

**SHORT-CIRCUITING DEMOCRACY?
THE PARADOX OF COMPETITION IN NEWSPAPERING
AND
WHY WE CAN'T GET 'THERE' FROM 'HERE'**

By

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Abstract

There are conflicting hypotheses about the role of market competition in creating a diverse press within Western democratic societies. Popular wisdom often assumes that the greater the number of commercial presses engaged in market competition, the more diverse the range of topics and perspectives. More empirical evidence, however, suggests that this may not be the case, and that market competition may in fact short-circuit the dissemination of information needed in a political democracy. This dissertation tests these hypotheses using a case study research strategy in the city of Honolulu, Hawaii, where two daily newspapers went from a semi-competitive joint operating agreement (JOA) to head-to-head market competition.

Three normative Western traditions regarding the role of the press, how it ‘should’ be organized and operated in democratic societies, and the role of markets and market competition toward those ends are identified. These traditions are as follows: liberal and/or market-liberal tradition; reformist liberal and/or social responsibility tradition; and democratic socialist and/or economic democracy tradition. The underlying assumptions of each tradition are evaluated against the results of the content and discourse analyses using a pre-post competitive arrangement design. These results are furthermore compared to surveys and interviews conducted with journalists and SOS activists, regarding their views on the press and their predictions of the effects of market competition.

This case study found that market competition not only did *not* broaden the range of topics and perspectives within and between the two papers, but it was also catalytic in one of the two papers moving in the direction of becoming more of a tabloid press. The

results of this study suggest that the consequences of organizing the newspaper industry around market logics in general and, market competition in specific, may be more detrimental than beneficial in the creation of an informed citizenry necessary for democratic self-governance and support the democratic socialist tradition in its assertion that a public sphere model of the press cannot be achieved by basing the newspaper industry upon market principles alone. Implications and directions for further research are discussed.

Dedication

To Simplicio Paragas, without whom this entire (ad)venture would have been improbable if not impossible, much like “the pot calling the kettle black.” And, to my great aunt Louise, who taught me that there are consequences to *not* pointing out that the emperor has no clothes. Also, to my mother, Rosetta, who has always been my ‘audience.’

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Introduction

Hawaii As A Living Laboratory

What is happening in Hawaii is a test case for the nation.
Beverly Kever,
Professor of Journalism
University of Hawaii at Manoa (Tighe, 1999)

Beginning with Plato who said, “Those who tell the stories also rule society,” the link between power and narrative has been recognized and articulated throughout Western history (Shaheen, 1990, p. B3). Racine, the seventeenth century French playwright, developed this theme throughout his fictional writings. His works repeatedly attempted to explore his troubling perception that power will always be in the hands of those who retain the ability to create, transmit and decipher language (Hoffmann, 1994). In more recent times, this link was illuminated by George Gerbner, Professor Emeritus of the Annenberg School of Communication, when he said, “If you can control the story telling of a nation, you don’t have to worry about who makes the laws” (Gerbner, 1984). Similarly, and perhaps more aptly in relation to this study, Vaclav Havel, the Czechoslovakian playwright and former Czech Republic president, reportedly once said, “A people without a narrative is a dangerous people.” Although Havel was said to be referring to the problems of the former Soviet Union, I believe his poignant observation about the role of narrative can be equally applied to contemporary social and political discourses about and within the American press.

It is not that I accuse Americans of being a people without a narrative. On the contrary, American stories have been canonized, sanitized, translated and beamed to nearly all corners of the globe. But, rather I argue that certain narratives about the press

and its relation to democracy are in a crisis of meaning and utility. Americans have quite possibly become a people whose mainstream discourses about the way a free press ‘should’ be organized and operated no longer provide them with the possibility of collective solutions to pressing problems. I argue in this dissertation that some of these narratives appear to have become dysfunctional, like an obsessive compulsive disorder, in that they tend to constrict the imagination and foster ineffectual thoughts and behaviors in relation to desired goals. Therefore, it can also be said that a people without a ‘functional’ narrative are also a dangerous people.

Given that media are currently the preeminent story tellers upon which we all must rely for our information to some extent, and that the news media are pivotal sites of social struggle due to their capacity to frame social issues and set the agenda for public discourse, it can be argued that questions about the structures within which news is produced, by whom and under what organizing principles, are some of the most important political questions of our time. In the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 and the war in Iraq in 2003, where, in retrospect, individuals and groups reflecting the gamut of perspectives — from Noam Chomsky to Dan Rather — are questioning the influences that led to such uniform coverage, it is time to re-visit what we know and don’t know about the forces that shape and control one of our most vital building blocks for sustaining democracy — the circulation of political information in the form of news.

What circumstances coalesced, for example, to form a virtual blackout of alternative voices and interpretations during both crises? Are these circumstances and influences, ranging from the Pentagon’s direct censorship to journalists’ reported self-

censorship, acute and situation specific, or chronic and just more difficult to perceive when attention is not so keenly focused? While the media in no uncertain terms juxtaposed cowardice with courage in both instances, might the opposite of courage in fact be conformity (Hightower, 2002, p. 8)? In the aftermath of such recent illegal accounting practices by Enron, WorldCom and others — which left millions without their retirement savings but lined the pockets of the upper echelons within those corporations — might what was once considered radical critique become mainstream observation? Or, will those influences and factors, which rendered these corporate collapses invisible and ‘off the radar screen’ until after the fact, prevail and become exponentially more powerful? It is hoped that this study will contribute to both scholarly and popular debates about the answers to such questions, and to serve as a potential guide for re-mapping policy at the local, state and federal levels, a guide which aims toward expanding the range of voices necessary for meaningful democratic participation.

This research, therefore, looks at some of the troublesome features of the US press that serve to undermine meaningful democratic participation. Specifically, it examines the role of market competition and its relative importance, when compared to other factors, in creating a diverse, vibrant and information-rich press. It articulates the expectations and goals of a ‘free’ press, and the role of market competition in achieving these goals, as put forth by the three most prevailing and influential normative Western traditions/narratives about the press. The veracity of each of these three normative traditions about how the press ‘should’ be organized and operated in democratic societies is then assessed by using the current circumstances in Honolulu, Hawaii — where two daily newspapers shifted from a semi-competitive arrangement (Joint Operating

Agreement) to head-to-head market competition — as a test case to critically investigate the consequences of market competition upon the breadth and depth of political communication. In short, this study traces the relationship(s) between the content and narratives *in* the press to those narratives *about* the press.

Two of the Western traditions reviewed and evaluated in this dissertation — the market-liberal and reformist liberal — claim that a competitive marketplace serves as the best model for organizing the dissemination of political information and ideas, and that a competitive news market serves both the public interest and democratic ideals. Although the reformist liberal tradition is arguably more skeptical of market forces, both of these traditions argue that by fueling innovation, increasing the quality of products and keeping consumer prices low, competition is not only the heart of the marketplace, but it is also the key by which political truths emerge from competing ‘reality’ claims (i.e., “the market place of ideas”). In other words, the dissemination of political communication is seen as best served by free market principles. In relation to the newspaper industry, this argument assumes that the greater the number of commercial presses (multiplicity), the more diverse the range of opinions, analysis and perspectives. The breadth and depth of public discourse are viewed as dependent upon and achievable through commercially-competing papers with differing owners, operators, editors and working journalists (as distinct from a plurality or differing ‘forms’ of ownership, i.e., member/audience supported, government subsidized, etc.), much like any other type of industry (Nerone, 1995).

The third tradition reviewed and evaluated — the democratic socialist and/or the economic democracy tradition — argues that the newspaper industry in democratic

societies is unlike other industries in that it is a business that manufactures a product supported by advertising revenue, *and* is also an institution that, in theory, is responsible and constitutionally protected for providing the service of information and ideas, an institution which enables citizens to meaningfully participate in decisions that alter lives. The dual roles of a privately-owned commercial enterprise and/or publicly-traded corporation, and that of a federally protected conduit for political communication, places the newspaper industry in a unique and precarious position. The democratic socialist tradition claims that there exists inherent tensions and contradictions between the First Amendment's intended purpose of equally protecting *individual* speech in the service of enhancing the circulation of diverse information necessary for self-government, on the one hand, and a market-based press, which commodifies information/news in the service of profit, on the other. Moreover, the democratic socialist tradition asserts that market competition between newspapers actually damages and constricts public discourse by creating the conditions under which 'fluff' and sensationalism, rather than politically-oriented news, are financially advantageous (Picard, 1985, p. 134).

This study is designed to determine which of the three Western normative traditions/narratives best explains the results of the multi-leveled analysis and to contribute to a better understanding of the aforementioned tensions and problematics by the critical evaluation of whether market competition within the newspaper industry creates the conditions under which diversity of ideas and perspectives are possible. It furthermore aims to build upon existing research that explores the factors and influences that shape and generate patterns of news coverage, and aid in understanding more fully those forces, determinants and ways of organizing news production that ensure and/or

impede diversity of ideas, opinions and perspectives. The dissertation, therefore, both exploratory in nature and a form of hypothesis testing. The net to garner data was cast widely in an attempt to not only trace some of the overall consequences of market competition but to also track some of the more nuanced ones. Hence, unlike many studies of this type, both content and discourse analysis were employed.

Honolulu, Hawaii was chosen as the location for this case study due to the unique historical circumstance of *The Honolulu Advertiser* and the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* resuming a head-to-head competitive arrangement in 2001, after nearly four decades of operating under a Joint Operating Agreement (JOA).¹

A recent assessment of the newspaper industry reports that 98% of all US newspaper markets are currently noncompetitive in the sense that they have no head-to-head local daily newspaper competitor (Picard, 2004, p.56). The current circumstances in Honolulu are, therefore, an exception to the norm as Hawaii clearly attempted to swim against the tides of concentration and industry monopoly that accelerated in the 1980s. Given these contemporary trends of consolidation and monopolization of media in general, there have been few, if any, opportunities available in previous years to conduct research of this nature.

Recent studies have been situationally forced to focus on the impacts of monopoly upon the quality of political communication – often leaving assumptions about the positive rewards of market competition in place and unexamined. As a consequence, Honolulu became a living laboratory, so to speak, for a case study evaluating the validity

¹ A Joint Operating Agreement (JOA), discussed in detail within Chapter Two and again within Chapter Three, is an exemption from anti-trust laws and allows two commercial presses to merge business functions but maintain two editorial staffs. A JOA allows for editorial competition but not market competition.

and consequences of those arguments and traditions, which assert that commercial competition is an adequate means to achieve breadth and depth of public discourse and preferable to monopoly.

Such were the arguments and assumptions underlying the unprecedented organizing efforts of a locally-based action group, ‘Save-Our-Star-Bulletin’ (SOS), which effectively blocked the closure of Honolulu’s second daily paper, thereby crippling Gannett’s position to form a newspaper monopoly in the state of Hawaii. This group, comprised of the state’s strongest unions, the Newspaper Guild, community activists and political leaders (including the then-Governor, Ben Cayetano), legally challenged Gannett, owner of *The Honolulu Advertiser*, and Liberty Newspapers, owner of the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* at the time, under federal and state antitrust laws and the Newspaper Preservation Act. The success of its actions paved the way for Canadian newspaper owner, David Black, to purchase the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, which began daily printing and head-to-head competition with Gannett on March 15, 2001. Some of the concerns raised by ‘Save-Our Star-Bulletin’ regarding monopolies — whether privately-owned or publicly-traded — and their influence upon the quality of the press and upon advertising rates were certainly valid issues, as will be detailed in Chapter Two through documentation by Ben Bagdikian, Robert McChesney, Peter Phillips and many others. But, within the movement’s arguments, there also existed assumptions about the nature of market competition. Namely, that it is the only viable alternative to a monopoly situation and a sufficient condition for diversity of perspectives (one feature and/or indicator of a ‘quality’ press).

Theoretically, this research presumes neither an economic deterministic stance,

nor a posture of idealism. Rather, it is premised upon the proposition that ideas and material forces are mutually constitutive; and that news content and discourses are determined by a complex interplay between economic, cultural, social, political and symbolic forces. It also assumes that these forces and their attendant values/ideologies are in fact traceable through numerous avenues, including such methods as undertaking critical discourse and content analysis; researching the ways news production is financed and organized; studying the organizational and business structures within which journalists and editors reside; and, analyzing the discourses that news workers employ to describe and explain what exactly it is that they 'do.' This research incorporates all of the above with an overarching emphasis upon how these various factors that influence news might be linked.

Paradigmatically, this study uses premises from both the liberal pluralist and the critical paradigms in media studies. It draws from the liberal pluralist paradigm by beginning its critique of modern news content and discourses from a constitutional perspective. It takes as a fundamental presupposition that the Bill of Rights is the backbone of American democracy and worthy of its supporting role. It assumes the intention of the First Amendment was to safeguard against the monopolization of speech by leveling the playing field in regards to who can speak, who can be heard and who can disseminate ideas. It does not reject the Amendment's viability, but rather seeks to identify specific determinants of its apparent impotency, and to contribute to an enhanced understanding of possible ways to restore its functionality. This research also draws from the critical tradition in its insistence that power is not more or less equally distributed in American society, nor is it necessarily visible. Also paralleling the critical paradigm, this

study intentionally separates democracy as a political ideal and capitalism as an economic structure. Market economics may be adjuncts to democracy but they are not criteria for democracy.

On a more personal level, a study of this nature could have been legitimately approached from any one of multiple angles. The choice to emphasize and explore the potential links between the narratives *about* the press and the topics and narratives *in* the press is due to the author's long-standing fascination with, and the study of, the origins of the stories we, as humans, tell ourselves about the world; our place in it; how these narratives are eventually woven together as a cohesive discourse, but with contradictions; and how these contradictions are accommodated and assimilated. After years of training in clinical psychology and psychoanalysis, in addition to a private practice in psychotherapy, it has become apparent to this author that to alter a story is to alter a future. By the same token, to alter the conditions of a future often necessitates altering a story. Although my focus has shifted in recent years from the personal to the political realm — albeit a distinction only surface deep — many of the same premises, skills and analytic tools of psychotherapy can be applied to this study.

The overarching questions of inquiry, of which this study is but a small part, are: What are the optimal structural and organizational conditions under which diversity of opinions may flourish? What are some of the forces and factors that tend to enhance and/or constrict public discourse? And, what light, if any, do narratives *about* the press shed on narratives *in* the press? The *specific* questions addressed in this study are: How and to what degree did market competition between the two newspapers under study affect the quality of political communication? How do these results compare with the

predictions offered by the three normative Western traditions of the press? How do these results compare with the predictions generated by journalists, activists and others articulating the functions of the press? A three-pronged or triangulated methodology of interviews/surveys, content analysis and discourse analysis was implemented in the service of exploring these questions and lines of inquiry.

Conceptually, the six chapters are divided into three overarching themes: diagnosis, prognosis and treatment options. Chapters One and Two constitute the 'diagnosis' aspect. Chapter One, " 'There' and the Disagreements Over Getting 'There': Expectations of a Free Press According to Three Normative Traditions," sketches the broad contours of the most prevailing and influential Western narratives about the role of the press in democratic societies, and looks at the philosophic antecedents to contemporary intervention strategies. These traditions are as follows: liberal and/or market liberal tradition; reformist liberal and/or social responsibility tradition; and democratic socialist and/or economic democracy tradition. The specific emphasis in Chapter One is on how each tradition conceptualizes the role of markets and market competition in achieving diversity within the press. Chapter Two, " 'Here': Factors That Have Been Found to Influence and *Not* Influence Patterns of News Content and Diversity of Ideas Within the Press," details those factors and influences identified as shaping patterns of news content and discourses by reviewing what previous research has told us about the conditions which constrain and/or facilitate diversity of views, perspectives and opinions. In short, Chapters One and Two map out the parameters of the contemporary debates about the press and the nature of the industry, how it is perceived, what it supposedly does, how it does it and identified problems (i.e., diagnosis).

Chapters Three, Four and Five constitute the prognosis aspects of this research. For example, Chapter Three, “ The Case Study: Coup d’Etat Of The SOS Vs Confessions Of An S.O.B.,” provides the historical and legal context within which the current newspaper ‘war’ in Honolulu, Hawaii is being waged by tracing the historical influence and role of the press in Hawaii. It furthermore explores the circumstances and premises that enabled the SOS to legally prevent a monopoly situation in the state – thereby creating the conditions of a ‘living laboratory’ for this study. Chapter Three also presents the results of the surveys and interviews with journalists and SOS participants, and identifies patterns of thought about the press and its role in democratic societies. Chapter Four, “Content And Its Dis-contented Analysis: Competitive Compliance?,” presents the results of the content analysis conducted on the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* and *The Honolulu Advertiser*, both before and after the competitive arrangement. It addresses the following questions, ‘Did market competition improve the quality of both papers and broaden the range of topics to which the citizens of Hawaii are exposed?’; ‘How are the two papers differentiated and what are the areas of increased and/or decreased coverage?’; ‘How do the two papers resemble one another?’; ‘What were the low representation areas of inquiry and/or blind spots in Hawaii under the JOA arrangement, and did these shift as a result of market competition?’; And, ‘do these results reflect the perceptions, predictions and opinions of journalists and SOS participants as presented in Chapter Three?’

Whereas Chapter Four focuses upon *how much* of *what* was topically present and/or absent in the news, Chapter Five, “ Making The Familiar Strange: Critical Discourse Analysis,” looks at the differences between the two newspapers in the *ways* various stories were presented — again, both before and after head-to-head competition. In the service of assessing the breadth and depth of perspectives within news discourse,

both ‘hard’ news items and editorials were analyzed. The salient features, theoretical origins and methodological approaches to critical discourse analysis are also detailed within Chapter Five.

The Conclusion, “Why We Can’t Get ‘There’ From ‘Here’: Stories Matter,” assesses the implications and consequences of these results, and re-evaluates the notions that market competition is a necessary and sufficient condition for the promotion of diversity and that a free press is equivalent to a commercial press. The Conclusion argues against an exclusively market-driven press, and illustrates how the public model of the press — as intended by the First Amendment of the United States’ Constitution — cannot be achieved solely through the commercial organization of the press because of the logics and dynamics of the market itself. Moreover, the Conclusion links those stories *about* the press, such as those narratives found woven throughout the liberal and reformist liberal traditions and the American master narrative, to those types of stories present and absent *within* the press. And lastly, the Conclusion offers directions for further research and a possible starting place from which to begin re-thinking and re-formulating how best to assure the diversity of views, perspectives and opinions necessary to restore the press’ pivotal role in representative and participatory democracies. As with any successful treatment, the Conclusion is based upon the cumulative knowledge from those who came before and those of us currently engaged in such pioneering efforts.

In 1947, the Commission of Freedom of the Press concluded its study by asking, “how we might free the press from the influences which now prevent it from supplying the communication of news and ideas needed by the kind of society we have and the kind of society we desire” (1947, p. 79)? Although it has been more than 50 years and much

has changed, it is in the spirit of the Commission's report that this project was undertaken.

‘There’ and the Disagreements Over Getting ‘There’: Expectations of a ‘Free Press’ According to Three Normative Democratic Traditions

“ If informed public opinion is not possible than neither is democracy.”
(Barron, 1973, p. 16)

Chapter One sketches the broad contours of the most prevailing and influential Western narratives about the role of the press in democratic societies, and looks at the philosophic antecedents to contemporary intervention strategies. Academically and politically speaking, these narratives have been grouped into three distinct traditions which are often characterized by the following designations: liberal and/or market-liberal tradition; reformist liberal and/or social responsibility tradition; and democratic socialist and/or economic democracy tradition (Nerone, 1995; Picard, 1985; Barron, 1973; Siebert, Peterson & Schramm, 1956).² Through articulating the main features of these three traditions, it is the aim of Chapter One to map out the terrain of ‘There’ as indicated in the title of this thesis — to trace some of the ideals upon which the circulation of political communications are based and the various conceptualizations of how the press ‘should’ (normatively) operate and be organized. In other words, this chapter is about the stories we have told, and continue to tell ourselves and each other about the role of political communication, and how it is best disseminated.

² The term ‘libertarianism’ is often used in lieu of ‘liberalism’ within discussions of this nature. There are overlapping features between the two doctrines. However, most of the scholars cited in this section prefer the term ‘liberalism’ to reflect the set of beliefs under review. Hence, ‘liberalism’ is employed rather than ‘libertarianism.’

Chapter One also details the perceived relationship(s) — as put forth by these three traditions — between a market-driven/commercially-based press and the expected level of diverse perspectives/opinions published by the daily press. By extension, it outlines the contested paths and interventions thought necessary by each tradition in achieving the goal of a ‘free press’ — supposedly, a vital and responsive communication instrument sensitive to the needs and requirements of democratic societies. The assumptions and predictions underlying the three traditions will then be compared and critiqued at various points within the following chapters, in terms of their impact upon political communication as revealed by the findings of this project and other similar case studies.

Through such a comparison, we can begin to determine which narrative/tradition best explains or, at the very least, more accurately reflects the empirical data garnered over the last few decades regarding the impact of commercial competition upon press content. Furthermore, this type of comparison allows us to situate the actions of the Save-Our-Star-Bulletin (SOS) in a broader context than the state of Hawaii, and to assess the viability of its interventions for future reference within policy-making arenas. Did, for example, the SOS’s organized efforts, strategies and interventions to promote head-to-head market competition create the anticipated and much talked about diversity of perspectives and did they improve the ‘quality’ of both papers? First, however, it is necessary to set the terms of debate by taking a more nuanced look at some of the often ‘taken-for-granted’ concepts that are used throughout this text, such as democracy, freedom of the press and diversity of perspectives.

Democracy, Freedom of the Press and Diversity of Perspectives

Perhaps the two most overlooked similarities among the terms ‘democracy,’ ‘freedom of the press’ and ‘diversity of perspective’ — aside from their polymorphous and polysemic connotations — are these: 1) They are all ‘ideals’ in the sense that none of these concepts have ever been fully realized in and of themselves, much less in combination; and 2) All of these terms reflect a developmental and/or a process orientation as opposed to a static state of political and/or organizational achievement. There has never existed, for example, a direct democratic nation state where everyone equally participates in the decision making of political, social and economic life (Picard, 1985, p. 9).³

Likewise, ‘freedom of the press’ and ‘diversity of perspectives’ are relative concepts that can only be assessed by their approximation to the ideals associated with them. Yet, it is common within much of our day-to-day parlance for these concepts to be inaccurately portrayed as visible and concrete states of political existence — full blown and efficiently operational. Therefore, in the discussions that follow, the reader is invited to suspend this tendency to view democracy, freedom of the press and diversity of perspectives as ‘achieved,’ and instead to focus upon the multiple conditions that inhibit and/or promote the potential mechanisms/processes for choice and self-expression associated with each of these concepts (Nerone, 1995, p. 69).

³ The models of direct democracy, also referred to as participatory democracy, are quite distinct from representative and/or the competitive elitist models of democracy. Whereas the latter emphasizes the delegation of political authority to ‘public’ servants who may or may not respond to the will of the people, the former seeks more equality between the rulers and the ruled above and beyond the act of voting (Hackett and Zhao, 1998, p. 2).

The modern ideals of individual political freedoms and the equal participation in deciding public policy are only a little more than three centuries old (Picard, 1985, p. 5; Curran, 2000, pp. 120-155). Emerging in Europe during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as the dominant form of opposition to aristocratic political and property privileges, contemporary notions of democratic rule have developed slowly, unevenly (especially in relation to who can/cannot vote, and levels of economic disparity) and have varied from nation to nation in accordance with specific approach (McChesney, 1999, p. 4). Nonetheless, two overarching philosophical precepts tend to inform most people's concept of a political democracy: "To set the citizen above the state and to provide maximum liberty (to be discussed in the following section of this chapter) for individuals while treating all citizens equally" (Picard, 1985, p. 6).

As part of ensuring the potentiality of these precepts, many Western democracies have constitutional protections regarding the right to speak and to write freely about issues that concern citizens (McChesney & Nichols, 2002, pp. 81-113). In the case of the United States, the US Constitution's First Amendment, which is one of ten that make up the Bill of Rights, expresses these protections. It reads: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press; or of the people to assemble peacefully; and to petition the government for redress of grievances." Without reaching beyond the scope of this study and digressing into the finer points and arguments of constitutional law, it is nonetheless necessary, at this point, to take notice of three important general features of the First Amendment in relation to political communication as it is situated

and spoken of within this study, by the three traditions detailed within this chapter, and by many of the researchers cited in Chapter Two (further discussions on the intentions and consequences of the First Amendment interpretations are forthcoming in the Conclusion).

First — and where there is little dissent among academics, legal scholars and popular opinion — is that the First Amendment was created, in part, to encourage communication between (We) the people and between the people and the state because the open expression of ideas and opinions was viewed as one of the cornerstones in the construction of a well-functioning system of democratic deliberation (McChesney, 1999, p. 269; Sunstein, 1997, p. 16; Barron, 1973, p. 321). The right to communicate political ideas was perceived as being at the heart of informed decision making and, as a consequence, in need of legal protection. Second, all of the five protected modes of expression mentioned in the First Amendment — religion, speech, press, assembly and petition — were intended to be enjoyed by all citizens, despite the fact that the right to vote was not enjoyed by all at the time of its conception (Barron, 1973, p.321).

And lastly, of the 42 words that constitute the First Amendment, it is the word ‘freedom’ and the phrase ‘freedom of the press’ that engender the most heatedly contested debates in contemporary politics and legal circles. When speaking of ‘freedom’ and ‘freedom of the press,’ there are four questions that usually arise. First and foremost, ‘whose freedom are we talking about? — who does it include and who does it exclude?’ The second question addresses, ‘freedom *from* what?’ The third inquiry generally revolves around ‘freedom *for* and *to* do what?’ And the final and most contentious question, ‘What are the conditions under which these freedoms are possible?’ In response

to grappling with these questions, many scholars from multiple disciplines have found it useful to distinguish between negative freedom and positive freedom (Berlin, 1958, pp. 118-172).

In direct relation to the press, negative freedom is thought of as the absence of government restraint and interference. More specifically, “ it is the absence of legal and/or political prohibitions, the absence of censorship and of institutions a priori denying the average citizen the opportunity of printing their opinion” (Picard, 1985, p.43). Positive freedom, on the other hand, refers to the freedom to explore, review and criticize the world in which the press resides, and to possess the material resources and cultural capacity to participate in the exchange of ideas (Nerone, 1995, p. 84). In short, negative freedom reflects freedom *from* and positive freedom reflects freedom *to* and *for* with the attendant attention given to those conditions which create opportunities to exercise expression. As will be shown, this distinction is of extreme import in evaluating the precursors and consequences of the newspaper industry’s day-to-day practices, especially as these practices influence diversity of opinion and perspectives.

Since the emergence of modern democratic ideals, free discussion, access to the diverse opinions resulting from such discussion, and a free press have been highly prized Western ideals; not only as conditions and requirements of a free society but also as outward manifestations that a democratic society is possible. Therefore, diversity — a wide spectrum of information and opinion including topics, perspectives and sources — has been historically encouraged to serve the goal of equal political participation and to provide the means by which citizens are equipped to make informed decisions about how best to organize public life (Barron, 1973, pp. 75-93). According to John Stuart Mill,

nineteenth century English philosopher noted for his works on liberty and the press, “diversity of opinion is useful for two reasons: One is that the received opinion may be false and some other opinion true; and the other is that if the received opinion is true, a conflict with its opposite will give greater clarity to its truth” (Mill, 1859). Although today most people do not think in terms of ‘Truth’ (absolutisms), we still, nevertheless, tend to value diversity within the press as a buttress against potential propaganda/misinformation, and to help clarify social, political and economic issues in the service of informed judgment.

Granted, there are those who argue against diversity of perspective on the grounds that the posture of impartiality — which according to some is thought to accompany the practices that foster diversity — only reinforces the inequalities of the status quo (Marcuse, 1969). But, that is not the position underlying this study. For the purpose of this thesis and for the sake of argument, diversity of political perspective as reflected within the daily press is viewed as: 1) a desirable means and ends designed to enhance other democratic processes; 2) an important feature of a ‘quality press’ (other characteristics associated with ‘quality’ are discussed in Chapters Two, Four and Five); and 3) more than the reflection of ‘established’ debates, especially by the two major political parties, and includes substantive political and ideological views of those not necessarily holding positions of political power and/or those of differing race, class and gender.

As previously stated, diversity is a relative concept and no single publication can be expected to voice every possible position on any given topic — nor, would this necessarily be desirable in relation to democratic ideals. In the extreme, diversity could

be taken to mean that Nazis and pedophiles, for example, are given ample newspaper space to print their views. This is neither the degree nor form of diversity this thesis addresses because it is hard to imagine either of those two groups contributing to a more vibrant public sphere. Rather, this text grapples with how much political diversity is ‘reasonable’ to expect in a democratic society.⁴ To illustrate, in this author’s view it is ‘reasonable’ to expect that the press offer anti-war arguments when a country is considering waging war. Likewise, it is ‘reasonable’ to expect that after tragedies such as September 11, 2001, various viewpoints would be offered on ‘why’ these events might have occurred. The question remaining is how do we achieve a reasonable degree of diversity within the press and/or ‘How do we get there?’ The following sections of this chapter trace the different answers to this question from three distinct Western traditions.

Liberal and/or Market-Liberal Tradition

The social and political philosophies of classic liberalism are premised on the idea that individual natural rights can and should be translated into individual legal liberties.⁵ The birth of Western liberalism is inextricably linked to the rise of democratic principles as the antithesis to and the destruction of eighteenth century European feudalism — a social system where privilege was based upon heredity and/or land ownership creating the fixed condition of great inequality between the few and the many (Bloch, 1961). The

⁴ What constitutes politically relevant information and what distinguishes it from other forms of information is highly controversial. As demonstrated by the feminist movement of the 1970s, “the personal can be political.” Nevertheless, politically relevant information, as used in this text, loosely refers to information pertaining to those affairs which deal with resource allocation, power and social equity.

⁵ The terms liberal and liberalism are employed very differently in Europe and Canada from the United States, often causing great confusion in relation to their contextual meaning. In America, the term liberal is generally characterized as favoring policies of reform which strive toward greater equity and stands in opposition to conservatism. Within Europe and Canada, however, the meaning of liberalism is more aligned with the term’s historical antecedents as detailed within this section of Chapter One, and often stands in opposition to the American usage.

central canon of liberalism, as an ideal around which all of its other values coalesce, is that the rational and autonomous *individual* is the basic unit of social life.

These theoretically autonomous and rational individuals are seen to possess natural or inalienable rights which, in turn, are translatable into legal rights/liberties. These liberties include equal and fair treatment and opportunities; freedom of expression, assembly and association; freedom to acquire and protect private property from the state and other individuals; the right to privacy; and the freedom to vote or run for office in competitive elections for a representative government that rotates on a regular basis (McChesney, 1999; Hackett and Zhao, 1998; Curran, 1996). All of these liberties are based upon the premise that individuals have inherent and equal worth which justifies these basic rights. Autonomy, in this context, refers to the *right* and the *capacity* to shape the conditions under which one lives. Current political notions of free will and personal responsibility can be traced to this assumption of autonomy. At its best, the notion of 'autonomy' has manifested in a strong belief in the freedom of the individual to acquire life's necessities and comforts through innovation and hard work, and free from external compulsion. At its worst, however, those trapped by the constraints of such structural inequalities as sexism or racism, for example, are often blamed for 'individual' shortcomings and flaws.

From its beginnings, liberalism's attendant economic philosophy has celebrated the organization of social life through the market place. Its tenets presume that the competitive pursuit of self-interest in the market place would lead to the welfare of the whole society. The common good is thought best served through the exertion of individual economic liberties, driven by unfettered market forces toward the attainment

of private goals (Nerone, 1995, p. 23). As interpreted by the tradition of liberalism, economic liberty simply means the absence of restraint (especially from government in the form of regulation) and embodies the idea of ‘negative freedom’ as described in the previous section. It is from classic liberalism that we have inherited such nomenclatures as ‘the invisible hand of the market place’ and ‘the market place of ideas’— both of which are based in the faith that the market allocates resources fairly and in accordance to productive output. And, when imbalances do occur, it is the self-correcting market forces themselves that will remedy the situation. The social and economic values of liberalism have been wed to the political processes of democracy in the form of the commonly heard term, ‘liberal democracy.’ The linkage of the two terms reflect the political, economic and social organization of a society which is based upon democratic principles, as well as individual liberties and the expressed commitment to limiting governmental activities to those which are thought to preserve rather than inhibit individual freedoms — an experimental marriage between liberty and equality that, at times, has been more acrimonious than harmonious.

Again, it should be noted that liberalism’s economic philosophy, like its political and social philosophies, emerged to counter the ‘natural laws’ of the day as dictated by the church and the aristocracy. In refusing god and heredity as the ultimate distributors of social and personal position, something or somethings had to take their place. It could be argued that the proponents of liberalism elected enlightenment’s twin offspring, individual rationality/reason and autonomy, in addition to the ‘natural laws’ of the market to serve as their replacements — hypothetically acting as great equalizers (Nerone, 1995, p. 134). One might also argue that given the enormity of changes and scientific

advancements in all aspects of life since the eighteenth century, these historically specific replacements would have since been, again, replaced. However, this has, in general, not been the case. Not only have they retained their prominence in certain circles — especially within the United States — but they have also enjoyed a kind of renaissance within the past few decades in the form of what is confusingly referred to as ‘neo-liberalism’ or, as it is sometimes called, ‘market-liberalism.’ I use the term ‘confusingly,’ because rather than a new (neo) variant of liberalism, it seems rather to be a retreat (when contrasted to the reformist liberal tradition) to the term’s original position, albeit, with a leaner and meaner face.

The exception to this observation, and one of the reasons for neo-liberalism’s stern gaze, is that under the neo-liberal and/or market-liberal version of classical liberalism, the social and political aspects of the philosophy seem to have all but disappeared, leaving the economic premises as representative of its entirety. In other words, neo-liberalism emphasizes economic life at the expense of the non-economic realms by advocating private control over society’s resources, reducing individual political freedoms to economic freedoms, assuming that political freedoms necessarily follow economic freedoms and by valuing economic liberties over the democratic principle of political equality (McChesney, 1999; Hackett and Zhao, 1998, p. 151; Picard, 1985). In effect, this particular brand of liberalism advocates market-driven solutions to social problems and presumes that market-driven commodities and services best serve democratic political processes. Both classic liberalism and market-liberalism have informed, and continue to inform, the ways we think about the press, how we organize

the press, and what we deem appropriate interventions to help the press better function as disseminators of political communication.

In the early stages of most modern democratic societies, the perceived major enemy of individual autonomy, personal liberty and freedom of expression was the government. Therefore, in order for the press to become a 'free' press and to carry out its historically self-professed roles as a watchdog against state corruption and first alert to potential abuses of power; as a conduit for transmitting the support and demand between the state and citizens; as a forum for public debate on the issues of the day and facilitator of political expression, and as a place which provides the information necessary for citizens to make informed decisions and, in turn, actions (Picard, 1985, p. 59; Curran, 1996, pp. 81-120) — it was thought that the press should have no formal relationship with government. Liberalism's historic definition of freedom of the press, then, means freedom *from* state restraint and/or negative freedom. Formal independence from the government was seen as the bulwark against government censorship, propaganda and other abuses of power (Hackett, 2001, p. 205), and as a condition for the free flow of ideas and opinions. The state, within the world view of liberalism, had and continues to have negative connotations and, more often than not, is associated with pressures that undermine freedom of expression.

In rejecting the state as a regulatory mechanism through which communications flowed, the adherents of liberalism sought to ensure the independence of the press through private ownership. The alternative and preferred regulatory mechanism became the commercial marketplace, which, again, was seen as a benevolent force that would benefit society as a whole because it would provide accountability via the feedback of

citizens in the form of purchase choices. It was assumed that the transition from state control to market control would end the possibility of censorship and thereby bolster freedom. This particular way of organizing information dissemination is often referred to as the market-model. And, although this model is nearly three centuries old, it remains a dominant tradition around which many people organize their thoughts about the press. Its philosophic roots are grounded in the dread of the state as the primary source of power and developed when capitalism, as an economic doctrine, was still in its nascent phase (Barron, 1973, p. 72). Capitalism, in its early stages, was overwhelmingly thought to be a system based on social justice — “inequalities of income and wealth measure, however roughly, the economic contributions of the men and women who embark their energies and resources in the productive process” (Bullock, Stallybrass & Trombley, 1988, p. 106). Experience and research, though, suggest that this is not necessarily the case (Phillips, 2002).

The market model of the press, as part of the liberal and/or market-liberal tradition, is premised upon five main assumptions. They are these: 1) Private ownership of the press is necessary for and equivalent to a free press; 2) Commercial markets are the most democratic means by which ideas are dispersed; 3) Markets, in general, and market competition, in specific, foster diversity of opinion (i.e., the marketplace of ideas) ; 4) Markets respond to the will of the people; and 5) Markets, in order to perform at peak efficiency, should be left to operate without public interference and/or political intervention (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001, pp. 15-38; McManus, 1994; pp. 200-201). Although many of these assumptions will be further explored and articulated in the following sections of this chapter and throughout the thesis, it is necessary to pause at this

point and look more closely at what is often meant by the metaphor, ‘the marketplace of ideas,’ because it is this phrase that epitomizes and/or symbolizes the underlying rationale for the five aforementioned premises of the market model.

The architect of the marketplace of ideas concept is reportedly twentieth century U.S. Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes. In the case, *Abrams v. United States* (1919), Holmes stated, “The ultimate good desired is better reached by the free trade of ideas — that the best test of truth is the power of the thought to get itself accepted in the competition of the market ... that at any rate is the theory of our constitution” (Coulson in Picard, McCombs, Winter & Lacy, 1988, p. 180). The meaning and intention behind this statement have always been a point of contention and continue to be heatedly debated among noted scholars (Nerone, 1995, p. 50; Barron, 1973, P. 76). Nevertheless, the imagery that this metaphor elicits is explicitly linked to liberalism’s conceptualization of how the press, in theory, works. The term, in its common employment, conjures visions of multiple flows of diverse ideas swirling around within public discourse, free of any restrictions or boundaries except their ultimate rejection or acceptance. Within this free and unfettered marketplace, it is the public, as judge and jury, who make these determinations over which ideas survive and which do not — a simple supply-and-demand-driven formula like any other good or service. The imagined yet invisible force propelling these dynamics is the spontaneous combustion created through market competition — compelling the idea generators to offer the highest quality information for the lowest possible price. Competition, it is thought, will necessarily produce winners and losers; a positive combative process designed to weed out the shoddy and duplications, and leave the best and most diverse standing. In the case of Honolulu, market-liberals

would have advocated letting the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* die a ‘natural’ death as intervention equals interference with the ‘natural laws’ of the market, much like Darwin’s law of ‘natural’ selection. And, so the story goes, the public is best served by the absence of regulation. But, there are other stories.

Reformist Liberal and/or Social Responsibility Tradition

In the wake of the economic, political and social turbulence left by the market failures of the Great Depression era in the early twentieth century, and the suspicions created by the disproportionate levels of accumulated wealth and political power during the Gilded age (1870-1890) — a time when extensive fortunes in business, railroads and finance were amassed by such ‘robber barons’ as Astor, Carnegie and Rockefeller, producing excessive concentration of power in the form of monopolies — the absolutist faith in the invisible and benevolent hand of the market, as professed by classic liberalism, started to crumble (Phillips, 2002). Pressures brought to bear from multiple popular movements over several decades eventually resulted in the acceptance that the state should take some responsibility to enact reforms and intervene in the marketplace on behalf of social stability. This acceptance gave rise to the existence of the welfare state (institutions designed to provide a temporary social safety net in times of crisis), state and federal regulatory agencies, and public ownership of many social utilities. Concomitantly, there was a shift in emphasis from negative freedom to positive freedom — access to the resources needed to *meaningfully* exercise freedom and liberty in everyday life (Hackett & Zhao, 1998). This philosophical stance was quite a reversal from the posture of classic liberalism because it was now thought that the state must not

merely allow freedom but must also actively promote it and that the government's failure to intervene could be seen as a denial of positive liberty (Nerone, 1995, pp. 25, 91).

These trajectories in economic and social thinking necessarily affected the ways in which individuals were perceived. Rather than conceptualizing the individual as the lone wolf among other lone wolves whose actions would necessarily benefit the species as a whole, there was an acknowledgment that the collective well-being and survival of the species, as it were, depended upon a general obligation to the common good which, at times, had to take precedence over individual desires, especially if those desires were based in economic greed — an attempt at re-balancing relative social and economic equity with individual liberty. Aggregately, these reformulations about society and the role of government to compensate for the negative social effects of self-interested individual behavior are known as the reformist liberal and/or social responsibility tradition.

With its attendant ideals about bettering the relationships among governmental institutions, and the public and private sectors in the service of the common good, this tradition was also catalytic in the re-evaluation of communication systems and the role of the press. Pivotal to these reformulations was the development of that concept we now refer to as the 'public sphere'— that collective space where issues of public concern have the possibility of being rationally discussed (Habermas, 1962) and/or the 'public sphere model of the press' (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001, pp. 19-21). This model views society's information systems as more than simply profit-generating businesses that naturally provide 'quality' services; rather, it sees vehicles of communication as crucial democratic sites that play useful and critical roles in cultivating public dialogue and, hence, are in

need of some form of external surveillance or accountability mechanism. As a consequence, and to counteract for those *particular* market failures which lead to monopoly situations, reformist liberalism advocated limited governmental oversight and regulation of the mass media to control for excessive commercialization at the expense of the public interest and to maintain and/or restore market competition.

The prevailing thought in relation to the latter premise was that through legal intervention designed to assure multiple commercial media outlets, a wide range of substantively diverse opinion was, by extension, also assured. It was within this newly acceptable regulatory climate that the organized efforts of liberal reformists resulted in the passage of the Communications Act of 1934, which established the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). At that time, and in the spirit of enhancing the public sphere, the FCC required commercial broadcasters to fulfill their 'public service' obligations (time devoted to issues of public concern that is not underwritten by advertisers trying to sell a product) in order to attain and maintain their broadcasting licenses (McChesney, 1999, pp. 70, 125). These required obligations, however, have since been either eroded or completely dismantled due to the re-emergence of market-liberal media policies (to be discussed in Chapter Two).

Reformist liberals had similar concerns over the state of the newspaper industry as they did about the airwaves, but took a bit longer to organize and act. Prior to World War II, media tycoons such as William Randolph Hearst, Robert R. McCormick, and Henry Luce controlled not only the major American presses, but also wire services, magazines, movie studios and radio stations (Nerone, 1995, p. 79). These media moguls were notorious for using their powerful positions to influence elections and legislative actions

causing great alarm within major segments of the population. Moreover, they were also prone to extreme sensationalism, publicity stunts and outright fabrication of stories in the name of profit, i.e., ‘yellow journalism’ (McManus, 1994, p. 200). In response to this public outcry relating to fears of propaganda and concentrated power over information flows — and against the backdrop of WWII — a commission was formed to inquire into the proper function of the press in modern democracies. This commission is now commonly referred to as the Hutchins Commission, named after the then-president of the University of Chicago, Robert Maynard Hutchins, who headed its inquiries. After four years of research, the commission issued its landmark report in 1947 (Nerone, 1995, p. 80)

The Commission’s report agreed with the popular opinion of the day in stating: “The press is caught between its desire to please and extend its audience and its desire to give a picture of events and people as they really are” (The Commission on Freedom of the Press, 1947, p. 57). Regarding the market-based model of the press, the report acknowledged that the press’ subservience to market forces could be as equally restrictive of freedom as governmental control, and that it was the “state which needed to guard against private abuses of economic power and seek to control the economic infrastructure of the press to ensure media plurality and the opportunity for a wide variety of political views to be disseminated” (Picard, 1985, p. 137). The commission went on to say that industries based solely upon market logics have a tendency toward monopoly and that hyper-commercialism produces a dangerously selfish population not interested in those different from themselves (Nerone, 1995, p. 77). The report offered suggestions to alleviate both threats to democratic communications.

First, and in response to the dangers surrounding hyper-commercialism, sensationalism, and yellow journalism-type publicity stunts/practices, the commission argued that the press itself had a responsibility to society and that it should voluntarily accept the burdens of behaving in the best interest of the people rather than their own narrow economic and political concerns. If not, the state would have to intervene and impose guidelines to elevate press standards. In effect, they were advocating social responsibility, hence the name of the tradition, through self control and ethical behavior in the effort to promote positive freedoms. These suggestions were not well received by the majority of press owners who tended to be more aligned, in thought and deed, with classical liberalism. To them, the notion of responsibility had too many parallels with governmental oversights and external authority, and rang perniciously close to that dreaded form of social and political organization — communism (Nerone, 1995, p. 78).

Second, although the commission championed a privately controlled and self-policed press, it also accepted the insufficiency of laissez-faire economics as a determinant of diversity. If, as the commission professed, market forces lend themselves to monopoly industries, then it is necessary for the state to intervene in media economics. This recommendation resonated with the American population of the time because it echoed many of the sentiments of the then-former US president, Franklin D. Roosevelt, who was campaigning for and implementing social and economic reforms now known as the 'New Deal' (Zinn, 2003, p. 392). The general acceptance of the need for intervention in the economics of the press eventually cleared the path for two specific types of intervention that are of import to this study. They are: antitrust laws as applied to the newspaper industry and the Newspaper Preservation Act.

After much debate and argumentation, the Supreme Court in 1945 ruled that antitrust laws — which originated with the Sherman Antitrust Act of 1890 and the Clayton Act of 1914, and were created to limit the consolidation of private power in industries like oil, steel and railroads — were consistent with the intentions of the First Amendment and therefore could be legally applied to the newspaper industry. The court's rationale was that this was permissible because governmental intervention in newspaper markets would result in diversifying the market structure and prevent anti-competitive conduct thought to inhibit freedom of expression. (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001, p. 225; Coulson in Picard, McCombs, Winter & Lacy, 1988, p. 179). With this ruling in *Associated Press v. United States*, the Supreme Court, arguably, understood that antitrust laws were more than just a economic means of protecting consumers but also a political tool that could be used to enhance democratic processes.

Similar in spirit and intent, was the creation and passing of the Newspaper Preservation act of 1970. The Newspaper Preservation Act is an exemption from normal antitrust laws and support for the cooperation between two papers by permitting the formation of what is known as a Joint Operating Agreement (JOA). This Act of Congress allows two newspapers in the same city to engage in what otherwise would be illegal business practices, such as price-fixing and market allocation. Under a JOA, two newspapers pool their advertising, circulation, production and business departments and split profits according to an agreed upon formula. The logic behind this arrangement is that although there is no head-to-head market competition, the preferable set of circumstances, there is at least editorial competition. A JOA, then, is seen as a means to preserve a second editorial 'voice' in cities that otherwise would be left with only one

daily paper and/or a monopoly situation (Alger, 1998, p. 117; Lacy, 1988; Picard, 1985, pp. 105-112). Underpinning both interventions, The Newspaper Preservation Act and the use of antitrust laws against the newspaper industry, is the market-based belief that diversity of ideas necessarily follows a multiplicity of commercial ownership. The first is designed to prevent monopoly and the latter to break up existing ones. Both are meant to restore competition, whether it be editorial or market. The *Honolulu Advertiser* and the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* had been participants in a JOA from 1962 until 2001 when David Black purchased the Honolulu Star-Bulletin.

The actions taken by SOS members, in their successful attempt to block the closure of the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* and thus preventing *The Honolulu Advertiser* from gaining monopoly status in Honolulu, reflect the theories and practices of the reformist liberal and/or social responsibility tradition. Their legal actions of utilizing existing antitrust laws and their belief that by promoting market competition, diversity of opinion and the overall quality of Honolulu's press would be enhanced are tested in the following chapters. In turn, of course, so are the presuppositions of the liberal reformist tradition.

But, before that, there is yet another story about how the press best functions in democratic societies and how those functions are best achieved.

Democratic Socialist and/or Economic Democracy Tradition

The democratic socialist tradition or, as it is sometimes called, the economic democracy tradition, substantially departs from the previous two traditions by calling into question the general nature of the market itself. This tradition argues that there exists inherent structural biases embedded within market-oriented principles and, as a consequence, are not the best means by which political communication should be

disseminated. Whereas classic liberalism professes that unfettered markets are the most effective routes to free and diverse flows of ideas, and reformist liberalism sees markets as, overall, beneficial mechanisms by which to organize the distribution of opinions (with those few noted exceptions cited above and *if* the industry exercises self-restraint in the name of the public good), democratic socialism views market principles — including commercial competition — as standing in direct opposition to a diverse and vibrant public sphere as represented by the press. As a consequence, according to democratic socialism, political communication needs to be organized by means other than the market — ones which are more compatible with the ideals underlying a political democracy. This assertion is premised upon six primary arguments, many of which were responses to the changing relationships between the state and economics in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and brought about by the maturation of industrial capitalism, which increasingly denied citizens the ability to participate in economic and political decisions (Picard, 1985, pp. 27, 137).

First, it is argued that markets are inherently undemocratic. The principles of democracy rest upon the concepts of equality and individual equal worth. The commonly heard phrase, “one person, one vote,” has come to represent these sentiments by connoting that regardless of minor social or economic differences between people in certain aspects of life, the act of voting levels the playing field because all votes count equally. Markets, on the other hand, work more like, “one dollar, one vote.” And, because markets are economic conduits concerned with the distribution of money, those with the most of it have a distinct advantage over those who do not — therefore skewing the balance of power not only in economic arenas but also in the social, political and

cultural arenas as well (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001, p. 22). With the profits generated from successful capitalist enterprises and/or large inheritances comes the economic clout to further amass capital and influence those markets in which one operates, (prices, wages, etc.) not to mention increased political influence over those agencies which regulate markets (discussions specific to the FCC are forthcoming in Chapter Two). In essence, the wealthy become, literally and figuratively, 'worth more.' This dynamic of the rich being able to get richer because of access to capital, and the poor and middle-class unable to attain capital in order to level the playing field — regardless of productive output — is endemic to the economic system of capitalism and runs contrary to democratic principles. The market and its forces, then, become problematic and serve as obstacles to press freedoms rather than effective solutions.

The second and related argument posed by the democratic socialist tradition is that the press tends to reflect the distribution of power within society (ways in which this occurs are discussed in Chapter Two and Five). Given that contemporary forms of power are, for the most part, unjust by way of great disparities, the press comes to represent and thus reinforce — or, as some would say, 'enforce' — this injustice. The logic is: If markets reproduce inequality and the privately-owned press is an integral part of the market structure, then a privately-owned press cannot be relied upon to self-correct in the name of democracy. The structural biases and market logics (profit=success), within which the press resides and operates, effectively prevents it from assuming a more democratic role within society. In short, markets are not value free or neutral. Nor do they distribute resources fairly. They work to the advantage of those with the most money and emphasize profit over all else. The press cannot be 'free' from capital and its logics

because it is capital in form and use. Therefore, private control of an institution as vital to the well-being of democracy as the press is damaging (Picard, 1985, p. 68).

The third assertion put forth by democratic socialists is that the other two traditions miscalculate and/or misdiagnose the effects of market competition upon the level of diverse ideas circulating within the press. Rather than commercial competition enhancing diversity and being a circumstance to be encouraged, they argue that: 1) Market competition creates the need for the broadest possible audience which results in a ‘stilling’ of divergent voices and “a monotone of commonly held values and viewpoints” (Picard, 1985, p. 134); and 2) Rational behavior by individuals engaged in market endeavors dictates that one “attempt to reduce the threat of competition as much as humanly possible, and then to engage in as little direct competition as can be managed” (McChesney, 1999, p. 140). Both speak to the possibility that commercial competition is a myth on two levels; that it produces what it is thought to produce — diversity of ideas — and that it is wanted by producers. Evidence of the latter being a myth is supported by the media merger sprees of the last decade which has resulted in more local and national media monopolies than ever before. Evidence of the former, in relation to the newspaper industry, is tested by the design and execution of this project. Furthermore, this tradition argues that current governmental policies that support economic competition in the press, like antitrust laws, have effectively limited freedom of expression within public discourse because they favor growth of large commercial presses. Of major concern is, “the temptation to seek vigorous enforcement of antitrust laws in order to inhibit and perhaps to break up concentration of media ownership and control. It must be remembered,

however, that our objective is a multiplicity of ideas rather than a multiplicity of forums” (Barron, 1973, P. 337).

Concomitant with democratic socialism’s third assertion, democratic socialists question the criteria and content of what is commonly heralded as ‘diversity.’ If, for example, both the Republican and Democratic perspectives are presented on an issue, is this diversity? Might there be many other perspectives on any given topic? Most Western democracies have more than two political parties in addition to an opposition party. Although the US does not have an opposition party, there are other organized political entities which offer differences of opinion from the two major parties, but these perspectives rarely make it into the daily press. Why not? Similarly, if a member of a minority or a woman writes political commentaries for a newspaper, does this mean that we, as readers, are receiving a distinct and different point of view from that of the mainstream white male perspective? Or, are these potential differences of opinion muted because of external pressures? And, does the current state of the newspaper industry reflect the state of the broadcast industry (there may be 500 channels to choose from, but the homogenized formulaic system upon which most programs are based leaves little real diversity or choice)? In other words, freedom without choice among several alternatives is not true freedom and “a diverse array of ‘fluff’ is no diversity at all”(Croteau & Hoynes, 2001, p. 34). The democratic socialist tradition broadens the meaning of the concept ‘diversity’ by including those voices and perspectives that are outside the boundaries of ‘established’ consensus and by rejecting the more narrow definition of the term which has traditionally meant number of topics, outlets and owners.

The fifth premise upon which it is argued that the press needs to be organized by means other than commercial marketplace is that contrary to the market model of the press, markets do *not* respond to the will of the people. It is not the newspaper readers who are judge and jury in determining what ideas survive and which ones do not. Instead, it is the advertisers, who represent the real markets that newspapers seek. Media industries are unique in that while most businesses receive revenue from the consuming public, newspapers get the majority of their profit from other businesses — advertisers (Picard, 1985, p. 135). This kind of business situation is called a ‘dual product’ market. “Media simultaneously sell two completely different types of “products” to two completely different sets of buyers. First, they produce the media product (newspapers, TV programs, etc.) that are marketed and sold to consumers. Second, they provide access to consumers (readers, viewers) that is sold to advertisers” (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001, p. 26). It is the centrality and structural dynamics of the latter, according to the democratic socialist tradition, which is underestimated within the market model of the press. They assert that if the market is indeed responsive to any group or entity, it is to the advertisers and not the public. The media, it is argued, exist to sell commodities and their sustenance is advertising (Barron, 1973, p. 10). The consequences of such a dual product arrangement are multi-leveled and discussed further within the following chapters. It is, however, important to keep in mind that the issues underlying the critique of this specific aspect of the market model of the press — often referred to as ‘consumer sovereignty’ — pertain to the differences between seeing the press as any other business and seeing it as having a starring role in the democratic process, and the differences between positioning the public primarily as consumers and addressing them foremost as citizens.

The sixth and last major departure of the democratic socialist tradition from the other two traditions is its emphasis upon the conditions under which positive freedom is possible. Whereas classic liberalism and reformist liberalism, to greater and lesser degrees, focus on negative freedoms and/or the freedoms gained by the absence of restraint and interference, democratic socialists seek those conditions which facilitate the ability to act in situations calling for democratic deliberation. Their conclusion: in order for the press to function in the capacity of its historically-professed roles within democratic societies, as outlined in earlier in this chapter, and to be relatively free of both elite governmental and economic influences, the press itself has to be economically and politically democratized. What are the advantages, for example, of having liberties and freedoms that one can't exercise due to economic and political constraints? Put another way, what are the benefits derived from possessing equal rights to compete economically only to become unequal (Hackett, 2001, p. 205)? It is not enough to possess the freedom to publish or the freedom to speak, as guaranteed by the First Amendment, without having access to avenues of expression. Press freedom, they contend, can no longer mean merely the right to publish but also the public's right to hear and know. Moreover, the right to publish needs to include the right of access for an individual or group to write their own copy and present their views. "Current laws for freedom of expression have done very little to insure opportunity for freedom of expression. There are enormous limitations on the power of thought to get itself accepted into the competition of the marketplace because the marketplace prefers some thoughts over others. There is inequality in the capacity to communicate just as in economic bargaining power....if you don't have a press, you can't just go get one" (Barron, 1973, p. 321). As it stands, the

American press has great power and many privileges but little accountability and responsibilities. It is constrained by no constitutional duties yet is afforded constitutional protections; and those constitutional protections, as interpreted by the courts, favor the large corporations and wealthy owners who control the presses rather than the public (McChesney, 1999, pp. 257-281; Schiller, 1989, pp. 46-66). If the government is ideally to be held accountable to the public, why not the press which, like the government, is ideally operating as a 'fourth estate' in the service of the public?

The role and duty of the state to pursue communication policies on behalf of its citizens lies at the heart of the democratic socialist tradition. Rather than fearing the government, this tradition perceives it as the only socially-oriented, non-profit mechanism whose *raison d'être* is to promote and protect democratic ideals, large and powerful enough to limit and/or restrain uncontrolled private economic interests detrimental to the public sphere. And, while acknowledging that state involvement and government intervention can be benign or malignant and, as a result, must be carefully planned, they also view intervention as taking place on an active/passive dimension. By not intervening, the state can and often does choose certain interests over others. As illustrative, the recent trend in media de-regulation can be, and often is, misinterpreted as a 'hands-off' or passive approach. However, as will be addressed in Chapter Two, what appears to be passive posturing on the part of the government is, in fact, a very active intervention designed to benefit media corporations and conglomerates. Furthermore, it is argued that state intervention in press economics "has been continuous since the early development of the newspapers in Europe; but the amounts and degrees of intervention have changed as democratic rule emerged and the economic needs of the press changed"

(Picard, 1985, p. 138). Therefore, it is not a question of setting precedence by creating and implementing interventions as they have always existed in some form or another — such as tax incentives, reduced postage rates, antitrust laws, regulation and deregulation etc. — but rather it is a question of how best and by what means, should we intervene in the interest of a free and more *balanced* flow of ideas?

Also at the core of the democratic socialist tradition is a strong reassertion of democratic principles and participation of individuals in *all* spheres of life that affect them. This is one of the reasons why the philosophy is also called the ‘economic democracy’ tradition (Picard, 1985, p. 28) As previously explained, it is thought that without relative economic parity, there can be no political democracy. It is because of this expressed commitment to equality in all arenas of life that this tradition advocates democratizing the newspaper industry through its organizational structure. Possible ways this could be accomplished are the following: public/not-for-profit ownership; funding from foundations and nonprofit corporations; journalist-operated cooperatives and other collective organizations; and/or the division of the press into various and multiple sectors, such as the social market sector, the civic sector, the professional sector and the private enterprise sector (Curran, 2000, pp. 140-148; Picard, 1985, pp. 131-151). In direct relation to the situation in Honolulu, it is impossible to predict what the democratic socialist tradition would have suggested, as a way of preserving diversity within the press, because each community is seen as having different needs and as beginning from a different set of circumstances. However, it can be surmised that the democratic socialist tradition would not have recommended allowing the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* to die a ‘natural’ death nor would they have advocated utilizing existing antitrust laws for those

reasons already covered. They might have, however, pursued the path of re-organizing the newspaper along the lines of a journalist-operated cooperative — ironically the same path that many of those working for the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, at the time, also favored

Summary

Each of the three normative democratic traditions reviewed in Chapter One share similar ideals and expectations of a ‘free press.’ These include, but are not limited to: 1) The press should act as a watchdog against state corruption and other abuses of power; 2) The press should be a conduit and forum for public debate; 3) The press should serve citizens in making informed decisions; 4) The press should democratically represent the citizens/populations it serves; and 5) The press should be free of influences which would compromise its integrity and ability to accomplish these tasks. Where these traditions differ is in their professed means by which to arrive at these ends. In other words, each visualizes a different road in getting ‘there.’ The liberal and/or market liberal tradition asserts that the market model of the press is the most direct route to these aspirations and emphasizes ‘negative’ freedom. On the other hand, the reformist liberal and/or social responsibility tradition thinks that although the market model route is in need of a few minor repairs, such as the creation and enforcement of antitrust laws, it is nonetheless travelable. By contrast, the democratic socialist and/or economic democracy tradition — emphasizing positive freedoms — sees the road of the market model as having too many toll booths, so to speak, which effectively restrict the freedom of the majority by being cost-prohibitive. This tradition, therefore, suggests greater public access through greater public funding — much like the interstate highway system throughout North America.

These traditions represent the most influential stories about the role of the press in democratic societies. These are the stories that informed the SOS, the courts and public opinion in deciding what course of action to take in regards to the potential demise of the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*. And, like all narratives that are used to guide thought and behavior, they have consequences. This project attempts to assess some of these consequences. Prior to this, however, and for comparative purposes, it is necessary to look at what previous research suggests are the consequences of these stories. Chapter Two reviews some of these studies with particular attention given to the relationship between market logics and the elements of diversity.

**‘Here’:
Factors That Have Been Found to Influence and Not Influence
Patterns of News Content and Diversity of Ideas Within the
Press**

If a nation has narrowly controlled information,
it will soon have narrowly controlled politics.
(Bagdikian, 2000, p. xii)

Chapter Two discusses those factors and influences identified as shaping and *not* shaping patterns of news content, especially in relation to diversity of topic and perspective. It reviews what previous research tells us about the conditions which constrain and/or facilitate the press in its self-professed roles within democratic societies (listed in Chapter One). This chapter fills, with empirical evidence, some of the gaps left by the broad assumptions of the three normative traditions and looks more closely at the consequences of their differing paths toward the ‘ideal’ of a free press. Furthermore, Chapter Two begins to contextualize the relative importance of market competition, compared to other factors, as a determinant of diversity.

Chapter Two is divided into six main sections and several sub-sections. The first section briefly explains the differences between two academic approaches to media studies known as the liberal pluralist paradigm and the critical paradigm — those paradigms within which the research presented in this chapter was conducted.⁶

This explanation is important because the differences and tensions between the two paradigms tend to parallel the differences and tensions among the three traditions.

⁶ The term ‘paradigm,’ as used throughout this text, simply means a conceptual framework that offers a way to make sense of the world through relational meanings and/or a way of organizing consciousness.

The liberal pluralist paradigm reflects elements of the market liberal and reformist liberal traditions, and the critical paradigm reflects elements of the democratic socialist tradition. And, like the three traditions, there are definitive policy implications underlying the assertions made by these two paradigms.

The last five sections review the various levels of potential influences upon news content. These levels are: 1) individuals; 2) media routines; 3) organizational; 4) extramedia; and 5) ideological (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). As will become increasingly clear throughout this chapter, these levels of potential influences upon news content form a gestalt in which all are intrinsically linked. Each level of influence is either directly or indirectly affected by the others. In short, to make changes or modify any aspect of one necessitates shifting aspects of the others as well. It is only for explanatory and clarity purposes that they are treated semi-discretely. The questions around which Chapter Two is organized are as follows: What is it that is currently known about how individuals, media routines, organizational structure, extramedia and/or influences outside the media organization, and ideological factors affect what we read in the newspaper? And, what are the content and diversity implications of each level? Research will be presented that both supports and refutes many of the suppositions around which the Save-Our-Star-Bulletin activists rallied (to be fully detailed in Chapter Three). These suppositions include the following: 1) Market competition for readers, advertisers and sources lead to greater levels of diverse perspectives, opinions and views and, for these reasons, it is a better arrangement than a JOA where there exists only editorial competition; 2) Monopoly newspapers, especially if they are also large chain newspapers, are dangerous because monopolistic control leads to unscrupulous business practices, shoddy local

coverage and leaves too much power over the flow of information in too few hands; and
3) Independently-owned newspapers are, in general, of a higher quality than those of large chains.

The Liberal Pluralist and Critical Paradigms

Liberal pluralism, as an academic paradigm in media scholarship, coalesced between 1940 and 1960. Its development was primarily a reaction against the theory of mass society as formulated by European scholars in the midst and wake of fascism and totalitarianism.⁷ The liberal pluralist paradigm countered the Europeans' understandable pessimism of the time with optimism, and effectively demarcated the differences between American society and those European totalitarian societies wrought with conflict, war and inequality. Liberal Pluralism, in general, assumes the following about democratic societies: 1) Society is composed of individuals who form diverse groups which come together to lobby for and represent their interests before government. This diversity of interests gives balance and strength to the overall society. All voices can be potentially heard; 2) The power of groups to represent their own interests are roughly equal. No one group can dominate any particular issue all the time; 3) Political life (at the level of the citizen and at the institutional level) is independent from economic life. Rich and poor are equal in the face of government and the law; and 4) The exercise of power is, for the most part, visible (Curran, 2000, pp. 120-155).

⁷ The theory of mass society is a model of the social organization of industrial/capitalist societies which characterize them as comprising a vast workforce of atomized and isolated individuals who were at the mercy of and influenced by mass media and propaganda (O'Sullivan, Hartley, Saunders, Montgomery and Fiske, 1994, p. 173).

In relation to the press, newspapers are most often viewed as “a multiplication of representative voices forming a collective conversation” (Curran, 2000, p. 119). Regarding the media, in general, the following assertions are often made by those working within the liberal pluralist paradigm: 1) Media help give voice to most legitimate views and provide a forum for public debate; 2) Media provide information necessary for citizens to act; 3) Media are independent of economics and government; and 4) Media serve as an independent institution keeping watch over potentially self-serving government and the excessive influence of special interests groups (Curran, 1996, pp. 81-120). Traditionally, questions of inquiry tend to cluster around issues of *specific* bias (individuals and organizations), effects of *specific* messages or groups of messages (on voting and/or consumer behavior) and *specific* intraorganizational functions and relationships (gatekeeper, sources, power elites and adversarial journalists). In other words, the objects of study lean toward the micro levels of analysis, the psychological and sociological, and employ such methods as interviews, ethnographies, polls, surveys and content analysis. Although research from the liberal pluralist perspective uses both qualitative and quantitative techniques — more often than not — the data are observable and quantifiable.

By contrast, the critical paradigm originated in Europe where the social, political and economic philosophies of the day were quite fragmented. It initially arose from the Marxist tradition(s) as a form of social criticism with a view to emancipation and reflected attempts at understanding the conditions under which European fascism emerged and maintained itself. The critical paradigm, as a competing theory of society, gained popularity within the American academy mainly through the Frankfurt School of

Critical Theory in the 1960s, where it effectively challenged, for a time, the world view of those scholars working from liberal pluralist assumptions. “Throughout, this body of critical writings exemplified an abiding commitment to the study of culture, including the complicity of the media industry in the ideological struggle, and to an analysis of the cultural process” (Hardt, 1996, p. 104). Since the 1970s, however, critical theorists have splintered into many subgroups within various disciplines. Nonetheless, there are enough overlapping and shared precepts and assumptions to constitute a cohesive paradigm. At present, the critical paradigm predominantly constitutes the writings of those working from the political economy and the cultural studies approaches to media studies.

The first issue of contention between the two paradigms is that the critical school argues that society is stratified and hierarchical — not relatively egalitarian. Second, it is argued that power is *not* diffused, visible and balanced, but rather concentrated, often invisible, and that those with power and privilege often share interests antithetical to the well-being of the majority of the population. And, third, given such inequality, conflict should be expected. It is the apparent lack of conflict, relative stability of the system and the ‘naturalization’ of dominant unequal social relations that need explanation (Hackett, 1997; Hall, 1982). Questions of who has the power to define whom, in what interest does the presumed consensus and order work, and how sources of inequality are masked are central themes within the critical paradigm.

Media institutions and those employed by them are viewed as either subordinate to or as acting in tandem with other societal institutions and centers of power which tend to limit and shape individual agency according to the logic(s) of capitalism and accumulation. This phenomenon, in turn, necessarily reproduces the interests of capital and those who possess it rather than the public’s. Individuals are perceived as

agents, to be sure, but as shaped by external structures and historical forces not of their own making nor necessarily consciously understood (Mosco, 1996, pp. 212-245). As aptly described, “people know what they do; they frequently know why they do what they do; but what they don’t know is what they do does” (quote often attributed to Michel Foucault, unknown source). It logically follows, then, that within the world view of critical scholars, news as an institutionally-produced and capital-generating product is more often than not a conduit or vehicle through which the ideology of elite interests are produced and reproduced. Repetitive signification practices resulting from organizational structures designed to serve capital and its logic(s) are seen as shaping the contours of news content and discourse. These assumptions and issues generally demand a more macro level of analysis. Research from the critical paradigm tends to explore the ways specific political and economic conditions direct and shape the flow and content of public discourse. Methods often include some form of historic analysis or inquiry into the conditions under which news is produced, and range from critical discourse analysis as a way to track the consequences of political and economic arrangements, to empirical analysis of the structures of ownership and the mechanisms of capitalism — themes, issues and methods also central to the democratic socialist tradition.

The correspondence between these two paradigms and the three traditions becomes even more apparent as we trace the empirical evidence that supports and refutes the assertions made by each, and test the efficacy of their claims. The following five sections are organized using Shoemaker and Reese’s model of influences on mass media content (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996). They conceptualize their model of analysis as five concentric circles beginning with the more easily observable — the micro level (individuals) — and moving outwardly to the least noticeable and observable, the macro

level (ideology). Many aspects of these five levels overlap (Cross and Hackett, 1999, p. 33). For example, issues surrounding the potential power of readers as an influence on content could be discussed under 'media routines' because, it could be argued, that the audience is a factor in determining journalists' day-to-day schedules; especially if one sees the reader as predominantly a consumer and thinks it is the reader who ultimately determines content. The same could be argued for discussing readers and/or audiences under the category of 'organizational influence.' Or, addressing readers as a potential influence upon news content could be taken up in the 'extra-media' sphere as they are certainly not part of the news organization itself. Therefore, categorizing the aspects and issues of each level of influence is not a rigidly determined process, but is more fluid and revealing of the complexities of the topics in general. Simply put, there are no 'appropriate' categories in which to discuss the issues involved in the production of news as the issues necessarily 'bleed' into one another given the gestalt nature of the model itself. As a consequence, the following sections are organized according to how this author conceptualizes the relative importance and weight of the issues in relation to the overall aims of this project, and according to flow and readability, while fully acknowledging that there are several ways to organize and present issues of influence upon the news.

Individual Newswriters

The first level identified as potentially shaping the news is the newswriter. Research conducted on the individual level revolves around questions of whether and how journalists' personal attitudes, values and beliefs, and/or group characteristics (age, gender, race, etc.) influence news content. This body of research has been, overall, driven

by concerns with biases. Some of the hypotheses thus far explored are as follows: 1) Journalists usually come from relatively privileged and elite backgrounds and therefore tend to be out of touch with the concerns of the ordinary citizen (Fallows, 1996); 2) Journalists' political and moral views are more 'left-liberal' than the general population which leads to a 'left-liberal' bias in the news (Goldberg, 2001; Lichter, Rothman & Lichter, 1986); 3) Journalists' occupational culture is hostile to authority, generating 'adversarial' journalism which undermines trust in public officials — whether they have 'leftist' or 'rightist' leanings (Sabato, 1991); and 4) News is, for the most part, written by and for white men. An increase in diversity within the newsroom — by hiring more women and minorities, for example — results in an increase in diversity of views in print (Mills, 1990).⁸

All of these hypotheses, nevertheless, are premised upon two potentially problematic assumptions — that journalists are willing to inject their views into reports and that they are able and institutionally rewarded for doing so (McChesney, 1997, pp. 54-60; Hackett, 1991, p. 61). Upon a thorough investigative overview of the literature on journalists' influence, Shoemaker and Reese concluded that individual influence is dependent upon either the power of one's position or a critical mass of particular demographic composition. Most of the studies reviewed found that the average newsworker is more guided by how s/he conceives her or his institutional role and its attendant professional values, the ethos of objectivity, the practices and pressures of workday routines and the demands of the organizations that employ them rather than

⁸ Another relatively new yet different type of bias than those just detailed is what could be referred to as the 'star syndrome.' That is, contemporary reporters are neither liberal nor conservative but egoist and fame junkies who are willing to write and or say what is necessary to attain notoriety. This author knows of no credible research, to date, conducted upon this phenomenon.

personal views (Weaver & Wilhoit, 1991, p. 25). In other words, personal views are superseded by perceived roles and day-to-day routines, and are not overall governing determinants in what we see and read. This is not to say that personal backgrounds are never an influence upon content. But, it is to say that when there is a direct influence, it is an exception to the rule rather than the norm. As has been well documented, journalists are often fired or demoted for expressing personal political views (Borjesson, 2002). There also exists an inherent contradiction between the current ethos of objectivity (i.e., bias-free reporting) and the interjection of personal opinion. Furthermore, most newswriters are dependent upon major corporations for employment and these corporations need broad audiences to attract advertisers. Publishing blatantly partisan and/or strong opinion is, therefore, frowned upon for fear of offending or alienating large segments of the advertising and audience markets. “Not only is the suppression of personal attitudes, values, and beliefs part of the professional communicators’ role; the exertion of personal will within a mass media organization takes more power than most communicators can wield” (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996, p. 102).

There are two specific sets of consequences to locating, and therefore misattributing, the power over content as residing with the newswriter. First, the focus upon individuals and/or individual bias obscures the conditions and structures within which journalists work. Second, it promotes a blame-the-victim strategy that upon closer scrutiny is illogical. For example, journalists as individuals or as a group did not transform most cities into a one-newspaper town — economies of scale and market logic(s) did. Journalists did not shrink the newshole over the past ten years because they were unmotivated and lazy — publishers did so to increase revenue. Journalists did not democratically or unanimously vote to close their foreign and distant bureaus and fire

their colleagues — corporate CEOs and boards of directors downsized to upsize their bottom lines (Frank, 2000, p. 309).

Far from being the culprits of the public's distrust in the political process, the individual journalist has been the main victim of these decisions through layoffs, lack of job security (now labeled as 'flexible workforce'), cuts in real wages, closures and mergers (Hickey, 2001, pp. 37-39). Many have even argued that journalists have become mere 'content providers' or 'stenographers' for the real clients — the advertisers and the U.S. government (McChesney, 1999). These mistaken attributions of blame-the-journalists are a good example of the unintended consequences of overdetermining individual agency and autonomy so prevalent within the market-liberal and social responsibility traditions, and also within some variants of the liberal pluralist paradigm. Accordingly, remedies for perceived journalistic malaise — as diagnoses by these traditions and paradigm, which focus upon individuals — are akin to treating schizophrenia with topical creams. The diverse personal backgrounds, beliefs and values of the majority of journalists are not governing factors in determining diversity of content (Baker, 2002, p. 283). For these reasons, it is necessary to look at the next level of influence to better explain what shapes news.

Media Routines : Efficiency, Sources and News Values

Previous research on reporters' day-to-day routines, mostly sociological in orientation, has focused upon how these routines determine what does and does not get chosen as 'news' and, as a consequence, how these practices impact diversity. Media routines have been found to simultaneously function as enablers and as constraints. They function as enablers by helping to reduce an infinite number of 'occurrences' into manageable and reportable 'events.' Routines also allow for a coordinated use of staff

and financial resources, and to help cope with deadline pressures. And, they help to assure a steady supply of usable news needed to secure readership and advertising revenue (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996, p.105). Without some form of routine, the commercial press would resemble the ever-changing face of the family refrigerator with its hodgepodge of appointment reminders, sticky notes and an assortment of photographs. At the same time, these routines have been shown to also function as constraints to diversity of ideas. Three sets of constraints that shape news' routinization continuously emerge from this body of research — efficiency, sources and news values (Schudson, 1996; Sigal, 1986; Fishman, 1980; Gans, 1979; Gitlan, 1980; Tuchman, 1978).

Efficiency and Sources

As Mark Fishman so succinctly stated in his seminal work, Manufacturing the News, “the world is bureaucratically organized for journalists” (Fishman, 1980, p. 51). What he meant was that in the service of routinized efficiency, reporters must rely on bureaucracies for the bulk of their information. This greatly affects news content and discourses by orienting journalists toward what there is to know, who knows it, where and when. Bureaucracies, according to Fishman, define for journalists their movements through specific ‘beats;’ exposure to specific sources (and not others); the meaning and/or relevance of what they are told; what constitutes a fact; and what is and is not worth writing about.

The over reliance upon bureaucracies for public information in the service of efficiency, Fishman argues, tends to “conservatize” the news and thereby renders it ideological. News is conservatized in the sense that most of the information provided to reporters by state and federal bureaucracies is predicated on the assumption that the roles played by these institutions are adequate for the given task at hand. This has the tendency to support the status quo of the existing political order. Critical questions are therefore

directed toward the internal functionings of particular agencies while leaving its overall role in society unexamined. Furthermore, by using spokespersons for large bureaucracies as primary sources, other competent and possibly competing truth claims are not pursued and are therefore mostly unheard. For these reasons, Fishman saw the news as ideological in that the schema for interpreting the world through the bureaucratic prism tends to contain procedures and mechanisms for ‘not knowing.’

Similarly, Gaye Tuchman in Making News, asserts that the spatial and temporal anchorings of the news ‘net’ (a metaphor aimed at connoting the ‘capture’ of some stories and not others depending on where the net is cast and is akin to Fishman’s notion of ‘beat’) in specific “legitimate” institutions not only produce gaping holes in available perspectives, but they also shape access to the news as a stratified social resource because institutional utterances are objectified as ‘fact’ rather than ideas subject to revisions (Tuchman, 1978). She also conceptualizes sources and routines as inseparable because knowing ‘what’ to ask, directly influences ‘who’ to ask. In other words, Tuchman found that the choice of source and the search for ‘facts’ mutually determine each other and, together, constitute the news frame — much like the saying, ‘every fact is already a theory.’ A news frame, as the term is employed by communication scholars, has been loosely defined as those principles of organization which guide the interpretations of social events and serve as the context — or lack of context in many cases — in which people debate the meaning of those events. Cognitions and perceptions are seen as guided toward meaning and/or interpretation via the news frame.

In support of many of Tuchman’s positions, Sigal in Sources Make the News and Gans in Deciding What’s News, also conclude that the social locations and organizational routines restrict the sampling of news sources. As a consequence, news tends to present a very narrow range of views. As Gans summarized: “When the most powerful sources are

also the most efficient, they will be amplified and the remaining muted” (Gans, 1979, p. 39). Furthermore, in so far as reporters are required to ask who and not why, there is a greater chance for those already holding power to determine the direction of political life at the expense of a more diverse sample of sources. This phenomenon has become more evident with the increasingly pivotal role of public relations firms in public as well as private affairs.

News Values

What have come to be known as ‘news values’ have also been identified as impacting the levels of diversity by guiding the process of selecting what does and does not get chosen as ‘news.’ News values tend to provide day-to-day “criteria of relevance” which aid journalists in determining what is ‘newsworthy’ (Chibnall, 1977, p. 12). News values, however, are not something written in a manual and handed to journalists during their first week of employment. Rather, they are often implicitly absorbed and represent what the ‘old-time’ news writers used to refer to as ‘a nose for news.’ However, a more academic approach to understanding the factors that make up news values and newsworthiness has been developed over the past several decades. Perhaps most noted for shedding light on the news selection process are Galtung and Ruge in their seminal piece, “The Structure of Foreign News.” They created a taxonomy of news values for western nations and identified 12 conditions which needed to be met for an issue or event to be selected as news (Galtung & Ruge, 1965). These conditions are: 1) frequency (temporal and event-oriented rather than long-term social process); 2) threshold (intensity of event or issue); 3) unambiguity (without multiple meanings); 4) meaningfulness (cultural resonance); 5) consonance (expectation of or preference for an event); 6) unexpectedness (rare occurrence); 7) continuity (repeated coverage); 8) composition (‘light’ stories balancing ‘heavy’ stories); 9) reference to elite nations (involving nations

who hold international power); 10) reference to elite people (involving people who are famous and/or powerful); 11) reference to persons (emphasis upon people rather than social forces); 12) reference to something negative (tragic events which occur over a short period of time).

More recent research, however, suggests that some of these news values may have changed. One study in particular found that contemporary western issues, events and processes must meet one or more of the following requirements to be selected as news: 1) be about powerful institutions, organizations or individuals; 2) concern people who are already famous; 3) be about sex, show business, animals and/or some form of ‘entertainment;’ 4) possess an element of surprise; 5) have negative overtones; 6) be excessively positive like rescues and medical cures; 7) have a great number of people involved; 8) be about groups and nations perceived relevant to the audience; 9) concern subjects that are already in the news; 10) concern stories that set or fit the news organization’s own agenda (Harcup & O’Neill, 2001, pp. 261-280).

The relevance of this research and others like it is two-fold. First, the results tend to affirm popular opinion that a ‘dumbing down’ of news has occurred over the past several decades. If accurate, these more recent results show a shift in emphasis toward sensationalism and entertainment. This necessarily affects the range and kind of topics presented, and impacts the circulation of political communications (Baker, 2002, p. 28). Reporting upon the Golden Globe, the Oscar and the Grammy awards is generally not the type of diversity one thinks of as enhancing democratic processes.⁹ Second, these findings suggest that contrary to what many journalists and academics often assert — that news values are a set of neutral and routine practices — they may instead be equally or

more ideologically and economically determined (both possibilities are addressed in later sections of this chapter). Nevertheless, when taken together, this body of research clearly indicates that media routines do influence diversity in the press by categorizing, organizing and creating a hierarchy of voices via sources and news values. But, to more fully understand the issues underlying the day-to-day routines of a newspaper, we must ask, ‘What drives such routines, values and practices and what functions and/or interests do they serve?’ To begin answering such questions, it is necessary to move to the next level of influence — organizational.

Organizational: Ownership Structures

Organizational research on the press is vast and varied, spanning the spectrum from historical analysis, often beginning with the penny press, to the shifting roles of gatekeepers (i.e. editors and publishers), to the sociology of organizations and the origins of their imperatives and policies (Epstein, 1974; Tuchman, 1978). In general, the focus of this level of analysis is upon the differences in organizational structures and the consequences for content. This body of research seeks to explain the variations in newspaper content that cannot be explained by the previous two levels, and encompasses studies that focus upon organizational roles, goals, policy and ownership. This section, however, will address only those factors of direct relevance to this project — diversity in the press in relation to ownership structures. This topic necessarily spills over into the extramedia level of influence, especially in relation to market/commercial logic(s). But, because the research on those assumptions about how ownership structure impacts

⁹ Not all scholars agree, however, that the increase in ‘populist-type’ fare in the news necessarily constricts public participation in democratic processes. For counter arguments see P. Dahlgren and C. Sparks Communication and Citizenship: Journalism and the Public Sphere; P. Norris A Virtuous Circle: Political Communications in Post-Industrial Democracies and C. Sparks and J. Tulloch Tabloid Tales.

newspaper content lays the groundwork in understanding the effects of market forces discussed in the next section, it is reviewed under the organizational level.

‘Popular wisdom’ tells us that there is a direct and causal correlation between organizational structure (such as monopolies, chains or independents) and content. The assumption is that newspaper chains, like Gannett, which hold a monopoly on the industry in many cities throughout the U.S., also hold a monopoly on the ideas that make it to print by the sheer fact that they are the only game in town, so to speak. This situation is perceived by many as detrimental to the public interest. Part and parcel of this assumption is the notion that competition, whether it be between two chains, a chain and an independent or even under a Joint Operating Agreement (JOA), breeds diversity of perspectives — one of several features of ‘quality.’ In theory, commercial competition is said to lead newspapers to devote more resources and efforts to news coverage/commentary and to provide an incentive for investigative journalism (Federal Communications Commission, 2004). Yet, these classical economic precepts held by market-liberals and many liberal reformists do not seem to reflect contemporary economic and organizational structures and functions. Current and not so current research on the relationship(s) among ownership structures, market influences and content, including this project, suggests that the interplay among them is more complex than a simple cause-and-effect formula.

Monopoly Vs Competitive Newspapers

In addressing questions of competition and monopoly, it must be asked, ‘Competition for what?’ Within the market model of the media, competition centers around specific markets. There are four different types of markets that competitive newspapers usually attempt to capture. The first, and arguably the most important, is the *advertising market*. Advertising revenue subsidizes the majority of production costs in

the newspaper industry. Therefore, without securing a solid business clientele who are willing to place ads, newspapers do not survive. The second realm of competition is in the *audience/reader market*. Without an appropriately sized or demographically suitable audience to buy the newspaper, advertisers have little reason to purchase ad space. The third arena in which newspapers compete is in the *source market*. Newsworthy information is needed to fill the daily pages and access to credible sources is vital. Last, some newspapers also compete in the *stock market*. Generating high quarterly profits drives up the price of stock which, in turn, can be theoretically used for expansion and improvements (McManus, 1994, p. 5).

Head-to-head market competition includes competing in at least three of these markets and sometimes four if both newspapers are publicly traded. By contrast, monopoly newspapers do not compete in any of these markets with another major local newspaper. Monopoly newspapers do, nevertheless, operate within the market system by the fact that they are commercially-driven as opposed to publicly-funded. The term ‘market’ therefore is commonly used in two ways — to signify the aforementioned specific markets or, more generally, to simply reflect that an organization is commercially-oriented. Furthermore, the terms ‘commercial logics’ and ‘market logics’ are often used interchangeably as is the case within this thesis.

One of the largest studies testing the effects of organizational structure on newspaper content was conducted by Luis Torres-Bohl and Val Pippis in the 1980s in Canada comparing Montreal and Winnipeg newspapers (cited in McCombs, 1988, p.129). Interestingly, that particular study is nearly a photographic negative of this one in its quantitative aspects. Also employing content analysis in a before-and-after study, Torres-Bohl and Pippis traced changes in content from a competitive arrangement to a monopoly. They found little difference in style and content from before to after the end of

competition. In conclusion, they attributed differences in newspaper quality as hinging on the level of social responsibility and professional competence of those who own and operate papers, and not the presence or absence of competition (some of the same conclusions were also made by the Hutchins Commission). As a result of their findings, they went further to question the efficacy of anti-trust statutes, which were originally enacted to ensure diversity of information through competition, and to surmise that the dangers of monopoly had been over-exaggerated.

In a similar study, using the same papers but in a critique of monopoly, James Winter and Doris Candussi tested one of the pro-monopoly hypotheses: Monopolies are beneficial because they are more profitable which is reflected in greater editorial expenditures, whereas competition promotes sensationalism. Their findings suggested that a monopoly situation does not benefit either the consumer or the advertiser. The newspapers of study, under the newly formed monopoly, decreased their newshole and advertising space but dramatically increased the cost of advertising, while sensational stories held constant (Winter & Candussi, 1988). Similar studies, using a pre-post test design, conducted in the U.S. over the past five decades also show a high degree of content homogeneity between once competing papers and subsequent monopolies (Donohue & Glasser, 1978; Nixon & Jones, 1956; Borstel, 1956), as well as little difference in the space devoted to editorial content (Weaver & Mullins, 1975).

Other studies, however, which have also tested the 'market competition promotes sensationalism' hypothesis, found different results. Taken as a body of research, these studies found that competition often resulted in pressure to dramatize, simplify or trivialize the news in a quest to increase circulation. In some cases, market researchers and consultants have been brought in to plot strategy for circulation battles. They have tended to suggest down-playing public affairs coverage in favor of features thought to

appeal to a wider range of subscribers (Picard, 2004; Hiromi, 2002; Zaller, 1999; McManus, 1993; Underwood, 1993; Fletcher, 1981, p. 40). Furthermore, commercial competition has been found to produce an array of special supplements like 'TGIF,' 'HomeScape' and 'HiTech,' designed to attract large-scale advertisers, which often displaces space and resources for the analysis of important public issues. These latter findings support some of the tenets of the democratic socialist tradition as well as those of the critical paradigm. On the other hand, there is some evidence that competition can have positive effects by providing an incentive for resisting pressures to suppress the news and serving as an audit of performance (Thompson, 1980, p. 51).

Chain Vs Independent Newspapers

The differences and/or similarities in content categories between chain and independent newspapers, also one aspect of this study, have also been a focus of many communication studies. One such project used content analysis to analyze local, state, national and international stories, features, wire and local photographs (Daugherty, 1983). Few statistically significant differences were found between chains and independents. The most significant finding, according to Daugherty, was the great similarity between the two newspaper types. Research that has focused more upon 'quality' related variables also found no significant difference between independent and chain papers (Grotta, 1971). Operationalizing 'quality' has always been somewhat of a subjective conundrum for researchers and editors alike. However, the following features are commonly associated with a quality newspaper and were used to assess the content of the studies cited in this sub-section and as benchmarks in this project as well: size of editorial staff, size of newshole, percentage of locally written news versus wire stories, size of the editorial page newshole and percentage of editorials as content, amount of hard news versus soft news, amount of 'enterprise stories' (investigative journalism originating

within the news organization), range of topics and diversity of perspectives (Picard, 2004, p. 60; Zaller, 1999, p.2; Alger, 1998, p. 181; Picard & Brody, 1994, pp. 57-58). Using the aforementioned criterion, most studies concluded that chain papers are not necessarily inferior to independents but certainly not superior either, given that the potential benefits from a chain's large scale economies were not being passed on to the consumer.

Perhaps one of the most comprehensive qualitative studies about the quality of news and its relation to ownership structure is presented in The Buying and Selling of America's Newspapers (Ghi-glione, 1984). The book looked at 10 in-depth case studies of newspapers with a circulation of 6,000 to 47,000, purchased by various chains from 10 different states. Three papers were reported to have improved under chain ownership, three remained the same and four deteriorated. Although no definitive conclusions were drawn from these results, it can certainly be deduced that, overall, chain ownership does not necessarily improve newspaper quality. Still, yet another quality-related study found that conflict news decreased by nearly one-half over a 14-year period under out-of-state-owned chain papers (Donohue, Olien & Tichenor, 1985). Conflict news and/or controversy news — which is also a variable in this study — was defined as 'space devoted to differing positions about public issues from at least two persons.' The authors of the study concluded that when outsiders own newspapers, they encourage sitting publishers to minimize the reporting of local controversy. These findings run contrary to the often heard claim that the advantage of a chain paper is that they are more independent of local elites. This is especially interesting in relation to Hawaii where both of Honolulu's newspapers are owned by 'outsiders.'

Joint Operating Agreement Vs Monopoly and Competitive Newspapers

In comparison to these types of studies, little empirical examination has been conducted on the similarities and differences between papers within the same city that

publish under a Joint Operating Agreement (JOA). One hopes that this project will contribute to this scant body of inquiry as well as contribute to several other debates. As discussed in Chapter One, a JOA is a legal arrangement brought about by the Newspaper Preservation Act of 1970. This Act of Congress allows two newspapers in the same city to pool their advertising, circulation, production and business departments in order to promote competition between two editorial departments. So, although they do not compete in any of the four markets previously reviewed, they do ‘compete’ editorially. Some researchers and newspaper owners have noted that whereas commercial competition tends to ‘kill’ newspapers (meaning one eventually goes out of business), journalistic competition tends to improve their quality (Fletcher, 1981, p. 5). If this is in fact the case, one would expect that newspapers operating under a JOA to be of a higher quality than those operating under market competitive conditions.

Ironically, at the time that the Newspaper Preservation Act was passed, no empirical data had been gathered either in support or against its premises (Lacy, 1988). It was passed on the ‘belief’ in an economic system founded upon competition and the assumption that some competition between papers was better than none. Since that time, however, studies that have been conducted on JOA newspapers all point in the same direction. Although little difference has been found among monopoly, competitive and JOA newspapers in editorial and op-ed space allocation, the JOA newspapers slightly resemble competitive papers more than monopoly papers in the way they allocate funds to wire services and reporters, and in the various categories of news topics (Lacy, 1988; Ardoin, 1973). Furthermore, it was found that two newspapers in the same local market tend to differentiate themselves while trying to remain substitutes for each other (Rosse, 1980). As a result, differences between two commercial newspapers under a JOA should

not be particularly great. Twelve JOAs currently exist within the United States (Newspaper Association of America, 2003).

In combination, all of these studies indicate that structures of ownership cannot account for the level of homogeneity found in news content, and that diversity — as a feature of quality and as measured by the cited researchers — does not appear to be directly dependent upon a multiplicity of commercial ownership. Monopolies and competing newspapers share more similarities than differences as do independents and chains. This body of research refutes the assertions made by the Save-Our-Star-Bulletin (SOS) that competition breeds diversity of content and that independent newspapers are, in general, of a higher quality than those of chains. If anything, market competition has been found to have either very little effect upon content or deleterious consequences. In short, competition does not appear to be a *positive* determining factor in what a newspaper publishes. It supports the SOS claims, however, that monopolistic control is detrimental to both readers and advertisers due to a decreased newshole and increased advertising rates. To begin answering questions about homogeneity levels within the press, it is necessary to ask what drives, or is the engine behind these organizations, regardless of ownership structure. How are they organized and around what principles? And, what has changed over the past several decades?

Ownership Shifts and Trends

The organization of the newspaper industry has undergone two pivotal transformations since World War II — from family-owned presses to large national chains, and from chains to corporate conglomerates. In 1946, for example, three quarters of dailies were owned by local families. Today, only 250 of the United States' 1,500 dailies are family-owned (Lyons, 2002, p. 6). The major players, in total circulation, are: Gannett, Knight Ridder, Newhouse, Dow Jones, Time Mirror, New York Times Co., and

Hearst (Bagdikian, 2000, p. xxxii). All of these corporations command profits of 20% and higher (Harris, 2001, p. 6) — a margin unheard of in most other industries.

Concomitant with these structural shifts in the newspaper industry, the media system as a whole, within which the commercial press is now fully integrated, has moved toward increasing concentration and conglomeration. Whereas single industry monopolies and oligopolies are built upon horizontal integration (i.e. the control of as much of one product as possible), the trend in the last decade has been for corporations to merge and form conglomerates that are premised upon vertical integration, which occurs when firms that have major holdings in multiple companies not only produce a given product, but also provide the distribution/advertising channels for that product, and determine the locations where that product is sold. In specific relation to the media, **Disney** is a good example of a conglomerate which has successfully implemented vertical integration in the service of cross-promotion and cross-selling to the ‘toon’ of \$25.4 billion a year (The Nation, 2002). Disney owns six production companies where much of its ‘content’ is created; 16 television networks, including ABC, ABC News Productions, A&E and ESPN, where this ‘content’ is advertised; and several theaters within which the ‘content’ is sold. Additionally, Disney owns two professional sports teams, resorts all over the world, five publishing houses, five magazines and 50 radio stations (The Nation, 2002). Much of this cross-ownership used to be illegal under federal regulation. But, in this era of deregulation/reregulation, Disney’s vertical integration has become ‘business as usual.’

Ben Bagdikian, in The Media Monopoly, has traced the trends and trajectories in media consolidation for the past 25 years. From the book’s first edition in 1983 to its sixth and latest edition in 2000, the number of corporations that dominate all of U.S. media has fallen from 50 to six. These six conglomerates are **General Electric** (2001

revenue: 125.9 billion), **AOL-Time Warner** (2002 revenue: 41 billion), **Disney** (2002 revenue: 25.4 billion), **Viacom** (2002 revenue: 24.6 billion), **News Corporation** and **Bertelsmann** (Vincent, 2003, p. 3). Although the top four conglomerates, in terms of annual sales, are American-owned, they are often and, more accurately, referred to as transnational media because their reach and control of media and allied industries extend well beyond the borders of the United States. For example, **Disney**, besides its American holdings, also has broadcast sports programming interests in Australia, Brazil and throughout Asia. They provide cable programming in Taiwan, Malaysia, Australia, France, Italy, Spain and the Middle East. Similarly, **General Electric**, which owns NBC, CNBC, 50% of MSNBC, the New York Knicks and Rangers, Madison Square Gardens, 14 communication satellites, aircraft engines and 13 television stations, also conducts much of its business abroad, especially in military hardware (The Nation, 2001).

In addition to owning CBS, **Viacom** owns Paramount Pictures, MTV Films, Simon and Schuster, CBS Radio Network, 39 television stations, Paramount Theme Parks in both the U.S. and Canada, Blockbuster retail video outlets, and cable holdings in MTV, VHI, TNN and the Movie Channel. **AOL/Time Warner** controls CNN, HBO, Cinemax, TBS, TNT, Cable, CompuServe, Warner Bros. Studios, Warner Books, Time-Life Books, the Atlanta Braves, Hawks and Thrashers, 64 magazines, 40 music labels and many on-line services. The **News Corporation's** holdings include Twentieth Century Fox, Fox Studios, N.Y. Post, Fox News Channel, satellite and cable interests, TV Guide, Harper Collins, the *London Times* and the *New York Post*. **Bertelsman**, a German conglomerate, owns Random House, Knopf and Vintage presses, 22 television stations across Europe and the U.S., 11 daily papers in Germany and Eastern Europe, 18 radio stations in Europe, Family Circle and Homestyle magazines, and numerous multimedia services. In combination, these six conglomerates garnered \$239.6 billion in 2001 —

more than the yearly budgets of many countries. This is a tremendous amount of power and potential political clout in very few hands (Vincent, 2003, p. 3; The Nation, 2001; Bagdikian, 2000, pp. x-xiii; McChesney, 1999, pp. 1-30; Herman & McChesney, 1997).

What many people fail to appreciate about this set of circumstances are the conflicts of interest that are inherent when a transnational conglomerate owns media. GE, for example, owner of NBC, has been one of the leaders in moving American jobs to China. It continues to be a major polluter, has a strong anti-union record, is heavily into military production and financial services, and has a long record of paying minimal taxes. This gives GE very specific interests to protect which manifests in what it is willing to cover through its news organizations, what it is not and how (Sanders, 2002, p. 6). In other words, the same corporations with the worst records of transgressions against the public interest also own the media which control the flow of information around the world.

On the surface, it might appear as if there exists fierce competition among these giants, spawning diverse, informative fare or, at the very least, counterbalancing the private interests of one another. However, this is anything but the case. Through mutual cooperation, interlocked directors and shared partnerships in media ventures, these behemoths function more as an oligopoly — or, as many have labeled them, a cooperative cartel. As illustrative, Ben Bagdikian, Peter Phillips (director of Project Censored) and Robert McChesney have all traced the memberships and affiliations of the U.S. media board of directors and found an astonishing level of interconnections.

As Peter Phillips summarized:

An analysis of the interconnectedness of the top 11 media organizations in the United States shows that they have 36 direct links creating a solid network of overlapping interests and affiliations. The 11 media corporations collectively have directorships interlocking

with 144 of the *Fortune* 1,000 corporations. All 11 media corporations have direct links with at least two of the other media organizations. General Electric, owner of NBC, has the highest rate of shared affiliations with 17 direct links to nine of the 11 corporations ... The media in the United States effectively represent the interests of corporate America.
(Phillips, 1998, pp. 149-152)

These numbers, in a very real sense, support the critical paradigm's position that media are not just compromised by big business — media *are* big business.

McChesney, in further extrapolating the meanings from Bagdikian's and Phillips' findings, concludes that because the media are full participants in the corporate community and are run by largely wealthy and unaccountable CEOs and billionaires, the situation as it currently exists undermines any semblance of democracy (McChesney, 1999, pp. 30-31). Not only do these conglomerates have obvious stakes in *political* decisions, which are theoretically to be held publicly accountable, but they also have enormously deep pockets to use for the lobbying process in the service of their own interests (i.e. financial gain). These interests, arguably, run contrary to the democratic principles of equality and an informed citizenry. However, McChesney cautions against personalization and 'blaming' the heads of these conglomerates. He argues that they are overall interchangeable and that individual personalities, however authoritarian, charismatic and/or florid they may be, are not the driving force behind such cartel-like structures. Rather, commercial logic(s), market imperatives and Wall Street are the engines. In other words, the focus upon individuals only obscures the structural problems. And, as Merrill Lynch media analyst Lauran Rich Fine said in response to a question about just how much of a profit margin Wall Street expects from a publicly-held newspaper company, "It's never enough of course — this is Wall Street we're talking about" (Harris, 2001, p. 6). But, to more fully understand the impact and consequences of

‘Wall Street,’ modern market imperatives and logics upon the quality and diversity of news, it is, once again, necessary to move to the next level of influence — extramedia.

Extramedia: Market Logic(s), The Courts and The FCC

Andy Rooney, longtime 60 Minutes commentator, stated in a relatively recent interview: “I’ve seen it all change within the last 15 years — there used to be a commitment to news and now the emphasis is on money — the American public has no idea what they are not being informed about” (Rooney, 2002). Without implicating Rooney as a nostalgic who longs for a return to the golden age of journalism that arguably never existed, he was nevertheless referring to a *noticeable* shift from journalism as a public service (a mostly not-for-profit sector) to a type of journalism that stockholders demand be directly profitable — from news which helps keep the ideals of freedom and democracy viable ideals to ‘news you can use,’ most often about consumer products, health and private services. In other words, he was responding to the shift from something to ‘tell’ to something to ‘sell.’

As the late communication scholar Dallas Smythe suggested, we might want and need to re-think the relationship between information and advertising by standing it on its head, so to speak. Whereas most people see ‘information’ as the content and the ads as the filler, Smythe argued that, in fact, the information is the ‘free lunch’ and the ads are the content (Smythe, 1981, pp. 37-38). Commercial logic(s) and pressures, according to Smythe, demand two particulars of free lunches. First, they are to attract an audience of either an appropriately large size or an appropriately wealthy demographic. Second, they are to lull the audience into a frame of mind conducive to the advertising message. In some senses, Smythe was agreeing with the political scientist V.O. Key when he said, “newspapers are essentially people who sell white space to advertisers” (Barron, 1973,

p. 311). Whether one agrees with Smythe and Key either in whole or in part, market imperatives and/or market logic(s) have been shown to affect the news industry and its 'free lunches' in numerous ways.

Consequences of Market Logic(s) Upon Newspapers and the Roles of Advertisers and Audiences

One of the most important ways that the intensity of focus upon the bottom line has affected the news industry is in the erosion of the once sacrosanct separation between the newsroom and the business department — often referred to in 'newsroom speak' as the wall between church and state. Not surprisingly, it is the newsroom that has taken a back seat to the business department. Most newspapers no longer try to overtly hide this obvious conflict of interest. But, nor do they make a point of explicitly explaining the cozy relationships within their corporate brethren to their readers (Jackson & Hart, 2001, pp. 15-22)

None, however, have been quite as publicly celebratory as when in 1997 Times-Mirror appointed business manager Mark Willes as general manager of its news division for its flagship *Los Angeles Times*. Willes boasted about what until that time most publishers denied — that what did and did not get published as news was increasingly based upon how it affected advertising revenue and investors. This is obviously not a beneficial way of news selection if the goal of the press is to have an informed citizenry. Wall Street, on the other hand, enthusiastically agreed with Willes, as Time-Mirror stocks tripled in price after Willes took over the news department (Bagdikian, 2000, p. xxv). In response to this situation, Bagdikian observed:

This practice is wide spread and insidious... executive editors throughout the country are being trained not to select news of interest to their communities as a whole, but only those people who live in selected neighborhoods that have certain characteristics wanted by major advertisers. The news thus becomes profoundly altered for financial reasons unconnected to the principle of never

permitting business advantage to influence news...
this is not journalism. It is advertising and marketing.
Combining journalism with advertising and marketing
will destroy the integrity of news.

(Bagdikian, 2000, pp. 232-233)

Bagdikian echoes here the sentiments of Harold Evans, former editor of the *London Sunday Times* when he said, “The challenge for American newspapers is not to stay in business — it is to stay in journalism” (Ostendorf, 1980, p. 27).

Another consequence of the primacy of commercial and/or market logic(s) upon newspapers is staff reduction through massive newsroom ‘layoffs.’ In an article entitled, “Wall Street’s Gain is Journalism’s Loss,” Janine Jackson details media job cuts announced from September to February 2001. In ranking order of layoffs: 1) Knight-Ridder — 2,100; 2) LA Times — 1,611; 3) Tribune, Co. — 1,400; 4) Reuters — 1,340; 5) New York Times, Co. — 1,200; 6) CNN — 420; 7) NBC — 385; 8) Dow Jones — 375; and 9) ABC — 260 (Jackson, 2001, pp. 20-21). The usual rationale from company headquarters is the need to ‘tighten the belt’ in tough times. Yet, Knight-Ridder newspapers had a 20.8 percent profit margin in 2000. As one Knight-Ridder staffer stated, “The ingredients in great journalism are simple: money, ample staffing and guts. Great journalism isn’t cheap” (Beacon, 2001, p. 4).

Not all publishers, however, agree with such draconian methods of newspapering. Jay T. Harris, for example, resigned as publisher of the *San Jose Mercury News*, owned by Knight-Ridder, on March 19, 2001. His stated reasons revolved around what he termed ‘tyranny,’ which, according to Harris, is “the high salaries many of our leaders receive — in newsrooms and business offices as well as corporate headquarters — have turned into golden handcuffs and those handcuffs have morphed into blindfolds and gags as well” (Harris, 2001, p. 4). Similarly, Frank Blethen, current publisher of *The Seattle*

Times, stated in a recent symposium that he is concerned about the mutation of newspapers from public service organizations to assets which are leveraged, sold and traded. Focusing on the industry's language, he questioned, "When did communities become markets, newspapers become properties and journalists become FTEs or headcounts ... when did bragging about profit margins, quarterly profits and reduced headcount become more important than talking about journalistic accomplishments and public service" (Blethen, 2002, pp. 4-5)? Through these and other admissions, it is becoming apparent that both industry insiders and outsiders, citizens and academics, and those from both academic paradigms are all growing increasingly concerned and suspicious about the quality and diversity of information published by the press.

As news becomes but an industrial by-product driven by commercial logic, its content and discourses are affected in multiple ways. Massive layoffs necessitate that those journalists still working produce more stories in less time. Therefore, stories that are inexpensive and easy to cover (such as celebrities, human interest, court cases, crime and disaster) replace the more time consuming and investigative journalism for which Pulitzer prizes are awarded (McChesney, 1999, pp. 30-53). Also, as editorial policy is increasingly shaped by large advertisers, ideas that do not 'adhere' easily to a consumerist frame of mind, all but disappear. Those ideas that do remain tend to become "bleached and bland" (Bagdikian, 2000, p. 129). Moreover, because of inevitable conflicts of interests that arise between advertisers and profit-seeking newspapers, some issues may not get covered. As illustrative, the *Orlando Sentinel* lost as much as \$700,000 in revenue after it printed a hard-hitting expose of flawed construction in the Florida housing market. In retaliation the Home Builders Association of Metro Orlando pulled its annual "Parade of Homes" guidebook from the paper, as well as much of its members' advertising. If newspapers run the risk of this type of financial retaliation,

readers run the risk that some aspects of their lives may not be honestly reported — issues such as shelter, food, clothing and transportation (Extra!, 2004, p. 5).

The current market-driven necessity of a newspapers' responsiveness to advertisers, and in many cases also to stockholders, undermines that part of the market model of the press which asserts that news organizations respond to the will of the people. As explained in Chapter One, many of the market liberal and reformist liberal arguments are premised upon the public being a decisive factor in shaping patterns of news coverage via market mechanisms. As exemplary, Mark Fowler, chairman of the Federal Communications Commission under Ronald Reagan, once said, "The public interest is that which interests the public" (Hallin, 2000, p. 234). From this point of view, it logically follows that what succeeds on the market is, by definition, what the public wants — the notion of consumer sovereignty as applied to the media. It also follows from this argument that because the content of the press is determined by the readers, a privately-owned press best speaks for the people. However, research from the political economy branch of media studies — often conducted from the perspective of the critical paradigm and reflecting the democratic socialist tradition — suggest that Fowler's line of thinking is flawed in multiple respects and tends to conflate short-term passing 'interests,' such as the latest popular vacation destination, with the long-term interests of a functioning democracy served only by a well-informed citizenry. This body of research has found that economic realities and necessities far outweigh audience preferences in influencing types of stories and perspectives published (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001).

Foremost, the consumer sovereignty argument assumes strong preferences by the reader and a readily available wide array of choices. Neither is typically the case. Newspaper readership has been on the decline for more than a decade. Those who continue to read a daily paper generally incorporate it into their daily routines, which is

more often than not driven by habit rather than by preference. In much as demand creates supply, habitual supply can also create demand (Hackett & Zhao, 1998, pp. 185-188). Most receive their papers either through delivery or at the local newsstand, and currently most cities publish only one or two dailies. That is not exactly a wide array of choices. One simply cannot select what is not available. Therefore, the market liberal assumption, 'if readers don't like a particular paper they can go elsewhere,' does not reflect the actual conditions of the newspaper industry. To actively pursue less readily available avenues for information requires the time and money beyond what the majority of citizens are willing and/or capable of expending.¹⁰ Although the commercial media do consider some aspects of what the audience wants, "In the final analysis, media produce that which is most profitable and in their interests. When people consume from the options provided, the media then state that they are satisfying audience demand. What the public wants and what the public is taught to want are not the same things" (McChesney, 1997, p. 51).

Second, the current level of concentration in the newspaper industry, fueled by the merger and acquisition spree of all media within the last 15 years, effectively restricts the freedom to publish due to the high cost of entry into the market. As already quoted, "if you don't have a press, you can't just go get one" (Barron, 1973, p. 321). In effect, deregulation, or more aptly, market-based re-regulation annihilated the possibility of any real competition. Even if a newspaper doesn't offer what readers want, it is highly unlikely that another press could enter the market to supply a 'competitive product' more suitable to a community's needs (Bagdikian, 2000; Curran, 2000; McChesney, 1999).

¹⁰ Although discussions about the Internet in relation to diversity are beyond the scope of this thesis, it needs to be noted that the number of people with access to the Net is certainly not a majority. Economic and cultural resources continue to divide those who can and cannot access information from the electronic highway. Furthermore, those corporations which own and operate the majority of traditional media outlets are increasingly in control of news Net sites (Hackett and Gruneau, 2000, pp. 71-73; McChesney, 1999, pp. 119-185; McChesney, 1997, pp. 30-34).

Third, the remaining ‘competition’ that does exist between the media monoliths has resulted in a ‘dumbing down’ of content due to the omnipresent pressure to maximize advertising revenue. As research previously cited suggests, human interest stories are replacing public affairs features in the service of profits. Market-oriented media tend to shy away not only from information that is complex, but also from perspectives that might offend advertisers and, in turn, jeopardize profits (Hallin, 1994; Gitlin, 1990).

Fourth, and as an externality to the third, the tendency to produce fluff for profit has polarized those few cities that continue to publish two papers into a *relatively* information rich strata (prestige press) and an information poor majority (tabloid press) — i.e. *New York Times/Post*, *Washington Post/Times*, *Toronto Star/Sun* and *Vancouver Sun/Province* (Schlesinger, 1999). Stratification of this type is often justified in the name of ‘anti-elitism.’ But, rather than leveling the playing field, this situation has a tendency to short-circuit participation in public debates of relevance by excluding those groups with limited social, cultural and financial resources. Fluff is not fodder for democratic ideals, regardless of its appeal to those who have grown accustomed to its prevalence (Fallows, 1996). The market-based premises upon which the consumer sovereignty argument is made — newspaper quality is defined by readers and not other parties because newspapers are responsive to readers’ wishes and demands; reader dissatisfaction will force correction because the market itself is self-correcting; and there exists a wide array of readily available choices within the market place of ideas (McManus, 1994, p. 5) — all fail to live up to empirical scrutiny. If anything, it seems that contemporary market forces serve as censors to diverse political perspectives rather than as lubricants.

The most disturbing consequence, though, of the current condition of most commercially-driven media industries is perhaps also the most invisible. When a

country's predominant disseminators of news, commentary and ideas are controlled by a small number of the world's largest and wealthiest corporations, there is a very high risk that support for their elite interests are inscribed within much of what is produced and disseminated. When the same situation occurs in other countries, but via a government, it is referred to as 'propaganda.' Within the U.S. in present times, however, it is merely referred to as 'the invisible hand of the free market' which, according to market-liberalism and as explained in Chapter One, is thought to benefit all. The naturalization and often unquestioning acceptance of the benevolent 'invisible hand' has been called by some, 'the financialization of America' (Phillips, 2002). In relation to the press, this has equated to making more money but reporting less and giving the appearance of more choices yet with fewer voices. But, as briefly detailed earlier, this phenomenon is not 'inevitable,' 'natural' or 'just the way things are.' The path for the rise of conglomerates has been paved by various relationships between other extramedia centers of power — namely, the courts, the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) and large national banks, who supported these mergers and acquisitions with generous bank credits. The current situation is the result of a series of political decisions and not the 'natural laws' of the market (McChesney, 1999).

The Courts

Tensions between corporate power and individual rights, and the trepidations about potential imbalances, are certainly not new concerns as covered in Chapter One. Near the end of his presidency in 1909, Theodore Roosevelt lamented that the central problem of his era was that economic power had become so centralized and dominant that it was "chewing up democracy and spitting it out" (Moyers, 2001, p.12). The power of corporations, according to then-President Roosevelt, had to be balanced against the interest of the general public. The scales, however, had been tipped in favor of

corporations beginning in 1886 when the Supreme Court, in a landmark ruling, voted unanimously that corporations were ‘persons’ and consequently were entitled to the protection of the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment (Schiller, 1989, p. 47). The Fourteenth Amendment states: “No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any persons of life, liberty or property without due process of law; nor deny to any persons within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.” The amendment was initially enacted to overcome the inequalities between whites and blacks by protecting the individual rights of African Americans by assuring individual ‘due process.’ It was never intended as a shield for commercial speech. Nevertheless, of the Fourteenth Amendment cases brought before the Supreme Court between 1890 and 1910, “nineteen dealt with the Negro, 288 dealt with corporations” (Zinn, 2003, p. 255). By according corporations ‘personhood’ status, they could shield themselves from being deprived of property or managerial authority without ‘due process.’

Although throughout the years the Supreme Court has handed down contradictory and reversal decisions regarding corporate rights, the overall trend has been to expand corporate privilege. None, however, have impacted the current status of corporations as much as the 1978 landmark case known as the ‘Bellotti Case.’ This ruling mandated that because corporations were ‘persons,’ they also deserved the same individual rights as guaranteed under the First Amendment (Schiller, 1989, p. 51). As a consequence, the Bellotti ruling allowed corporations to make contributions for the purpose of influencing state referenda and to avoid any social commitments in doing so. This ruling effectively encouraged the potentially corrupting alliance between economic power and political strength. What this meant for the landscape of ‘democratic voices’ was that individuals were now ‘competing’ with billion-dollar corporations for channels of dissemination for political ideas

and opinions. Any attempts to constrain corporate growth to safeguard public interest could now be legally challenged by corporations claiming that their First Amendment rights were being infringed upon — especially concerning ownership caps. Needless to say, those who can afford the biggest megaphones will be heard the loudest. Because of these and other like-minded court decisions, in addition to the recent actions of the FCC, there has been a gradual erosion of regulatory policies which govern corporations, media acquisitions and cross-media ownership over the past 20 years. As critics of these decisions argue, it doesn't matter how many hundreds of media outlets we have if the same handful of voices dominate them all.

The Federal Communications Commission

The FCC, that governmental agency charged with safeguarding citizens' communication rights with respect to broadcasting and telecommunications, is one of the most powerful agencies within the government because of its ability to give out licenses to frequencies and airwaves that are worth millions of dollars. Again, the creation of the FCC was the result of the struggles by those adherents of the liberal reformist/social responsibility tradition *against* the market-liberal tradition's position that markets automatically produce diversity. By mandate, the FCC is to provide the necessary regulations under which diverse media outlets may thrive (Federal Communications Commission, 2004). It is also legally required to consider *all* opinions in matters of communications regulation and to announce a 'public comment period' to give Americans a chance to weigh in on proposed regulations (Coen & Hard, 2002, p. 4). An honorable mission in theory, but quite dysfunctional in practice. As Robert McChesney explains, "Those decisions about how to regulate the communication industry, made for, paid for and in the public's name, are now done in "sleazeball, Enron-style, behind-closed-door power politics, where the biggest, wealthiest lobbyists buy off politicians and regulators and then they push to get the deregulations that make those companies bigger and

more powerful and the markets they're in less competitive" (McChesney, 2002, pp. 26-27). For example, just two days after the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, when everyone's attention was focused elsewhere, the FCC began proposing to eliminate the last remaining regulations on media concentration by reviewing those laws that currently prohibit the same company from owning both a newspaper and a TV station in the same geographic area.

McChesney goes on to articulate some of the connections between this government agency and corporate America by tracing how most of the commissioners and other leading people at the FCC end up with careers serving commercial media once they leave office. It could be argued that the FCC has become but an arm of the commercial media and that the current situation is much like the 'fox guarding the hen house.' Most would certainly look askance at oil companies writing energy policy (which increasingly appears to be the case under the Bush Administration), so why not Viacom, for example, writing communication policy? The simple, yet disconcerting, answer is because most people have no idea this is occurring. How could they? Those conglomerates that own, operate and control the lion's share of the political communication in the U.S. have the power, and at times the desire, to stifle public debates around these 'public' issues. As insider Andy Rooney said, "The biggest story of our time is the associations and relationships between big business and big government. The press, however, owned by big business, is lousy at covering it" (Rooney, 2002). When public officials are involved in decisions that affect the profits of the media industry, and the media industry is allowed and encouraged to 'donate' millions of dollars to those officials in order to create a business-friendly government which, in turn, needs a friendly media, the public interest all but disappears.

Even the former chairman of the FCC, William Kennard, publicly acknowledged his concerns about how the FCC currently functions. In a 2001 interview, Kennard stated:

For most members of Congress the FCC is seen as this little honey pot whose decisions they can influence to benefit their corporate friends. The power to grant or deny licenses is the power to make people incredibly wealthy very quickly.... I feel strongly that the agency has become the captive of corporate interests and is not really connecting to its core mission of protecting the public interest in communication.

(McChesney, 2001, pp. 17-20)

He further stated, “When I took the job, I’d been advised that basically the job of the FCC is to referee fights between the very, very, very rich and the very, very, very, very rich. The public interest has nothing to do with it” (McChesney, 2002, pp. 26-27).

Current FCC chairman, Michael Powell (Secretary of State Colin Powell’s son), does not, however, seem to share Kennard’s concerns. Powell has repeatedly announced his support for eliminating all remaining ownership restrictions, which he calls ‘the oppressor’ and has vowed that “my religion is the market” (McChesney, 2002, pp. 26-27). Markets, however, as has been demonstrated, work imperfectly and create an uneven playing field — especially in relationship to public communication where a free market philosophy has been shown to not adequately protect the public from excessive private or ‘public’ powers. In 2000, for example, 1.4 billion dollars was spent on lobbying by the media industries to sway political decisions in their favor — no citizens’ group can match this (The Nation, 2002).

Although the FCC is predominantly concerned with the broadcast and telecommunication industries, current proposals before the governmental agency, if passed, would allow both industries to purchase and operate newspapers, and vice versa, in the same locale. This potential ruling, supported by the major players in the newspaper industry, would directly impact the US print media in numerous but yet untold ways, and

place the industry somewhat hazily under the jurisdiction of the FCC. This proposal and the demarcations between those who support it and those who do not, illuminate the existing and dubious overlapping business interests and relationship(s) between the FCC and the newspaper industry. Those against the loosening of such cross-ownership restrictions, mainly organized citizen groups, generally argue that the passing of the proposal would further restrict the circulation of contending ideas by creating conglomerate monopolies within numerous communities. They stress the need to maintain and/or restore at least some semblance of market competition in the service of diversity — similar arguments as put forth by the SOS and reflective of the reformist liberal tradition.

In summary of the ‘extramedia’ level of influence upon shaping the news, it would seem that the wider relationships of mostly invisible power — such as those emerging from large national banks, the high courts, the FCC, and Congressional links to industry lobbyists which often result in the contamination of democratic representation — supersede those factors identified as impacting levels of diversity within the previous three levels. We would not have, for example, ‘individual’ journalists needing to reorganize their ‘routines’ because of ‘organizational’ layoffs without the incentives and infrastructures of support from the extramedia centers of power driven by market imperatives and commercial logics.

One conclusion that can be drawn from the research conducted upon the extramedia level of influence is that market-based print media, as a *standalone* forum for news, is inadequate because they tend to undermine those very goals underpinning the commendable argument for a market-organized press — independence from governmental and other powerful institutions. Rather than market structures giving rise to public interests as ideally theorized, they are often lining the pockets of ‘corporateers’

and elected officials. Just as the media giants have a vested interest in maintaining the legitimacy of the state because one ‘doesn’t bite the hand that feeds you,’ so, too, does the government have a vested interest in not revealing the extent of its involvement with corporate media interests (Curran, 2000, pp. 128-129). The authority of both rests partly upon their credibility.

These aforementioned types of relationships necessitate re-visiting the explanatory reach of the market-liberal and reformist liberal traditions as well as certain aspects of the liberal pluralist paradigm. Each of these philosophies possess a theoretical insistence upon the independence of the press as the Fourth Estate and have difficulties accounting for how extramedia relations of power affect political and democratic communications. These failings can be viewed as suppositional blind spots. In this particular case, by directing attention to ‘the way things are supposed to be,’ and to ‘how things are supposed to work,’ the corporate ties which tend to subdue critical surveillance of corporate power, and how unaccountable private interests are aligned with supposedly accountable public interests, are overlooked. Over time, these blind spots can affect collective opinions and craft public consciousness which have very real consequences, such as resource allocations and, at times, can determine life and death as in the case of war. These issues, however, are best addressed in the next and final level of influence upon news — ideology.

Ideology

Research and inquiry into the ideological level of influence upon news is overwhelmingly conducted by scholars working within the critical paradigm of media studies (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996, p. 223). The term ‘ideology,’ as employed by these writers, is generally thought of as, “an integrated set of meanings, values and beliefs that

govern the way we perceive the world and ourselves; it controls what we see as ‘natural’ or ‘obvious’ and serves to establish and sustain relations of power which are systemically asymmetrical. Ideology, broadly speaking, is meaning in the service of power”

(Thompson, 1990, p. 7). Within this and other similar definitions from the critical tradition, the concept of power is always the centerpiece. The underlying assumption is that ideas have links to interest and power, and that the media are far from a neutral force in society because of their ability to create/disseminate symbols and to define social situations by ‘re-presenting’ the order of things. In other words, rather than reflecting a pre-existing reality, the act of making news is viewed as an act of constructing a symbolic reality (Cross & Hackett, 1999, p. 37). These abilities not only give media ideological power by defining the limits of acceptable behavior and thought, through shaping the narrative contours of ‘deviance,’ but they also put them in the potential position of being agencies of social control — especially in times of crisis (Hall, Critcher, Jefferson, Clark & Roberts, 1978).

Unlike the more common usages of ideology, where it is viewed as an overt and visible process of beliefs — often imposed upon unsuspecting and/or uneducated persons — critical scholars see ideology as subtly working through the existing values of a given society and linked with specific loci of power interests. As one critical theorist describes, “The most effective power prevents conflict from arising in the first place” (Lukes, 1974). Conflict simply becomes unnecessary as alternative interpretations of ‘reality’ become hard to imagine — a colonizing of the imagination, if you will. By contrast, the liberal pluralist tradition, in general, does not concern itself with ideology in the same manner as the critical tradition because notions of power, as previously explained, are overall and in the structural sense seen as unproblematic. If one sees power as more or less evenly distributed across multiple competing interests and only situationally a problem in relation to

individual transgressions, then, ideology as a *collective* and potentially oppressive phenomenon does not pose much of a threat to democratic principles. It is for these reasons that the research on and inquiry into the ideological level of influence upon news is mainly conducted by critical scholars who view ideology not as alien forms of thought, but as a natural outgrowth of the way the entire media system now works as a whole and in tandem.

It could be argued that the ideological level of media studies looks at the cognitive and behavioral precursors and consequences of the activities of the previous four spheres of influence, especially as those practices manifest in discourse. Ideological inquiry seeks to peek behind news content and examines how the press, as extensions of powerful interests, maintain and reproduce dominant ways of interpreting social processes and relations. This level of inquiry also seeks to unearth potential ideologies inscribed within news gathering practices and professional values. As one might imagine, there is a vast body of research around the ideological role of the press in society. However, this section will address only those aspects thought to shape the ideological characteristics of American news — as predominantly discussed within the cultural studies and political economy traditions — which pertain to this study. Some of these particular identified aspects of ideology will be expanded upon and their manifestations demonstrated within the content and discourse analysis prongs of this study, and presented in Chapters Four and Five.

Hegemony

Hegemony, from the Greek word *hegemon* meaning leader or ruler, was a concept developed by Antonio Gramsci in the 1920s and 1930s. It is most widely conceptualized as the consistent and repetitive assertion of a definition of a social situation by way of discourse rather than overt political or economic power, an assertion which becomes real

in its consequences (Hall, 1982). The term represents a form of power in which those who have power maintain their position, not through force, but through the elaboration of a particular world view, an ideology, a particular notion of ‘common sense,’ which is widely infused into everyday cultural practices. The result is that people do not *submit* to power, they *consent* to it, by accepting a particular definition of social reality — even though it may not be in their own best interest (Hall, 1982). Ideological power, in this view, is often exercised through the legitimacy of those institutions, which are supposedly impartial and neutral, such as law, education and the news media, for example. The process by which hegemonic ideology is said to operate is by winning the *active* consent to ways of making sense of the world, by naturalizing dominant inequitable social relations and rendering them to a form of ‘common sense,’ to ‘just the way things are,’ to ‘the inevitable’ or, more cynically, to ‘It’s sad but true, life just isn’t fair, there will always be the unfortunate in the world.’ For example and, in relation to the media, Barry Diller, the CEO of USA Networks was quoted in the *LA Times* as stating, “Media are going to continue their trend of consolidation, which mirrors globalization. This is the natural law. It is inevitable” (Extra!, 2002, p. 2). Overall, hegemony is associated with theories of how power is exercised and disguised in modern capitalist societies. The term suggests that mass media in general, and news media in specific, may invite people to understand the world in certain ways and not others, and that customary ways of understanding the world may have important political consequences. The hegemonic process is considered largely unconscious on the part of both those who wield power and those who do not — an unconscious symbiotic collusion, of sorts. Conscious intentionality is not a prerequisite for the successful reproduction and dissemination of hegemonic ideologies.

Several specific features of American hegemonic discourse(s) — those unquestioned naturalized assumptions about the world — have been detailed by numerous critical communication scholars. Perhaps most cited and discussed is Johan Galtung's articulation of America's master narrative. Galtung outlines five salient features or story-lines which manifest themselves throughout U.S. news discourse. These features include: 1) The nation state of America reflects The Judaic, Christian and Islamic myths of a chosen people in exile; 2) Rugged, competitive individualism embodies the American spirit; 3) The U.S. is the moral and democratic exemplar; 4) The U.S. is the center of 'good' which is defined by values of the free market, a monotheistic God and competitive elections (with their opposites being the center of 'evil'); and 5) America is accountable to no one except God and therefore has the duty to globally bestow God's order (Galtung, 1987, p. 6). Similarly, scholars such as Roach (1993, pp. 1-41), Dorman and Farhang, (1987) and Said (1981), who have all researched how specific international events and crisis are portrayed within the American media, have further identified repeated patterns of coverage and/or hegemonic discourses. They are as follows: 1) the privileged status of private property and the prerogatives of capital; 2) the assumption of American consensus and harmonization of interests; 3) the elevation of nationalism/patriotism to nearly a state of religion; 4) the belief in Western superiority and benevolent actions abroad; and 5) a belief in Western scientific objectivity and the assumption that for every problem there is a technological solution (i.e. 'smart bombs'). More domestically-oriented researchers like Gitlin (1979) and Gans (1980) have also identified several meta-narratives that consistently emerge within American news discourse. These include: 1) The expectation that American democracy is an altruistic

democracy; 2) The expectation that American capitalism is a responsible capitalism; 3) The expectation that the U.S. practices the politics of moderatism; 4) The priority given to the national security state; and 5) An emphasis upon individualism and individual successes within corporate and bureaucratic institutions. Although possibly not as obvious during the daily quick read of the paper, these features are more easily observable during times of national crisis like the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 or the 2003 war in Iraq and within international coverage, in general (Arno, 1984, pp. 229-238).

These hegemonic discourses are thought to become actualized and privileged through numerous avenues and ‘translative moments.’ Some of these avenues, which were discussed earlier, include: the overuse of established and elite sources, a bureaucratic news net, news values, organizational and hierarchical structures, commercial imperatives/market logics and trends in concentration of media holdings. A term coined by British communication scholar John Hartley, translative moments, are “linguistic moments of disguise” (Hartley, 1982, pp. 58-62). These moments are perceived as being accomplished through such ‘techniques’ as the neutralization of class antagonism, for example, by attributing differences of class to differences of culture, religion or intelligence. Similarly, the attribution of human-made and therefore changeable social conditions are often translated to and disguised as static external realities (i.e. ‘just the way things are’). This latter technique, according to the critical paradigm, is also created by the routine de-contextualization of events in the name of objectivity (Hackett & Zhao, 1998). Another way translative moments are realized is in the suppression of important aspects of social relations by ex-nomination or failure to name, as will be illustrated in the critical discourse analysis part of this study. In

combination, these identified avenues and translative moments, which enable hegemonic discourses and narratives to maintain themselves, are thought to short-circuit the democratic aim of the circulation of diverse views and perspectives (Henry & Tator, 2002).

Censorship: Structural, Direct and Self

Research on the various forms of media censorship originates from both academic paradigms in media studies. Overall, this body of work looks at three forms of censorship which are thought to impede diversity of perspective — structural, direct and self. In general, on the one hand, liberal scholarship has focused upon state and/or direct censorship. And, on the other, critical scholarship, especially from the political economy tradition, has tended to focus upon structural and self censorship. Again, political economy, in media studies and in relation to ideology, concerns itself with the channels and degree to which economic conditions and power relations determine ideological discourse. There are, however, clashes of opinions over how each of the three forms of censorship are weighted, over the degree to which economics determine ideology and over the exact means by which power is expressed.

Structural political economy, for example, focuses on the consequences of complex interconnectedness, as was presented earlier in this chapter, and is concerned with tracing the ways in which the policies and operations of news organizations are limited and circumscribed by the general dynamics of media industries and capitalist economies (structural censorship). Those from the instrumentalist viewpoint, on the other hand, see a more direct linkage between ideology, media elites and the news. This approach stresses ownership influences and the interests of the capitalist class upon news content and discourses (direct censorship). And, research that examines self-censorship tend to look at the external factors and pressures that can potentially influence which

issues get covered and how such issues are framed. It has been found that the fear of alienating sources, owners, editors and advertisers can create a powerful 'internal' self-censoring mechanism, and are potential hazards for investigative and critical journalism (Hackett & Gruneau, 2000, pp. 60, 88). Unlike the process of hegemony, which implies the shaping and the unconscious internalization of certain types of knowledge, self-censorship usually implies the conscious suppression of one's knowledge.

One of the most widely known and controversial conceptualizations of direct and structural censorship is the 'propaganda model' as presented by Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky in Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of The Mass Media. Their model proposes that unlike state-run media with formal censorship mechanisms, privately-owned media must use money and political influence to filter out and/or marginalize ideas antithetical to the interests of elites. The thrust of their argument is that in order for elites to maintain power in 'democratic' societies, propaganda is a necessity. Although Herman and Chomsky do not use the term 'ideology,' their conceptualization of propaganda is quite similar by their overall focus upon how power directs and shapes discourse. They identify five filters that function in the service of propaganda — most of which have been covered throughout this chapter. Those five filters are as follows: 1) size, concentrated ownership, owner wealth and profit orientation of the dominant mass media firms; 2) advertising as the primary income source of the mass media; 3) the reliance of the media on information provided by government, businesses and experts, funded and approved by primary sources and agents of power; 4) 'flak' as a means of disciplining the media; and 5) 'anti-Communism' as a national religion and control mechanism (Herman & Chomsky, 1998, p. 2). At this point in history, it could certainly be argued, as many have, that 'terrorism' needs to be added to the fifth filter of control because since September 11, 2001, many debates and perspectives have not made it into

print in the name of ‘the war against terrorism’ and/or ‘national security.’ Furthermore, it has been suggested that ‘market fundamentalism’ be added as yet another filter through which ideas must pass to be regarded as ‘acceptable’ (Frank, 2000).

Throughout Manufacturing Consent, Herman and Chomsky give ample evidence of how these filters and/or features of censorship operate by fixing the premises of discourse and directing attention toward certain interpretations and away from others, especially in relation to foreign affairs. However, one of the most interesting aspects of their model, and perhaps also the least noticeable, is the concept of ‘flak,’ which is more specifically defined as:

Negative responses to the media, including complaints, threats, petitions, letters and articles ... It originates mostly from the Right, which is most apt to have the resources to fund it, through, for example, foundations, think tanks and media monitors. Accuracy in Media is one such monitor; its objective is to harass, intimidate, discipline and in general keep the media from straying too far from acceptable elite viewpoints.¹¹

(Shoemaker & Reese, 1996, p. 235)

Other think tanks often cited by the media which are known for generating flak include the following: Heritage Foundation, American Enterprise Institute, Cato Institute, Family Research Council, Manhattan Institute, Hoover Institution and The Hudson Institute (Dolney, 2003, p. 29).

¹¹ A recent example of ‘flak’ is Bernard Goldberg’s book Bias (2001), which received enormous media exposure from all the major media outlets. In his book, Goldberg argues that the media have a left leaning liberal bias, as evidenced by the fact that ‘conservatives’ were more often labeled as such than ‘liberals.’ He was attempting to support hypothesis number two as presented in the ‘individual sphere of influence’ section of this chapter. The problem, though, is that some of his assertions have been shown to be untrue and hence a perfect expression of ‘flak.’ In response to Bias, linguist Geoffrey Nunberg searched all the databases of those presses to which Goldberg referred. Relying on empirical evidence, Nunberg reached the opposite conclusion. He reported: “If there is a media bias here, in fact, the data suggests that it goes in the other way — that the media consider liberals to be further from the mainstream than conservatives — liberals have a 30% greater likelihood of being identified as such than the average conservative (Solomon, 2002). In response to Nunberg’s refutation of the premises of his book, Goldberg admitted that it was only opinion and that he had not done any research because he did not want his book “to be written from a social scientist point of view” (Alterman, 2002, p.10).

Another model that has been useful in helping understand the ways in which media create and maintain ideological boundaries in the service of power was offered by media scholar Daniel Hallin in 1986. Hallin conceptualized three different spheres by which journalistic standards are governed. These spheres are: consensus, legitimate controversy and deviance (Hallin, 1986, pp. 116-117). Within the sphere of consensus lies those issues in which it is assumed all are in agreement — the motherhood and apple pie domain. Within this region, journalists do not feel compelled either to present opposing views or to remain disinterested observers. On the contrary, the journalist's role is to serve as an advocate or celebrant of consensus values (Hallin, 1986, p.116). Again, in retrospect of the press' coverage of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 and the 2003 war in Iraq, it becomes more obvious how it is possible to assume and/or construct 'consensus' with the impact of marginalizing dissenting views and/or making dissent appear 'irrational.'

The sphere of legitimate controversy is the region of electoral processes/debates and other matters of state, where objectivity, balance and detachment are viewed as paramount. Although this sphere is comprised mostly of the taken-for-grantedness of what is news and, in turn, potentially good journalism, studies suggest this sphere is not without its conservative forces and biases. The notion of objectivity, as an ideal and as a set of institutional rules and routines to be followed, has raised troubling questions in media studies about its role in maintaining dominant ideologies at the expense of diversity. First, objectivity can serve as a defensive strategy. As Tuchman's arguments are summarized:

Because newswriters have little time to reflect on whether they have gotten the "truth" in their stories, they need a set of procedures, or strategies, that if followed will protect them from occupational hazards such as libel suits and

reprimands from superiors ... They can report conflicting statements, which allows them to say both sides of the story have been told. Both statements may be false, getting the reporter no closer to the truth, yet the procedure helps fend off criticism.

(Shoemaker & Reese, 1996, p.113)

Second, in researching the press and its coverage of the Vietnam War, Hallin noted that objectivity also helped legitimize the press by assuring the public that the immense powers granted to the news media would not be abused because its (objectivity) practice served as a check-and-balance system (Hallin, 1986). But, the problem with objectivity, according to journalist Eric Sevareid, is that it “gives the lie the same prominence and impact as truth” (Pedelty, 1995, p.173). As one journalist explained regarding another international quagmire in which the U.S. was involved:

There is no doubt about it, the majority of human right abuses in El Salvador were committed by the army. But what a lot of journalists did — especially those who were the most career oriented and ambitious journalists — they would say openly, “Well, I’ve written an article hitting the army, now I have to write something hitting the guerillas.” I have heard at least three mainstream journalists, one for the *Wall Street Journal*, one for the *Washington Post* and one for the *Miami Herald* say that. They are saying that because they want to appear objective and because if the army comes at them and says, “Well you said this about us, but you are not criticizing the guerrillas,” they can say, “Oh yeh, I criticized the guerillas as well.” And, it also pleases their editors as well, it shows that they don’t have any sympathies. But, what if the truth of the matter is that 85% to 95% of the abuses are being done by the army and 10% to 15% by the guerrillas? ... Are you going to mention an equal number of incidents for each side? It shouldn’t be balanced because the situation isn’t balanced.

(Pedelty, 1995, pp.173-174)

Looking more at the historical context and economic functions of objectivity, Hackett and Zhao, in Sustaining Democracy? Journalism and the Politics of Objectivity, trace the concept back to the democratic discourse(s) of Enlightenment — the rejection of

hereditary absolutes and religious dogma and an emphasis upon science, reason and the 'universal.' They argue that the precursor to that notion and practice we now identify as 'objectivity' originated from the labour movement and its presses in the 1800s which spoke for 'the people' and/or 'the universal,' and against monopoly and elite-oriented partisan presses. By the late 1800s, however, the commercial dailies had appropriated this 'universalizing perspective' as it became a convenient way to appeal to 'mass readership' and therefore to increase profits well beyond those that could be garnered by promoting overtly specific political ideals (Hackett & Zhao, 1998). Through time, this culturally resonating and economically functional practice was absorbed and entrenched into journalistic routines resulting in what Hackett and Zhao term the "regime of objectivity." This regime, although appearing neutral, works as an ideological catalyst with significant political consequences by contributing to how news excludes and marginalizes subjects/people, and how news constructs hierarchies and blind spots (Hackett & Zhao, 1998).

One way the practice of objectivity constructs hierarchies, and therefore conservatizes news discourse, is the reporter's necessary reliance upon seemingly credible and readily accessible sources. As earlier explained, those sources are most often drawn from official government agencies, as well as other powerful decision makers in society who possess the resources to use the media to their advantage — unlike most civic groups and/or individuals. "Yet, such sources are not typically disinterested observers motivated only by the love of truth" (Lichtenberg, 2000, p. 250). Unwittingly, then, the practice of objectivity can perpetuate an unlevel playing field by privileging established power as sources and thereby containing an inherent bias in favor of that power. One such example was highlighted in a study that examined how women are portrayed in American news. Of those articles analyzed that covered abortion issues,

quotes by women were rarely used. Moreover, several of those articles simply didn't mention women at all. Rather, they covered abortion exclusively as a political issue where the bodies and lives of women remained but an arena where politics were to be played out by predominantly white men (Bailey, 1995, p. 34). Furthermore, in attempting to maintain the appearance of neutrality by the use of point/counterpoint quotes, the press is vulnerable to becoming unfiltered megaphones for the delusions of the mentally disturbed but influential persons, such as the widely cited example of the press' response to the anti-Communist witch hunts of Senator Joseph McCarthy in the 1950s.

And, lastly, Hallin's third sphere by which journalistic standards are governed, which he sees as creating and maintaining ideological boundaries in the service of power, is that of deviance. This sphere is that area where journalists are able "to expose, condemn or exclude those who violate or challenge the political consensus ... it marks out and defends the limits of acceptable conflict" (Hallin, 1986, p. 117). Again, as within the sphere of consensus, journalists are not bound by the ethos of objectivity. The problems surrounding this realm is who gets to decide what, and who is deviant, and who maps out the limits of acceptability (Ericson, Baranek & Chan, 1987). For example, one study which researched the coverage of the Ethiopian famine of 1984 concluded that this circumstance in particular, but more importantly poverty and underprivilegeness in general, are portrayed by news discourse as self-inflicted, *deviant* and a crime (Riggins, 1997). In past years, mental illness was covered almost exclusively as deviant. More recently, homelessness has been characterized as such. In the words of Helder Camara in relation to the ideological boundaries of deviance, "When I help the poor, I'm called a saint; when I explain why they are poor, I'm called a communist" (Galtung & Vincent, 1992, p. 11). More subtle signals of deviancy, as manifest in language, often appear in news discourse as well, especially through the use of 'authoritative' quotes juxtaposed

with an ex-nominated source. These linguistic signals of ‘deviance’ often go unnoticed, a pivotal characteristic of hegemonic ideology. By not appearing openly ideological and/or coercive, relations of domination become ‘naturalized.’ As one critical scholar said, “Ideology may not necessarily be invisible, but invisibility is the condition of its effectiveness” (Bennett, 1982, pp. 287-308). These and other forms of ideological narratives, in relation to hegemonic discourse(s), will be discussed again and in more detail within Chapter Five.

Summary

Upon canvassing the vast literature and empirical research of what is currently known about the factors and influences that affect what we read in the daily paper, and the content and diversity implications of each, two conclusions can be drawn. First, of the five levels of influence, the individual (journalists) and the organizational (forms of ownership: JOA, independent, chain, monopoly and competitive) levels appear to have the *least* influence upon news content. These findings run contrary to popular thinking and narratives about the press as well as some of the suppositions around which the SOS organized and galvanized support. Specifically, head-to-head market competition was shown to be a market arrangement that produced nearly the same type of news as a monopoly or a JOA. Its importance as a condition for diversity was relatively small. Second, most of the results presented do not support the market model of the press as espoused by the market-liberal and reformist liberal traditions. Rather, they tend to support the democratic socialist tradition by way of tracing the detrimental impacts of market imperatives upon the newspaper industry in general. The same can be said for the two paradigms in question. Much of the research and findings reviewed affirmed many of

the broad assumptions and assertions made by the critical paradigm and not those of the liberal pluralist paradigm.

There are several characteristics of the U.S. press which emerge from the types of studies reviewed in Chapter Two that serve to undermine freedom of expression and diversity of perspective, as intended by the First Amendment. These characteristics include the following: 1) over-reliance upon bureaucratic and elite sources; 2) the 'regime of objectivity' and its theoretical dependence upon authoritative 'facts' for the bulk of news content; 3) the alignment and interlockings of media conglomerates with existing political and economic power structures; 4) lack of investigative reporting due to these alignments and the incessant demands for greater profit margins at the expense of the public's interest; 5) advertising as the dominant organizing principle and source of revenue; 6) re-regulation policy that encourages mergers and cross-ownership but masked as 'de-regulation;' 7) unaccountable regulation in the public's name but without the public's informed consent; and 8) the repetitive ideological assumption and assertion that the only free press is a commercial press. In combination, these features tend to constrain and impede not only collective solutions to pressing social problems, but they also hinder awareness that these problems exist.

The next chapter looks at how the above listed forces and factors that shape the news are perceived by some of Hawaii's journalists and those who were involved with the citizens' action group, 'Save Our Star Bulletin.' Are their perspectives congruent with empirical studies, especially in relation to market competition? And, if not, how do they differ? Chapter Three also explores the unique historical circumstance of *The Honolulu Advertiser* and the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* resuming a head-to-head competitive arrangement in 2001 after nearly four decades of operating under a Joint Operating Agreement (JOA).

**The Case Study:
Coup d'Etat of the SOS
Vs.
Confessions of an S.O.B.**

The greatest fascination of the study of the press is to watch some great event from the real world intersect with existing doctrine.

Harry Kalven

First Amendment law scholar (Alger, 1998, p.119)

Chapter Three provides the political and legal context within which the current newspaper 'war' in Honolulu, Hawaii is being waged by tracing the circumstances and premises that enabled the Save-Our-Star-Bulletin (SOS) to defeat Gannett's position of forming a newspaper monopoly, thereby restoring market competition and creating the conditions of a 'living laboratory' for this study. This chapter also briefly explores the influential role of the press in shaping Hawaii's history and offers a possible explanation for the high degree of concern — by the SOS and others — over a possible newspaper monopoly in Honolulu. The final section of Chapter Three presents the results of the surveys and interviews with some of Hawaii's journalists and SOS members, and their opinions regarding the press and its role(s) in society. To what extent do the journalists and the SOS identify greater diversity and quality as an expected benefit of moving from a semi-competitive situation (editorial competition) under the JOA to a head-to-head market competition situation? And, how do they expect these shifts in structural arrangements and ownership to influence content? Several salient patterns of assumptions and expectations regarding the press and the role of market competition are identified from these interviews and surveys.

Islands with Continental Aspirations: Historical Background

Hawaii, by geographical definition, is the most isolated chain of islands in the world. This archipelago consists of 122 islands and spreads 1,500 miles across the floor of the Pacific Ocean. The landscape ranges from snow-covered mountain peaks to lush tropical rainforests to active volcanoes. Conversationally, however, the term ‘Hawaiian Islands’ usually refers to the six largest and accessible islands: Oahu (seat of state government, hub of most business activity and home to both *The Honolulu Advertiser* and the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*), Hawaii or the Big Island as it is often called, Maui, Kauai, Molokai and Lanai.

The ethnic makeup of these six islands is as diverse as its landscape. According to an early 1990s census, Hawaii’s 1.25 million inhabitants are approximately 33 percent European-American, 22 percent Japanese-American, 15 percent Filipino-American, 12 percent Hawaiian or part Hawaiian, 6 percent Chinese-American and 10 percent Pacific Island origin (Tehrani, 1991, p. 6). Not surprisingly, Hawaii boasts the highest percentage of inter-racial marriages of any American state. As a result, the most recent census (2002) reported a ‘blurring’ of all the above mentioned ethnic categories as so many residents now have such mixed racial backgrounds that the categories offered simply didn’t ‘match’ their actual heritages. Some might surmise that as a reflection of such a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society, the press would be vigorously diversified in the sense of opinions and perspectives — especially given that the newsroom workforce is comprised of all the islands’ ethnicities. At present, however, as Chapters Four and Five will detail and suggest, diversity in the newsroom does not necessarily equate with diversity of perspectives, as is commonly assumed. Yet, the current state of affairs has not always been true and also mimics historical trends — much like the saying, “The more things change, the more they remain the same.”

The history and influence of the press in Hawaii is unique due to the Islands' geographic isolation. From 1822 when American Protestant missionaries from New England installed the first printing press in Honolulu to May 9, 1976 when live television news was first introduced to the Islands via satellite, the major commercial dailies not only held a monopoly over public political communication but also used this power to visibly and actively shape the history of Hawaii, from independent country to republic to a territory and finally to statehood on March 12, 1959. For 155 years, those who owned and published the large commercial dailies in Hawaii also, to a very large extent, wrote its history (Chapin, 1996, pp. 1-11).

During the same time period, nonetheless, historical documents provide evidence that more than 1,000 separately titled 'opposition' and/or 'independent' papers — mainly ethnic language and labour periodicals — surfaced and published for various lengths of time and in time frames from daily to monthly (Chapin, 1996, pp. 1-11). Today, however, there exist 25 newspapers throughout the state, predominantly English language weeklies, in addition to the two Oahu based dailies, *The Honolulu Advertiser* and the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* (Eojeda, 2001). Moreover, since the introduction of televised news in 1976, 97 percent of local households now own one or more television sets. Newspaper circulation, on the other hand, reaches only approximately 20 percent of the Islands' households — about the same level as the early 1980s (Chapin, 1996, p. 8).¹²

To be sure, the two Honolulu-based dailies do not wield the same monopolistic *form* of power over political communication that they once did. But, it does seem as if traces of

¹² Some might claim that given the increase in television viewership, especially news broadcasts, newspapers have declined in importance. Therefore, concerns over a newspaper's monopoly status is unwarranted. However, many would argue that daily newspapers remain the only easily accessible forum which can provide an in-depth analysis of the day's 'events,' and have not only retained their status as 'chroniclers of history,' but are also the places television stations often look to in deciding what topics to cover (Picard, 1985).

collective memories re-surfaced among those active in the SOS movement — memories of why ‘monopoly’ has become a ‘four-letter word’ in the state of Hawaii. In the words of 50-year-newsroom veteran, Bob Krauss, “We are all very sensitive to monopoly here. After the Republicans and the ‘Big Five,’ we know its dangers” (Krauss, 2001).

By monopoly, Krauss is referring to what has come to be known as the ‘ruling oligarchy’ of Hawaii, which reigned until 1954 when a democratic coalition finally overthrew its tyranny. This oligarchy was comprised of the following: the Republican party which was capitalistic and expansionistic in conviction; the Islands’ most powerful corporations which are referred to as the ‘Big Five’ — C. Brewer, Theo Davies, Amfac, Alexander & Baldwin and Castle & Cooke — that ruled the economy in the areas of agriculture (sugar plantations), maritime shipping and international trading, and were notorious for mercilessly exploiting labour; and, the dominant commercial presses. Both *The Honolulu Advertiser* (begun in 1882 as the *Advertiser* and later became *The Honolulu Advertiser* in 1921) and the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* (also begun in 1882 as the *Daily Bulletin*, the forerunner of the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*) were regarded as ‘Big Five’ newspapers (Chaplin, 1998, p. 191; Chapin, 1996, pp. 53 & 189). The intimate relationship(s) among business, government and the newspapers — the latter often publicly justifying the oppressive actions of the former — is an egregious example of the famous A.J. Liebling statement, “Freedom of the press is guaranteed only to those who own one” (Liebling, 1961).

It is against this historical backdrop — one of geographical isolation from any major continent as well as between the six islands, a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural past and present, and the collective memories of the brutality wrought by previous monopolies and oligarchies in which the press played an active and, at times, supportive role — that the SOS movement emerged, organized and succeeded where many have failed in their

efforts to challenge attempts at monopolization by one of the newspaper giants with worldwide operations, Gannett (McCord, 1996).

Gannett Co., Inc. ranks ninth among 10 of the largest media corporations in the world in terms of sales volume — recording 6.4 billion in operating revenue in 2002 (Carlsson, 2003, p. 57) — and has become legendary for its insatiable appetite for profits, questionable business tactics in the service of acquiring and ensuring monopoly status in numerous US cities (leading to multiple lawsuits), for spending millions of dollars for union busting and for its notorious arrogance (Bagdikian, 2000, pp. 67-89; Alger, 1998, pp. 130-134; McCord, 1996). As one of many examples of this arrogance, when Allen Neuharth, former chairman of Gannett and author of Confession of an S.O.B., was asked how to correctly pronounce Gannett, he would regularly reply, “It’s pronounced GANNETT — with the accent on NET as in profit” (McCord, 1996, p. 145). Gannett’s ventures outside of the newspaper industry include owning and operating 22 television stations throughout the US, multiple marketing services, numerous commercial printing operations and several media technology companies (Gannett Company Profile, 2004).

The SOS movement, eventually comprised of the state’s strongest unions, the Newspaper Guild, community activists and political leaders, including the then-Governor Ben Cayetano, was formed on the heels of the unexpected announcement that the 118-year old *Honolulu Star Bulletin* would close on October 30, 1999 due to a lack of preferred profit margin. Rupert Phillips, the general partner of Liberty Newspapers — which owned the *Honolulu Star Bulletin* — complained that the 12-percent return on their investment under a Joint Operating Agreement (JOA), arranged in 1992 and scheduled to run through 2012, was a disappointment and that they could be making 20 percent or more at a mainland newspaper (Kua, 1999). Liberty Newspapers, a smaller publishing company than Gannett, specializes in publications with daily circulation of less

than 20,000 and owns more than 300 publications, including 65 daily newspapers. Ironically, they are associated with a Los Angeles-based firm which specializes in organizing, structuring and sponsoring management buy-outs of established companies (Financial News, 2004).

If all had gone according to plan, Gannett Pacific would have paid Liberty Newspapers \$26.5 million to close the *Honolulu Star Bulletin* in anticipation of future higher profits (Barayuga, 1999). But, the deal was halted when the SOS organized and Attorney General Earl Anzai filed an anti-trust lawsuit claiming that the closure would give *The Honolulu Advertiser* a monopoly, which was unwarranted since the *Honolulu Star Bulletin* was making a 12-percent profit. Citing Liberty's failure to attempt to sell the newspaper, which is 'theoretically' standard legal procedure in the dismantling of a JOA, federal judge Alan Kay issued a preliminary injunction on October 14, 1999 effectively stopping the closure.¹³ Liberty finally agreed to put the newspaper up for sale in order to stop the lawsuit (Kayal and Cole, 2000).

After multiple failed attempts to find a buyer, including the employees of the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, the path was eventually cleared (under court supervision) for Canadian publisher David Black to purchase Hawaii's second largest daily, with a circulation of 64,000 readers, for \$10,000. *The Honolulu Advertiser*, at the time of sale, had a circulation of 106,590 readers (Kayal & Cole, 2000). The sales agreement included the following assets: the acquisition of the newspaper's subscriber and advertising lists; distribution and carrier records; newspaper boxes and newsstand locations; roughly 10

¹³ Challenges to newspaper closures using anti-trust laws can be extremely expensive and therefore more rare than they might otherwise be. In 1998, for example, Gannett agreed to pay \$65 million to the owners of the Nashville Banner, operating under a JOA with Gannett at the time, as part of the deal that resulted in the closing of the Banner. This action was not legally challenged (Dayton, 1999).

computers and some office furniture; and two vans and a 1994 Honda Accord (Kayal & Cole, 2000). What it didn't include, however, and the reason for the low price tag of \$10,000, was the office space, a printing press and the circulation services that were previously shared by the two newspapers under the JOA — thus making it more difficult and extremely costly for Black to begin operations and effectively compete. In response, Black purchased *Midweek*, Honolulu's free weekly with a circulation of 270,000 for an undisclosed price, thereby giving him access to the necessary printing facilities. Although considered an independent, as opposed to a chain, Black is no stranger to the world of newspapering, being the owner of Black Press, Ltd., which operates 80 small publications, mostly non-dailies, and owns 10 presses across Western Canada and the American Pacific Northwest (Gomes, 2000).

March 15, 2001, the day David Black formally began publishing the *Honolulu Star Bulletin*, marked a watershed day for the state of Hawaii as it ended a 39-year era, beginning in 1962, during which the two major local dailies had published under some form of JOA. Gannett had been part of those agreements since 1971 when they first entered Hawaii and purchased the *Honolulu Star Bulletin* — considered Hawaii's premiere daily at the time (Chapin, 1996, p. 311). Subsequently, in 1993, Gannett purchased *The Honolulu Advertiser*. But, because it was legally prevented from owning two papers, Gannett sold the *Honolulu Star Bulletin* to Rupert Phillips of Liberty Newspapers. After 1993, both papers were run by distant and absentee corporations (Chapin, 1998, p. 345).

Although Black is also absentee by definition, his purchase of the *Honolulu Star Bulletin* not only broke the JOA cycle, but it also swam against the tide of increasing concentration of newspaper ownership. Because of this trend toward concentration of ownership as well as declining competition in local markets, which has left 98 percent of

U.S. cities with a single daily, research of this nature (as explained in Chapter Two) has focused primarily on the effects of monopoly upon the quality of newspapers. But, due to the SOS, the courts and David Black, there now exists a set of unique and recently unprecedented conditions under which to access the reverse — the consequences of head-to-head market competition upon the content and discourses of the press in the wake of a JOA. As Beverly Keever, professor of Journalism at the University of Hawaii at Manoa stated, “What is happening in Hawaii is a test case for the nation” (Tighe, 1999).

SOS and the Courts: Arguments and Premises

As a brief review, a JOA is a legal arrangement brought about by the Newspaper Preservation Act of 1970. This Act of Congress is an exemption from anti-trust laws, which allows two commercial presses to merge their advertising, circulation, production and business departments. Under a JOA, newspapers engage in the usually illegal practices of price-fixing and market allocation, and the joint profits are split according to an agreed upon formula. Each JOA must be approved individually by the Justice Department.

The logic behind and rationale for such an anti-trust exemption are twofold. First, by granting such an exemption, it is assumed that the market in which the two newspapers co-exist cannot viably support both and one would fail without the agreement. Second, it is premised upon the notion that a community is hurt more by the loss of a second editorial voice than by the elimination of certain *aspects* of competition between the two papers. In other words, the courts allow for an otherwise illegal relationship between two newspapers in exchange for the commitment, from both, to maintain ‘competing’ editorial voices. Closing the *Honolulu Star Bulletin*, under a JOA

that was scheduled to run for 13 more years, was viewed by many as a breach of that commitment.

As also previously detailed, this particular Act of Congress was passed prior to any empirical evidence to either support or refute the assumptions that form the basis of a JOA (Lacy, 1988, pp. 147-160). As a consequence, the JOA has always been controversial, as some argue it is inherently uncompetitive by its very nature. These critics point out that a JOA is really a dual monopoly, or a duopoly as it is sometimes called, and overall, neither paper is usually failing. Some have even suggested that the Newspaper Preservation Act be more accurately renamed as the “Cry Baby Billionaire Publishing Act,” as those who generally apply for such an exemption are large chains with deep pockets (McCord, 1996, p. 100). Gannett, for example, the largest U.S. newspaper publisher, owned 74 daily newspapers in 2000, including *USA Today* — the largest selling daily paper — and reported a net income of \$208.3 million for the third quarter of that same year (Blakeman, 2000). Nonetheless, as discussed in Chapter One, the arguments *both* for and against the JOA are based upon the idea that market competition between commercial dailies results in diversity of editorial voices and content.

American anti-trust laws are similarly based upon assumptions about market competition. Their very existence are a recognition that the idea of ‘perfect competition’ — as conceived by Adam Smith, a founding father of marketplace economics — becomes severely distorted through concentrated business structures and those practices associated with such concentration. Anti-trust laws were designed to monitor such competitive practice issues as discriminatory pricing or collusion on pricing, as well as such structural practices as mergers and acquisitions (Alger, 1998, pp. 117-120). In effect, they were enacted to help correct for the two primary causes of ‘imperfect

competition' reviewed in Chapter Two— horizontal integration or economies of scale (monopoly) and vertical integration or economies of scope (conglomeration) — a bit of 'invisible hand' puppeteering by the legislature and courts.

Since the Reagan administration, however, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the Justice Department's Anti-trust Division have been loathe to aggressively pursue anti-trust cases (Nichols & McChesney, 2000, pp. 100-104). With very few exceptions, like Microsoft in 1998, the FTC has been disinclined to see media as in its purview, as evidenced by the mergers and cross-ownership patterns detailed in Chapter Two. It is somewhat ironic that the FTC would block the merger of two large office supply companies, as it did with Staples & Office Max in 1997, but take a hands-off approach to the non-competitive practices of those business institutions entrusted to provide diverse news and ideas (Alger, 1998, p. 119). Theoretically, according to classic economics, competition, regardless of the type of business, is beneficial to all involved. It is just this principle and premise that supposedly underlie the mission of the FTC, the Justice Department's Anti-trust Division and, to a lesser extent, the Federal Communication Commission (FCC).

Such were also the arguments made by the SOS, whose position was based upon assumptions regarding the consequences of market competition upon the quality of newspapers and backed by existing, yet not often utilized, legal doctrine. The group's and the state's accusation against Gannett and Liberty was that Gannett's payoff of \$26.5 million to Liberty Newspapers for the 'favor' of closing the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* was a blatant engagement in collusionary anti-competitive practices and therefore violated federal and Hawaii anti-trust laws. The lawsuit never went to trial because of the federal injunction and the subsequent buy-out by David Black. In other words, the sale canceled the trial. Therefore, it will never be known how the courts would have eventually ruled.

Nonetheless, SOS members felt they had achieved a coup d'etat by keeping the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* alive, by helping preserve approximately 140 jobs and by successfully organizing against one of the industry's Goliaths — Gannett.

Amid all the accusations that were leveled by each paper against the other, from the day the closure was announced until weeks after David Black and his team were up and running, there were also many articles in the press about how wonderful each paper was going to be, how each was prepared to add new and improved sections, and many promises made of community responsiveness and hard hitting investigative journalism. Tucked within these articles, and also within the nightly televised news, were many taken-for-granted premises about the consequences of market competition upon the commercial press. A sample of these comments and assumptions are as follows:

- 1) We believe that true competition can only improve the quality of both newspapers. The *Star-Bulletin* will be a better paper than it was before.
Quote by Jim Berkerton, Attorney for SOS,
in Daysog, November 9, 2000
- 2) We hope the public understands the importance of having two print media voices.
Quote by SOS member,
in Barayuga, October 7, 1999
- 3) Rather than restricting competition, ending the JOA would increase it, economic competition between the two papers ended more than 37 years ago.
Quote by Gannett,
in Barayuga, October 13, 1999
- 4) The First Amendment does not immunize the repression of views. Gannett and Liberty are restraining views and trade by refusing to publish.
Quote by Deputy Attorney General,
in Barayuga, October 13, 1999
- 5) We will be deprived of the necessary competition in news and editorial coverage.
Quote by SOS member,
in Adamski, October 6, 1999
- 6) In the end, Hawaii is a special case and the results will have to play out over time. It's an interesting experiment.
Quote by Ben Bagdikian,

in Ruel, November 9, 2000

- 7) It is such a small little island, with all these diverse interest groups, that it's important that every medium have more than one publisher or dispenser of information for the sake of the free press.

Quote by Mike Shiroma, government employee
in Shapiro, November 10, 2000

- 8) I hope the genuine competition will assure quality for readers and competitive prices for business.

Quote by Jean King, former Lt. Governor,
in Shapiro and Morse, November 10, 2000

- 9) True competition creates a better product, whether it's a radial tire or a newspaper.
Editorial by Charles Memminger,
November 13, 2000

- 10) David Black has given us a competing editorial voice that will continue to influence, educate and improve the lives of islanders. We have not been robbed of our greatest watchdog.

Letter to the editor,
November 17, 2000

- 11) It is great news for Hawaii's people that this alternate voice will be preserved, one that is free from big corporate influence.

Letter to the editor,
December 2, 2000

- 12) It's very important that a large city have more than one newspaper.

Letter to the editor,
December 2, 2000

- 13) Having two newspapers in Honolulu will raise the level of journalism in Hawaii by providing more substance and serving a broader audience.

Quote by David Black,
in Daysog, December 14, 2000

- 14) The suit by attorney general alleges that closing the *Star-Bulletin* will injure the public interest by eliminating an important source of democratic expression and controversy. Free expression of opinion is very crucial in any society.

Quote by SOS member,
in Dayton, December 7, 1999

- 15) Black's success would mean Honolulu and the rest of Hawaii will benefit from the hard work and energy of two experienced and talented newsrooms. At *The Advertiser*, we welcome and relish the challenge.

Editorial in *The Honolulu Advertiser*,
November 11, 2000

16) News coverage will gain in quality and depth. We will have cheaper and better products.

Community member,
in Duchemin, December 23, 2000

17) The effects of the newspaper battle will probably spread beyond the two papers and subscription rates could drop for more than 160,000 subscribers. Print, radio, broadcast and even online advertising rates could drop as publications compete for the same advertisers. News coverage could gain in quality as the papers hire more employees.

Unnamed industry expert
in Duchemin, December 23, 2000

Except for the comment made by Ben Bagdikian, the remaining sample quotes either explicitly or implicitly assume that market competition between the two dailies would inevitably lead to better quality newspapering which, in turn, would serve the citizenry of Hawaii. The next section of this chapter presents the results of the surveys and interviews conducted — four months *after* the sale of the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* — with some of Hawaii’s journalists and SOS members. The lines of inquiry revolve around perceived roles of the press in society, perceived hindrances and facilitators in fulfilling those roles, and perceived changes and consequences of market competition upon both dailies.

First, however, an overview of critical dates within Hawaii’s newspaper industry and within this research is offered in the form of the following timeline.

**Timeline and Critical Dates:
From 1822 — 2003
Table 3.1**

1822: First printing press in Honolulu

1882: *Advertiser* and *Daily Bulletin* first publish — eventually becoming *The Honolulu Advertiser* and the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, respectively

1959: Hawaii becomes 50th state

1962: First JOA formed between the two papers

1971: Gannett purchases the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*

1976: Live television news first introduced to island via satellite

1993: Gannet buys *The Honolulu Advertiser* from Thurston Twigg-Smith family

1993: Gannett sells *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* to Liberty Newspapers and forms a JOA that was to run through 2012

Sept. 7, 1999: Termination agreement to close the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* signed between Gannett and Liberty Newspapers

Sept. 16, 1999: Intended closure for Oct. 30 publicly announced

Oct. 13, 1999: Judge Alan Kay issues preliminary injunction to prevent the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin's* closure

Nov. 1999: Save-Our-Star (SOS) Bulletin forms, receives community support

Apr. 22, 2000: Under court order, *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* is put up for sale

Nov. 11, 2000: Announcement of *Honolulu Star-Bulletin's* purchase by David Black

February 22 — March 14, 2001: Pre-corpora/sampling period (content and 'hard news' discourse analysis)

Mar. 15, 2001: *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* begins publishing under David Black

July 2-23, 2001: Post-corpora/sampling period

July — September, 2001: Interview period

Feb., 9 — Mar. 16, 2003: Corpora/sampling period (discourse analysis upon editorials and opinion pieces on the potential war in Iraq)

Survey and Interview Demographics

Approximately four months after the sale of the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, I sent an introductory letter, a survey questionnaire, a request for an interview and a self-addressed stamped envelope to all news reporters (excluding sports, advertorial and ‘lifestyle’ writers) and editors from both papers, to the most visible activists for SOS, to the Newspaper Guild’s administrative officer and to the chairs of Hawaii’s two journalism departments (see Appendix A and B for introductory letter and full survey instruments).¹⁴ Reporters and editors were identified through mastheads and the SOS participants were identified through press coverage and interviews. The survey was designed to explore overall assumptions about news in general, perceptions of pressures that influence and shape news, and how diversity of views and opinions are best achieved. Of the 118 surveys sent out, 15 were returned. Two of the 15 were blank with notes attached stating that they declined to comment. Six of the 13 participants chose to include their names and seven chose anonymity. Five of the six known participants were from *The Honolulu Advertiser* and one from the SOS. All of the six known respondents were male. Nine people granted an interview (see Appendix C and D for interview questions). Many of the interviewees, however, acknowledged that they did not return the survey. Therefore, there were very few overlaps between the individuals who returned the survey and those who granted an interview. Four interviewees were from *The Honolulu Advertiser*, two from the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* and three participants from SOS. Seven were male and two were female.

Mike Fisch, publisher for *The Honolulu Advertiser*, Sandra Keyes, editor for *The Honolulu Advertiser*, the State’s Attorney’s Office and Anna Beth Black, wife of David

¹⁴ The numbered survey and interview questions listed in the appendices may not always correspond to the numbers as presented in the text. Some have been re-grouped and/or re-numbered within the text in the service of clustering themes for greater clarity.

Black, all responded but declined to participate citing various reasons, including the possibility of future litigation and therefore the inappropriateness of granting an interview (Fisch, 2001). For the interview aspect of this research, everyone was given the choice of speaking either on or off the record during the initial contact. Only one interviewee chose to have *some* of what they said off the record. The remaining eight stated that it didn't really matter either way. In relation to this particular study, 'who said what' is not as important as the collective patterns, assumptions and suppositions of 'what was said.'

The low response rate of both the returned surveys and interviews granted can be attributed to three and possibly overlapping factors. First, the timing of the requests was most likely premature. Many journalists, at that time, were adjusting to new routines, varied deadlines, new production methods and new co-workers. In short, it was a transition period and time was in short supply (Berger, 2001). Second and relatedly, many newswriters — especially at the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* — had just spent the previous year not knowing if they would still be employed in 2001, which was an especially precarious and anxiety-provoking situation for those living in Hawaii because of the expense of leaving the Islands to seek suitable employment. At the time the surveys were mailed, there could be heard, from several media, a collective sigh of relief over the survival of the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* with the attendant sentiment of, "Let's try and put this behind us now and move on."

Lastly, there could be detected an undercurrent of uneasiness emanating from those who worked for both papers. The newly formed competitive arena meant a 're-shuffling' of personnel, yet-to-be-negotiated union contracts and unknown expectations from new managers, editors and publishers. It was not uncommon, for example, to see copies of Richard McCord's The Chain Gang — a chronicle of Gannett's dubious business tactics in similar circumstances — on the desks of newswriters in anticipation

of things to come and prepare for from Gannett. Likewise, as Fisch presumed, further legal action continued to be a possibility. In combination, these factors created a ‘spiral of silence.’ Most seemed to either intuit or were explicitly told that this was not the right moment to potentially ‘rock the boat’ by speaking with someone who may or may not make public their thoughts on the issues in question.

Although the results of the surveys and interviews cannot be easily generalized in any statistical sense due to the low response rate, we can, nonetheless, comb from them patterns and clusters of assumptions about the press and, in turn, use them for comparative purposes with the results of the content and discourse analysis in Chapters Four and Five. The survey results are presented first, followed by the interviews with journalists and SOS participants. Discussions regarding the data follow each of the three presentations. All questions are grouped under sub-headings in the service of clarity.

Two of the following 15 survey questions are closed-ended and allow for only one response (number 2a and 11a). Twelve of the questions are open-ended and permit multiple responses (numbers 1a, 3a, 5a, 6a, 7a, 8a, 9a, 10a, 12a, 13a, 14a and 15a). The total responses for these questions therefore may be more or less than 13, as some respondents chose to make several comments and others none. And, one question (number 4a) is based on a five-point scale.

Survey Results

Journalists’ Perceptions of the Press’ Role In Society

Question 1a: *In an ideal world, what ‘ought’ to be the main purpose and/or function of the news media?(check all that apply)*

There was unanimous agreement by journalists that the ideal function of the news media is to **educate** (N=13). The second most important function is that of **watchdog** (N=12) against personal gain at the public’s expense, government/big business,

corporations and corporate greed. Following, in ranking order, were the functions of **providing a forum for public debate** (N=11), **analysis** (N=11), **mirror of society and events** (N=11) and **advocate** (N=7) for the poor and disenfranchised, and for the values of social justice and democracy. **Entertain** was also listed as a function by one respondent in the **other** category.

Journalists' Perceptions of Under-Reported News and Blind Spots

Question 2a: *Some people think that the news media, in general, tend to have systemic 'blind spots' (consistent patterns of omission) in coverage. Do you?*

Eight respondents stated that they think there are systemic blind spots in the news.

One respondent disagreed and four left the question blank (N=13). Of those areas potentially undercovered, the respondents ranked the categories — from most undercovered to least — as follows:

- Investigative reporting: 11
- Social policies/implications: 8
- Business/critical coverage: 6
- Human rights/social justice: 6
- Ethnicity/race issues: 6
- Labour: 6
- International issues: 5
- Politicians: critical coverage: 5
- Hawaiian affairs: 4
- Youth issues: 4
- Environmental issues: 4
- Business and investment: 4
- Religion: 3
- Features, in-depth: 3
- Education: 3
- Defense and security: 3
- Science and technology: 3
- Gender/women's issues: 2
- Crime/social causes: 2
- Arts and entertainment: 2
- Health: 1
- Positive news: 1
- Right-wing perspective: 0
- Left-wing perspective: 0
- Sports: 0
- Other: The economics of consumerism

Question 3a: *If you agree that there are blind spots in coverage, what might be some of the reasons? (open-ended)*

- Avoidance of the complex and subtle
- Laziness
- Lack of staffing
- Reliance on traditional coverage methods
- Time to research and produce

- Inability to cover suitable conclusions: What the effects of ‘soft money’ are on politics vs. who won the election.
- Lack of leadership
- Facts need analysis and analysis requires education
- Lack of corporate resources: Profit First!
- Training
- Less money
- Traditional beats
- Lack of context

Journalists’ Perceptions of Internal and External Pressures

Question 4a: *Please rate the following potential influences upon determining the range of ideas covered in the news.*

Respondents were asked to rate eleven potential areas of influence, from the strongest to the weakest, on a 5 point scale ranging from tremendous influence to no influence. The following are the journalists’ perceptions of influence upon news content, from the highest to the lowest (N= those who reported tremendous or much influence).

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Editors: 13 | • Public relations firms: 6 |
| • Journalists: 11 | • Special interests: 5 |
| • Market competition: 11 | • Big business: 3 |
| • Citizens/consumers: 6 | • Advertisers: 2 |
| • Owners: 6 | • Unions: 2 |
| • Government/politicians: 6 | |

Question 5a: *Most journalists speak about the need to exercise restraint in publishing information at some point during their career. Within American news, this experience is probably related to pressures from? (Check all that apply)*

- Attorneys: 7
- Editors: 6
- Publishers: 2
- Political figures: 1
- Corporations: 1
- Physical harm: 1
- Interest groups: 1
- Public relations: 0
- Other (open-ended): Personal ethics, self-censorship, fear of offending readers, good judgment.

Journalists' Perceptions of News Gathering Practices In Hawaii

Question 6a: *What are the most positive and negative aspect(s) of the way news in Hawaii is gathered, organized and reported?(open-ended)*

POSITIVE WAYS:

- Healthy competition now
- Less adversarial
- Less institutional
- Journalists are more a part of the community here
- Small and friendly place
- Decent public watchdogs
- Dedicated and talented journalists
- Belief in the power of the press
- Aloha and respect for each other
- Isolation — easier to keep track in a small community
- Collected with more sensitivity
- Local orientation
- Easier access for communities views to be public
- External news is localized

NEGATIVE WAYS:

- Over reliance on press conferences rather than digging
- Given our community, we have competing truth claims but do not invest enough to flush them out
- Superficiality
- Gannett trying to kill competition
- Underplays crime in Hawaii
- No depth
- Pack journalism because we are a small place
- Little publishing from individual perspective on how laws effect people
- Lack of financial resources due to corporate owners making 28% profit
- No crystal ball quality like the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post*, etc.
- Parochial and institutional meaningless processes
- Budget limitations
- Profit is priority = drab newspapering

Question 7a: *In your opinion, what are the political and social issues of the day that are being adequately covered in Hawaii and why?(open-ended)*

ADEQUATELY COVERED AND WHY?

- Business
- Hawaiian legal issues

- Government and legislation
- Economic trends
- Education policies and politics
- Sovereignty issues
- Local politics because it's a national sport here
- Military
- Bishop Estate¹⁵
- Drugs
- Native Hawaiian issues
- Crime because it's easy to do
- Education because of the clear cut issues

NOT ADEQUATELY COVERED AND WHY?

- Social issues — disenfranchised and poor
- Native Hawaiian issues
- Political corruption because it's messy and complex
- Investigation of corruption
- Education because of its complexity and lack of an immediate fix
- How the poor live
- Health care
- Military
- Social, economic, artistic and cultural stories
- Immigrant communities because they do not represent a large readership

Question 8a: *Much has been written over the past five years about a 'crisis of legitimacy' in journalism — do you agree with this assessment and why or why not? (open-ended)*

Eleven respondents agreed that there currently exist a legitimacy crisis and two disagreed (N=13). Reasons listed for the crisis included: 1) young and inexperienced; 2) reporters lack the context necessary for good reporting; 3) news is now too trivial and fluffy; and 4) the line between news and entertainment has been obliterated.

Question 9a: *In your opinion, did the previous JOA, in Hawaii, provide a competitive environment? Why or why not?*

¹⁵ The Bishop Estate (now called Kamehameha Schools) is a major landholding estate in Hawaii and is the chief funding source for the Kamehameha Schools, the private educational institution for Hawaiian children. As a result of enterprise investigation by the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, under the JOA, trustees were removed for mismanaging the trust, which led to several individual criminal indictments.

Six respondents thought that the JOA provided a competitive environment and seven reported that it did not (N=13). Most, however, distinguished between journalistic competition and market competition. No one stated that the JOA provided a commercially competitive environment.

Question 10a: *In your opinion, what have been the most prominent changes in the content of both papers since the JOA was dismantled on March 15, 2001? (open-ended)*

POSITIVE CHANGES

- *The Advertiser* is surprisingly better
- The public finally sees the papers as independent
- Both papers are spending more money on the editorial side
- *The Advertiser* is under more pressure to break the news
- Both papers are better
- *The Advertiser* is more responsive to the community
- *The Advertiser* has new energy
- Better timeliness from both papers

NEGATIVE CHANGES

- The *Star-Bulletin* has gone downhill: fluff and big photos
- *The Advertiser* has increased in size whereas the *Bulletin* shrunk
- The *Bulletin* is now local and ‘chatty’; *The Advertiser* is both more frivolous and serious
- Coverage of multi-cultural people is more superficial
- Gannett is more aggressive and mean
- The *Star-Bulletin* has fewer resources
- The *Star-Bulletin* has declined in quality
- The *Star-Bulletin* became a forum for fiction

Question 11a: *Are we, as citizens, better informed about social and political issues as a result of the current competitive arrangement?*

Six respondents stated that we are better informed and six reported that we are not. One respondent left the question unanswered (N=13).

Question 12a: *What do you think are the most important contributions, made by the media in Hawaii, toward the ideals of democracy? (open-ended)*

- Revealing Bishop Estate problems

- Keeping tabs on unions
- Consistent routine coverage of government meetings
- Role in statehood and exposing the plight of Japanese sugar workers
- Maintaining voices in a marketplace of ideas
- Educating people about the community they live in
- Informed electorate
- Political coverage
- Forum for ideas on how people live in a democracy
- Huh? Sorry, I have no idea
- Good question — give me 5 years and a research budget and I'll give you the answers

Journalists' Perceptions of What Constitutes A 'Quality' Press

Question 13a: *Can a commercial paper serve the interest of both commerce and the public at the same time? Why or why not?(open-ended)*

YES

- Of course, we do it every day
- Not perfectly but it's better than any alternative
- Sure, it must serve both
- Yes, there is no virtue in a non-commercial press. There is nothing evil about money.
- Yes, but it depends on the editors to manage that balance
- Yes, but not to the extent that greedy corporate masters like Gannett requires
- Sure, public service is the newspaper's reason for being
- Yes, better than state or non-profit

NO

- Only a publication that doesn't rely on ad revenue can ever be free of competing interests

MAYBE

- As long as the advertising and news are kept far apart
- As long as it is clear about which comes first
- Most try but fail

Question 14a: *In your opinion, what are the best ways to protect diverse perspectives, views and opinions?(open-ended)*

- Maintain a healthy free press — prejudice, crime and illegal power thrive in secrecy and depend on censorship — best antidote is sunshine
- By writing about them

- Maintain a legal structure that allows both market and community driven efforts at free expression
- By offering a respected forum for them
- Multiple outlets with differing perspectives ... now all is too similar
- Competing newspapers
- People with differing economic and social backgrounds in the newsroom
- Diversity in the newsroom and management
- Preserve public outlets
- More reporting
- Outreach and open doors

Question 15a: *If you could make one change in current journalistic practices that would enhance the quality of news, what would it be?(open-ended)*

- Place value on context
- A more scholarly approach to news
- More thought
- Bigger % of budget returned to news operations
- Decrease pack and theme reporting
- Need more people who grew up in poverty working in the news room
- Improve journalism education
- Stop pandering
- Lifelong learning for journalists
- To become more of a watchdog

There are several salient patterns, values and themes that emerge from the surveys. First, there was unanimous agreement that the primary role of the press is to educate citizens about the political environment in which they live, work and elect representatives, by presenting a cogent and *contextual* analysis of any given situation (Questions 1a and 3a). Second in importance was the role of watchdog — especially of those circumstances in which there exists the possibility that publicly subsidized projects have become privatized profits (Questions 1a, 12a and 15a). The top general uncovered areas that were perceived as constraining the above listed aims and roles of the press, in ranking order, were: 1) Investigative reporting; 2) Implications of social policies; 3) Critical coverage of business practices; 4) Human rights and social justice; and 5) Ethnicity and race issues (Question 2a). The identified reasons and/or inhibiting

forces for these blind spots in coverage included: 1) Journalists' lack of education in dealing with complexity; 2) Lack of time and resources; 3) Traditional beats (bureaucratic news net as described in Chapter Two); 4) Emphasis upon profit; and 5) The obliteration of the line between news and entertainment (Questions 3a, 6a and 8a).

Question 4, by design, was structured to explore perceptions of nodes of power and/or attributions for the identified problem areas listed in the previous questions. As illustrative, if a respondent noted that the investigative reporting was lacking due to an over reliance upon traditional beats and overemphasis upon profit, for example, Question 4 asked them to rate those potential influences upon such noted constraints from tremendous to none. Seemingly somewhat contradictory to other responses on the survey, journalists gave themselves more power in determining the range of ideas covered than citizens, government, politicians, public relations firms and owners. Editors and market competition were the only two identified influences upon diversity, which ranked above or was equivalent to the power attributed to journalists. Although the category of market competition was not signaled to mean either a limitation or an enhancement to the range of ideas presented within the press, it can be inferred from the responses to Questions 9a and 11a that, in this context, it was viewed as an enhancement factor. Similar in theme, only one respondent thought that a commercial press could not serve both the interest of commerce and the public at the same time (Question 13a). All others either assumed that a commercial press was equivalent to a free press and therefore thought it must do both or that it was at least theoretically possible under certain conditions. Responses were, however, evenly split as to whether citizens were better informed as a result of Hawaii's current competitive arrangement (Question 11a).

In more direct relation to circumstances in Hawaii, there were contradictory opinions and perceptions of what is and is not adequately covered and why (Question

11a). For example, some journalists listed Native Hawaiian issues, the military, education and local government as not being adequately covered. Those same issues were perceived as being more than adequately covered by others. These apparent contradictory perceptions may, however, have more to do with different interpretations of the word 'adequate' than a reflection of actual coverage. Some, for instance, may have assumed adequate to mean *amount* of coverage, whereas others might have thought adequate to mean the *ways* in which the topics are covered. The differences between amount and/or content, and ways and/or discourse will be addressed and compared to the surveys in Chapters Four and Five. And lastly, it seems that the overall collective culture of Hawaii and, quite possibly its image as well, has become somewhat of a double-edged sword in relation to journalistic practices. In response to the request to list the positive and negative ways news is gathered, organized and presented in Hawaii, the same characteristics appeared in both lists (Question 6a). What was perceived as "aloha," "respect," "less adversarial" and "sensitive" to some were perceived as "superficial," "pandering" and "lack of investigative reporting" by others.

Interview Results

The following several pages present the results of the interviews with journalists. Quotes are not directly attributed to any specific person as the patterns and clusters of responses are more important than 'who said what' in this research (for the list of participants, see Appendix E). Six of the questions have more responses than respondents due to one person answering with two or more distinct points. Two of the questions have fewer responses than respondents due to time limitations on the interviews.

Journalists' Perceptions Of New Gathering Practices In General And In Hawaii

Question 1b: How have you experienced news production in general, and in Hawaii specifically, change over the years since you have worked in the profession?

- Increase in corporate driven mentality. Journalists are no longer promoted to managers. They hire business people.
- 24 hour news cycle
- Blur between news and entertainment
- From hot type to computers; Used to be that 2/3 of the jobs were in the back shop. Now those tasks are mostly done in the newsroom.
- From family to corporate
- Was a reflection of a dedication to serve a community; now it seems more like a reflection of egos.
- Old time press was a vehicle for reporters; now it's a vehicle for editors.
- Ambient noise. Everything is electronic and now we hear too much!
- Increase in corporate control of every phase of the press
- In Hawaii specifically, the people have neglected to understand the last 50 years of Hawaiian history. *The Advertiser* was ready to fold when Twiggy and Ho formed the JOA. They both went to a hotel in New York City to hammer out the details (*Star-Bulletin*=60% and *The Advertiser*=40%). Both believed in two papers and both were from the Islands. They cooperated in an Island way. This competition rhetoric now, 'kill em,' is a continental philosophy and not an Island one. We now have two mainland owners that do not understand how to make it work for all — which is the point the Island way.
- The lines among local, national and international are blurring — not just here but everywhere. We still have our various sections but they don't make as much sense anymore because something can happen in Asia that will directly impact our local scene such as a trade agreement.

Question 2b: *Have the advances in technology changed the way you collect and organize information? If so, how?*

- Yes, it is now production driven and therefore the deadline pressures have increased.
- Yes, I don't have to leave my desk very often. I can sit here and access e-mail, Internet, Lexis-Nexis, Auto Track, government documents, reference works, quotes, wire copy for the day and even the morgue. We are more efficient because of these systems. However, it becomes too easy to lift paragraphs from previous stories without reworking or examining them. We still need to do aggressive reporting and talk to real people. We have to be vigilant to avoid falling into lazy patterns.
- Journalists are not particularly good writers but we're better now due to computers/word processors. It's easier to edit.
- Accelerated data/information exchange which has quickened the pace for better or worse.
- Production has changed for the better — especially for business — access to the latest quotes.

Question 3b: *What one subject would you most want to explore in more depth that you think would have a positive effect upon performing your current duties?*

- More resources to investigate political corruption and scandal. The people of Hawaii just seem to accept the corruption. The reason we're not doing those corruption stories at this point is, however, not so much about money or fear of politicians but the fear of being scooped by the *Bulletin*. If we spend all that time on one or two stories, those chances increase.
- Ongoing training. It is hugely important in helping journalists stay fresh, curious, open-minded and not too ideological. It's a tough grind. Those who get the chance to step away and refocus tend to be better at seeing what we're missing. But, it's hard to move publishers and editors. Those quarterly reports are always calling.
- I feel I'm just scratching the surface of the technical advantages of the new equipment and systems, and could become much better at doing more critical reporting if I could upgrade my technical skills. If I can find an expert in Turkey who tells me something about submarines at Pearl Harbor, I'd be better equipped to ask intelligent questions, and question the PR handouts, as an example.
- More about the inner workings of society in Hawaii
- As a department, we need more project/investigative reporting — not just 'breaking' news. We need both. For myself, I would like a Ph.D. in communication.

Journalists' Perceptions Of The Commercial Newspaper Industry

Question 4b: *In your opinion, how is the newspaper industry like other industries and how does it differ?*

LIKE:

- The mystique is gone and now we're like the rest.
- Survives on profits — depends on commercial realities.
- A bureaucracy like others
- Needs a profit to survive and requires public confidence.
- Must pay the bills like any business.
- Mass media IS industry. Sometimes the industry gives itself airs about being the defender of the First Amendment, lack of bias and presence of fairness that just aren't deserved.

UNLIKE:

- Its role in the community. It must serve. It would be nice if all businesses acted this way but they are not required to.
- A child of the community more than most businesses and it must reflect that. It must be "one of the family."

- It's a calling like the ministry or military service. It's not for the money, it's in your stomach. A lot of this has been lost and replaced with advocacy.
- Higher missions: maintain democracy, watchdog, civic sounding board and entertainment.
- It's easier to make money in the newspaper business. It's an outrageous profit margin compared to others.
- Lay people overestimate the power of the press. The power comes from the confidence people have in the paper. Therefore it must have credibility.
- Journalism is a skilled craft and not a profession.

Question 5b: *In your opinion, is there or might there exist a tension between market forces and journalistic integrity/independence or are the two complementary?*

- Absolutely! It is built into the system and must be recognized, not denied and dealt with. Journalism's graveyard of publishing is now littered with the news report.
- It depends. If a paper is weak, it is vulnerable to advertisers. *The Advertiser* was many years back. I experienced warnings about publishing anything bad about our advertisers. Now it's different. It isn't even an issue at editorial meetings.
- There certainly is a tension manifest in budgeting, staffing, access to resources, etc.. The big issue today, however, is not whether corporate publishers sway news so much as it is how the quarterly demand to please stockholders translates into lower expectations and fewer resources. In Honolulu, travel budget is a key issue. Many want to cover Asia-Pacific. Gannett wants to cover a less ambitious sphere.
- Potentially complementary but more tension. We need to look at long term commitment rather than short term profits — but it's rare.
- It doesn't have to be antagonistic. But, it will be if they decrease the news hole and restrict investigations that require time and travel. When they cut back on travel for profit, it decreases the quality on journalism.
- During my 39 years in the business I have had stories killed or assigned purely because of economic self interest of the owner or publisher. It doesn't happen often but it does happen. I used to think smaller papers were more vulnerable to pressure; they are more vulnerable to smaller pressures; all papers are vulnerable to pressure, and — like the fella said — 'sometimes the bigger they are, the harder they fall.' Most of the time, however, newspapers are too busy just trying to get their job done to indulge in a lot of machinations. We may be about to reach a new level, however, in which generators of editorial content — formerly called reporters — may gain some influence over advertising content. This is because new studies suggest that the content of advertising has a significant impact on the image or "brand" the publication presents to the community, and reporters and editors should be worried about that image and brand.

Question 6b: *Can a commercial press (primary means of profit via advertising) also be a critical press (holding power accountable) and, if so, how?*

- Within limits. The press has never been revolutionary. Because it is constitutionally protected, it supports the status quo. They went after Nixon because he broke the law and not to change the structure of the system. The press is not an agent of change. It is a chronicler — a spotlight that shines on some things and not on others. Society must change prior to the press.
- Absolutely. We must sell our reputation and credibility.
- Good question. I think the large metro model is fairly successful. Profits, rather than hinder, can bring power. A paper can withstand public and elite pressures if the corporation maintains news integrity. But, are commercial papers doomed to be apologists for the status quo? Probably too often. Most operate from a fairly narrow frame that accepts existing socio-political-economic power structures. To a degree, it's a matter of resources, routines and community expectations.
- Yes, but only when you are not vulnerable.
- Yes, by keeping its priorities straight.
- Yes, otherwise you lose your readers — lose your readers and you lose your advertisers. But, the big ones can take on the big ones, i.e., *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. Here it's different. It's scary. You can't afford not to cover it because of legitimacy but sometimes literally can't 'afford' to cover it. Look at the Bishop Estate story and advertising it's still a problem.

Question 7b: *For what reasons was the idea of a 'one newspaper town' perceived as a threat?*

- Advertising rates would have increased.
- Lack of competition = slackers
- The presence of just one other competing voice has a huge impact on the degree to which newspapers will put principle above profit.
- Free flow of information would be stifled.
- A fat, happy and lazy paper that would not have been responsive to readers because it doesn't have to be.
- It would have been capitalism out of control.
- Too much power in the hands of a few
- Rhetorically, claim was about loss of competing voice, with most attention paid to the editorial positions. The more salient issue was maintaining a second point of view in everyday local coverage. As a political reality, effort was really more about saving jobs. The labour unions provided the real thrust.
- If one paper is lost it becomes harder to deal with the problems of Hawaii — political insularity and lack of a transparent government.
- Gannett would not have been motivated to put out a good paper. I don't think it was about diversity because there are always different voices and perspectives in a community.
- Monopoly! We are very sensitive to monopoly out here. We know the dangers. We've seen it — just think of the BIG FIVE.

Question 8b: *In your opinion, under what circumstances, if any, might the news become 'ideological?'*

- Now we have an ideology of comfort. Everyone is doing well.
- We have little 'leftists' views.
- War
- Most reporters are apolitical.
- Fear, i.e., political correctness
- News is always ideological because news is written by people. In America, we can only strive for balance — not objectivity — within the same publication. Ideology is only a problem if it's uniform ideology like in Europe.
- There is some validity to the notion of a dominant belief system whose ideological foundations tend to overwhelm those who don't benefit from the status quo. But, I find it hard to apply some of that to practice under daily deadlines. Also, I think newsroom norms play a part in categorizing 'how we cover things.' But, I think the daily constraints and dispositions of individual reporters and line editors have at least as much effect, if not more. The best journalism can and does sneak beyond the bounds of ideology.
- No such thing as objectivity. That's bunk. We should be explanatory and analytic, not advocates. I concur with a *New York Times* editor who once said, "our job is to tell them what they need to know because they don't know."

Journalists' Perceptions of The Consequences Of Market Competition

Question 9b: *What have been the most prominent changes in your professional environment since March 15, 2001?*

- It meant a less cozy competitive situation with the *Star-Bulletin*. More overt competition. More pressure on top editors so, thus, more pressure on reporters to develop breaking news articles. Some new editors also came on board at the time, not coincidentally, and they were more open and aggressive.
- Alert to be better. The worst now would be to be scooped.
- 1/3 of our resources now go to the Sunday paper.
- Uncertainty
- Increased energy and aliveness
- Commitment to real competition; not just award ceremonies.
- Expanded news space — 140 work stations — there used to be 90.
- Strangely, we are less influenced by the *Star-Bulletin* than we used to be. Not so many of us see the paper, and what they have doesn't seem to be as important as it used to be. We don't want to be beat on any story, but I think we are looking at TV as our principle competition. As a professional, it is interesting to watch the *Star-Bulletin* try to identify itself, and to see how a publication truly separate from and competitive with us deals with news in comparison to how we deal with it. Overall, I think we are trying to play our game better and better, and paying less attention to the other guy's score. And, it is clear that Gannett intends to win the battle for readers by competing harder. I think they will in the end. I don't know if the *Bulletin* can survive

or if there is a niche or even a big market share which they can preserve. I hope they survive. I hope they compete hard with us and that we do a better job than they do.

Question 10b: *How have the context, resources, and priorities changed, if at all, since the Honolulu Star-Bulletin became a direct competitor of The Honolulu Advertiser?*

- Mainly in the minds of the journalists and editors. The competition makes it more exciting. Everyone took to it right away ... back in the groove.
- Now we strive to be different not just better.
- Yes, no scoops allowed and, an emphasis on 'breaking' stories.
- We spent money on human resources first ... hired 90-120 people now, we'll build a new press.
- More stories between 2-3 a day. This may hurt the investigative projects because of the rush to generate more stories.
- *The Advertiser* set out to be a more comprehensive paper with A.M. and P.M. editions. This is quite a significant change by modern standards. Gannett initially spent more resource investment. Some clearly was capital spending that had been postponed until the change.
- The priority to increase circulation increased.
- It seems to me that Gannett has poured on the resources — new computer systems, office furniture, renovated spaces, plans for a new printing plant, more hires, etc.. Working conditions at *The Advertiser* have improved as a result. It reminds me of what happens when a couple divorces: when you know divorce is inevitable, you stop trying to build up community property. When the divorce is over, you start trying to repair your own economic situation as fast as you can.

Question 11b: *Have you experienced an increase in 'bottom line' pressure since March 15 and, if so, has this helped or hurt the quality of news coverage (or neither)?*

- Gannett could have done the same thing without the breakup, but from an economic standpoint, it made better sense to make the big splash once the subsidy paid to Liberty was off the books. Plus, from a competitive point, Gannett wanted to insure it loaded up right when any competitor tried to enter the market. Pressure actually eased for the first six months after the JOA was dissolved. Common line in the newsroom was, "If you are ever going to pitch an expensive story, do it now." It helped the paper and raised hopes in the newsroom. The paper was too stagnant.
- They have decreased travel budget and that will hurt coverage in the long run.
- No, I do what I want, no time card or anything. I take the freedom, people know they cannot restrain me.
- Yes, at HNA the bottom line was invisible.
- Yes, at this point there is increased pressure. We must think ... decide allocations. It's not necessarily a bad thing because editing is choosing and it forces decisions.
- Yes, money is tight. In other places I have never been told not to do a story because of money (travel), but now it's different.

- Some coverage has become shallower. Sometimes it feels that quantity is more important than quality than it used to be. But, overall writing has become better, people are spending more time on their stories, and, *The Advertiser* is spreading itself generously over all the publics it is trying to reach, not just people who read the paper for hard news. The addition of the afternoon edition, and the appetite of our on-line edition, has made filling the maw a little harder. The paper is even more editor driven than it was in the past, which sometimes is a jolt to reporters. But, the goals are understandable — the editors have strong ideas about what kinds of stories will serve our readers and increase circulation, and are doing everything they can to get those stories in the paper.

Five specific themes emerged from these interviews. First, there was a recognition that newspaper publishing has undergone tremendous changes in the past several decades — most notably the shift from family to corporate control. Overall, this shift was viewed as negatively affecting the practices of journalism (Questions 1b, 2b, 4b, 5b, 6b and 11b). Technological innovations were also seen as a factor of change but with positive, as well as negative results. On the positive side, there was perceived increased efficiency. On the negative side, as a result of new technologies, there was an increase in deadline pressures which was viewed as threatening the processes of investigative reporting (Questions 2b and 10b).

Second, although the newspaper industry was identified as being ‘like other businesses’ because of its commercial base, most also spoke of the press’ ‘higher mission’ as one of the dominant vehicles for political communication. There was general agreement that this ‘mission’ was currently being compromised due to the quarterly demand to please stockholders and, at times, the commercial base itself — advertisers (Questions 4b, 5b, 6b, and 11b).

Third and, in certain aspects, at odds with some of the assumptions underlying the responses to the previous two themes, all but one person thought a commercial press could also serve as a critical press. Yet, most interviewees added qualifiers and conditions under which this would become a possibility. These ‘conditions,’ however,

had already been identified as being eroded by bottom-line pressures and a corporate ethos within previously asked questions. Furthermore, monopoly, as a market condition, was often viewed as restricting the flow of information necessary for a functioning democracy (Questions 1b, 5b, 6b, and 7b).

Fourth, the importance of not being ‘scooped’ was identified as a driving force in reporting since the two papers started engaging in head-to-head competition. This was viewed, by some, as a negative influence upon the quality of journalism due to the emphasis on ‘breaking stories’ rather than investigative projects (Questions 9b and 10b).

And fifth, the lack of different and continued education and training for journalists was seen as a major impediment to enhancing the quality of journalism (Question 3b).

The following and last section of this chapter lists key excerpts from those interviews conducted with SOS participants. Again, quotes are not directly attributed to any specific person. (For the list of participants see Appendix E.) In the service of brevity, overlapping responses are not presented. Responses to the entire interview instrument are also not presented because some answers, however interesting, were tangential to this project’s line of inquiry.

SOS Participants’ Perceptions of Monopoly and Market Competition

Question 1c: *What were some of the concerns about news in general, and specifically news in Hawaii, that led to the successful organization of ‘Save Our Star Bulletin?’*

- News is currently being controlled by a handful of corporations; chains are now eating chains.
- We didn’t want Gannett having a monopoly on information or advertising rates. We’ve seen in many other places just what they do when they are the only game in town.
- Also, the guild was faced with the loss of 82 jobs with the *Star-Bulletin* and we needed to fight for those members.

Question 2c: *What were some of the key themes/ideas and who were the targeted constituents?*

- The main people involved were community activists; people who were highly educated; those with connections; and the movers and shakers of the community. Who joined SOS made all the difference. It was an elite and significant bunch, certainly not grassroots. We thought of it as the elite left and the capitalists joining forces with a common goal. The business community joined in as their self interests were advertising rates. Everyone that was anyone jumped on board — Democrats and Republicans alike including the mayor and the governor (even though at first the governor publicly announced that he ‘didn’t care if it was a one or a two newspaper town). Many of those people were good people but too middle class — a lot of them just wanted to be on the right side when the chips finally fell.
- We knew we needed wider support, more ‘citizens,’ so we took the movement to them. We showed up at community meetings, football games and trade shows with petitions in hand. Eventually we did receive the support of the public.
- The loss of numerous jobs due to the closing of a paper that was NOT failing (12% profit guaranteed by Gannett to Liberty under the JOA) as was reported was the key theme in SOS. In ranking order of importance, it seemed saving the ‘idea’ of two papers (two editorial voices) and saving jobs were first, then to prevent a monopoly situation in Honolulu.

Question 3c: *For what reasons was the idea of a ‘one newspaper town’ in Honolulu perceived as a threat?*

- Given Hawaii’s isolation it would have become a one newspaper STATE not just town. Competition makes for better newspapering.
- A free press cannot be entirely state or corporate owned. Both are a threat.
- Having two papers directly contributed to the Bishop Estate story. If we hadn’t had the *Bulletin*, the corrupt trustees would probably still hold their offices.
- A one paper state would probably have undercovered Native Hawaiian issues because reporting on the poor is usually the first thing to go.

Question 4c: *Can a commercial press (primary means of profit via advertising) also be a critical press (holding power accountable) and, if so, how?*

- We need commerce for a free press. The USA has a commercial press system.
- A city paper that is big and strong will have this system work better for them because in larger papers the wall between editorial and advertising is stronger. It is not a good system for smaller weaker papers as advertising pressures can more easily kill a story. A good recent example is that in Hilo where an editor pulled a story so as not to lose a grocery chain, but the Seattle Times ran a story criticizing Nordstroms — one of their biggest advertisers.

Question 5c: *Which of the goals, that fueled the success of SOS, have been realized?*

- All. It is unbelievable. All the planets were aligned perfectly for this to happen. It was a combination of union power and the SOS on the front end; and several others trying to find a buyer on the back side. On the front end, the unions made all the difference — quite possibly these results could have only happened here in Hawaii given the strength of unions. Honolulu and Knoxville have the same story except the ending due to weak unions there. Denver recently added JOA protection due to the Honolulu case. Anti-trust lawyers were made available to us and the CWA paid for the local attorneys.
- A big fear initially was that unless we could find a buyer for the *Bulletin*, SOS was formed to preside over its funeral.

Question 6c: *What evidence, if any, have you seen that indicates the community continues to care about the quality of news coverage?*

- Seven months later people are still talking about it and many are subscribing to both papers to see what happens.
- The *Star-Bulletin* is certainly different. It appears to have gone to the right. It used to be more of a labour paper but it has lost that. On the other hand, *The Advertiser* seems a bit more humane and less mean.
- Black may end up forming yet another JOA with Gannett in the future. This is not a good scenario but better than Gannett owning the only paper.

Overall, these brief responses from SOS members reflect a similar set of concerns as did the surveys and interviews with journalists. There was a suspicion of monopoly status in the newspaper industry in general and of Gannett jockeying for such a position in specific (Questions 1c, 2c and 6c). Yet, by contrast, larger newspapers were seen, by some, as preferable to smaller ones because of their perceived strength in keeping more intact the ‘firewall’ between the editorial and business sides of the press (Question 4c). Likewise, a commercial press was generally viewed as being capable of adequately serving the political needs of citizens — just not a ‘corporatized’ commercial press (Questions 1c, 4c and 6c). Market competition, in comparison to a monopoly situation, was considered to have a positive impact upon the quality of coverage by increasing the potential for diverse views to be published. But, the ways in which this diversity

manifested was not necessarily the same ways that were predicted prior to the sale of the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* (Questions 3c, 4c and 6c). There were, however, three noticeable differences that did emerge between the SOS interviews and those with journalists. These differences are as follows: The emphasis by the SOS upon their struggles to preserve jobs rather than the more theoretical goal of preserving two editorial voices; the emphasis upon the powerful role that the unions played in keeping the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* alive; and the emphasis upon dispelling what some have called ‘the myth’ that the SOS was formed as a grassroots movement (Questions 2c and 5c). Until that time, in no other state had the State’s Attorney General, with the governor’s authorization, filed such a law suit. If it had gone to trial, the Justice Department would have most likely considered the issues in question to be a matter of high level state interest in addition to a citizen’s protest.

Summary

Like most narratives, the whole and/or overall meaning of these interviews and surveys are greater than the sum of their parts. Likewise, as with the majority of narratives, there are contradictory and competing aspects to the story line. Within these composite narratives, for example, one person said that a commercial competitive press best serves democracy, but then went on to *also* say that the problem with the lack of press diversity — which may lead to political dysfunction — resides in the capitalist greed of owners and corporations. On the one hand, then, many of the responses either implicitly or explicitly reflected a sophisticated awareness of some of the implications of commercialism and/or corporatism. But, on the other hand, the market model of the press remained the perceived counter-weight to state power and its potential abuses. ‘Free expression,’ ‘alternative voices’ and ‘quality’ seem to be intertwined with a ‘free market.’

Yet, at the same time, market forces were also often looked upon with skepticism, as evidenced by the many comments about the negative consequences of a bottom-line approach newspapering. In other words, there was a co-mingling of various strands of thought and traditions within the results of this portion of the project.

Nevertheless, with this said, the aggregated results of the surveys and interviews show that, overall, respondents expected greater diversity of views (as one measure of quality) both within and between the two newspapers as a result of moving from a semi-competitive (editorial) JOA situation to a head-to-head market competition — and certainly more diversity than if Gannett would have held a monopoly position in Honolulu.¹⁶ With a few exceptions, the responses to both instruments, as well as the presented views of the community, reflect either the market-liberal or the reformist liberal tradition. For example, in the service of the ideal roles of educator and watchdog, the majority of respondents thought that a commercial press was the best model available for providing and ensuring a free and diverse flow of political information necessary for a functioning democracy. Moreover, ‘a free press’ was often used interchangeably and synonymously with a market-based press. Tensions between the two were openly acknowledged but were viewed overall as surmountable.

As an extension of this line of thinking, market competition between newspapers was associated with more diverse ideas in print. In other words, democratic pluralism — as manifest in diverse views within the press — was seen as dependent, in part, upon market pluralism. Diversity within the press was also seen as dependent upon the socio-economic and cultural backgrounds of individual newswriters.

¹⁶I use the term ‘aggregated’ because some aspects of the perceived impacts of market competition versus monopoly were not garnered from the survey, but were from the interviews. In retrospect, this is most likely due to the survey’s instrument lack of sensitivity in various areas and to certain issues.

A continuum of what was considered a ‘healthy’ press emerged from these surveys and interviews. The existence of multiple commercial outlets, preferably including independents like David Black’s Black Press, Ltd., was viewed as the ideal condition under which diversity manifests. Publicly-traded corporations and/or chains like Gannett were seen as intentionally decreasing diversity of views in the service of profit and, therefore, were viewed suspiciously as mediators of political life. And, finally, monopoly status of a corporation or conglomerate in any one city was looked upon with hostility, as monopoly was interpreted as precluding diversity of news content, as producing shoddy local coverage and as assuring higher advertising rates. Identified blockages to diversity were most often linked to increased corporate control of the industry but not with the market-based structure of the press in general. Some of the factors, mentioned by several respondents, that negatively influence news content are: Lack of time and resources, traditional beats, pack reporting and pandering to advertisers. In short, the respondents tended to focus more upon the organizational and institutional pressures (internal) that they perceived as preventing a ‘healthy’ press, and less upon possible structural impediments (external). For example, many survey respondents and interviewees spoke about the deleterious consequences of increased bottom-line pressures, from their respective organizations, upon the quality of news. But, rarely did they address the external commercial logics and imperatives that drive such internal pressures.

Lastly, there existed an underlying sense of nostalgia for the era when most American newspapers were independent and family-owned. Currently, of the 1,500 publishing dailies in the U.S., only 250 are family-owned (Lyons, 2002, p. 6). There also seemed to be some comfort taken and hopes raised by the fact that the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* was purchased by an independent, rather than another corporation — even

though David Black is considered ‘absentee’ and an ‘outsider.’ Independent ownership appeared to be implicitly equated with independent views.

The next chapter will begin to evaluate and test the key premises and claims held by the journalists, SOS participants and many community members by comparing them with the results of two levels of content analysis. Did renewed market competition between the two Honolulu dailies lead to diversity of perspectives, opinions and views? If so, in what areas and around what issues? And, did the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, independently-owned, exhibit a higher quality of journalism, as intimated, than did the chain-owned *Honolulu Advertiser*, under the newly competitive arrangement?

Content and Its Dis-contented Analysis: Competitive Compliance?

In journalism, our sins of omission are almost always
more grave than our sins of commission. I believe that
a more serious problem than error and confusion is what
(Molly Ivins, 2002)

Chapter Four presents the results of the content analysis conducted on the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* and *The Honolulu Advertiser*, both before and after head-to-head competition. As previously discussed in Chapter One, both the market-liberal and reformist liberal traditions assume that market competition between newspapers is a democratically better arrangement than either a JOA or a monopolistic ‘one-newspaper town’ because it is thought that commercial competition creates the conditions under which a free and diverse flow of information is possible. If these assumptions, upon which both the success of the SOS campaign and many anti-trust laws are based, are grounded in empirical fact, changes in the content of both papers — toward ‘quality’ — should occur as a reflection of the competitive arrangement. Chapter Four looks at these changes and addresses the following five questions: Did market competition improve the quality, as operationalized in Chapter Two, of both papers and broaden the range of politically relevant topics to which the citizens of Hawaii are exposed?¹⁷; How are the two papers differentiated?; How do the two papers resemble one another?; What were the low representation areas of inquiry and/or blind spots in Hawaii under the JOA and, did

¹⁷ Again, as defined in Chapter One, politically relevant information is loosely defined as those affairs which deal with resource allocation, power and social equity.

these shift as a result of market competition?; Last, do these results reflect the predictions and opinions of journalists and SOS participants, especially the perception that market competition is an important condition for diversity of ideas, as presented in the previous chapter?

Methods and Measures

Content analysis, an investigative method well suited and often used for media research of this nature, was employed to measure ‘how much’ of ‘what’ changes occurred in the content of the two papers in question. As a method of textual analysis, content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context through the quantification of the manifest content (Krippendorff, 1980). It is generally used to summarize some of the characteristics of media content, like news, and to then draw inferences beyond the text about realities which lie outside media content (Stempel and Westley, 1989). In this particular study, it is used to describe and compare broad patterns of coverage and to relate them to possible filters that enhance or stifle diverse views and opinions.

Four characteristics must be present to satisfy the demands of a research design using content analysis as a tool of investigation. These are as follows: 1) *Objectivity* — in the sense that operational definitions and rules for the classification of variables should be explicit and comprehensive enough that other researchers who repeat the process will arrive at the same decisions in coding the data (i.e. reliability); 2) *Systematic* — meaning one and only one set of guidelines for sampling and coding is used and consistently applied throughout the study; 3) *Quantitative* — the need to record numerical values or the frequencies with which the various defined types of content occur; and 4) *Manifest*

Content — referring to the coding of what is ‘actually there’ rather than what the analyst thinks and/or feels was intended (Bailey and Hackett, 1997). All four criteria were met in this study.

There are, however, several limitations to this methodological approach. First, it cannot *prove* the presence or absence of particular filters in the news system. It can, however, suggest connections between content and organizational practices. Second, the need for pre-designed categories limits its yields. In other words, you can only get out of it what you put into the design. Third, frequency of categories is not necessarily the best indicator of the meaning of a news report. Many times, context is important in determining meaning. Given these limitations, researchers, such as this author, often use content analysis as an adjunct or complementary method of textual analysis to the overall design of a project. It is also common to employ more than one level of content analysis to a given text. It was necessary in this study, for example, to use two separate levels of content analysis to trace the shifts in content within and between the two papers. The first level was designed to monitor overall changes in volume and provenance of stories and the second level was designed to monitor topical shifts. Additionally, amount and types of overlapping stories were also measured.

Corpora were drawn from both papers for a three-week period — 15 days directly preceding the competitive arrangement and 15 days after (N=60). Weekends were excluded due to the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* not publishing a Sunday edition until April 1, 2001. The morning edition was used for *The Honolulu Advertiser* sample and the afternoon edition for the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* because each had only respectively published these editions prior to March 15, 2001. The sections analyzed were the ‘A’ or

front-page section — theoretically where the ‘hard news’ and/or national and international political news of the day is located — and the ‘Hawaii’ section where much of the local news is located. However, given that previous research suggests that newspapers take approximately three to nine months to establish an ‘identity,’ the post-competition corpora were taken four months after ownership changes (McCombs, 1988, pp. 131-134). Monitoring dates were February 22-March 14, 2001 and July 2-23, 2001.

The monitoring periods were typical in that no major events occurred which would have artificially skewed the data, except for the accidental sinking of the Japanese ship, Ehime Maru, by an American submarine off the coast of Hawaii, during the pre-competitive period. This event most likely accounted for the decrease in coverage within the *Disasters and Accidents* category after head-to-head competition and is duly noted in the discussion of those specific results. Furthermore, as was noted in the interviews (Questions 10b and 11b) and also easily observable, the two daily newspapers intentionally retained their customary sections, formats, layouts and staff until *after* March 15th, 2001. Evident changes in style and shifts in editorial personnel occurred within the first few weeks of head-to-head competition. Therefore, the chosen pre-competition monitoring period was overall representative of ‘business as usual’ under the JOA arrangement. In retrospect and based upon impressions as a regular reader of both newspapers, the post-competition monitoring period, four months after David Black assumed the helm of the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, was also overall representative of the ways in which the two dailies eventually decided to approach newspapering. In short, within the sections analyzed in this study, few noticeable differences have occurred

between the first few months of the competitive arrangement when the corpora was selected, and the present time.

Twelve variables were constructed to measure 'volume of news' and 'authors/source.' They include number of pages, number of stories, number of stories by local staff, number of stories from wire or news services, number of op-eds, number of letters to the editor, number of enterprise stories (locally authored only), number of controversy stories (locally authored only), number of stories by female writers (locally authored only), number of stories by male writers (locally authored only), number of co-written stories/both genders (locally authored only) and number of stories by authors of unknown origin (also locally written only). For the purpose of this study, 'Enterprise news' is defined as, 'investigative reports or a series on an issue initiated by the news media rather than driven by events or promoted by other institutions' (Tuchman, 1979). 'Controversy news' is defined as, "space devoted to differing positions about *public issues* by at least two people" (Hale, 1988, p. 165). Enterprise and controversy news were recorded because both indices have been associated with the characteristics and measures of 'quality newspapers' (Picard & Brody, 1997, pp. 57-58). Other characteristics associated with quality, as previously detailed, are the size of newshole (space that is devoted to news rather than advertising), size of editorial newshole, amount of hard vs. soft news, the proportion of local news to total news and the range of topics and perspectives covered (Alger, 1998, p. 181). Values were recorded as present/absent, and frequencies were calculated. Inter-coder reliability measure for this level of content analysis was initially 75%. Amendments and adjustments were made to include lengthy obituaries as stories and a second test conducted. The second test yielded 98% inter-coder reliability.

For the topical content analysis, a mutually exclusive 25 category schema was used. These categories were adapted from the research protocols used in *Diversity and Quality in the Monopoly Press: A Content Analysis of Hollinger Newspapers* (Ottawa, 1997). These categories include *Business, Education, Crime/Courts, Disaster/Accidents, Labour, Health, Environment, Civic Affairs, Women's Issues, Social Policy, State Politics, National and Federal Politics, International, Agriculture, Military, Land Use and Development Issues, Native Hawaiian Affairs, Race Relations, Entertainment, Sports, Science and Technology, Culture, Tourism, Lifestyles and Other*. Values were recorded and frequencies were calculated. One intra-coder reliability measure was taken for the topical level of content analysis. The result was 95%. Coding protocols and operational definitions for the volume/source and topical content analysis are located in Appendices F and G.

Volume and Origin Results

The following six tables are the results of the first level of content analysis designed to monitor overall shifts in volume and origin of stories.

**Volume and Origin
A Section
The Honolulu Advertiser
Table 4.1**

	Pre		Post	
	N	%	N	%
Total Pages	238	100	208	100
Total News Stories	317	100	260	100
Local	90	28	66	25
Wire	227	72	194	75
Male Authored (Local Only)	54	60	40	60
Female Authored (Local Only)	27	30	22	34
Co-written-Both Genders (Local Only)	7	8	2	3
Authors Gender Unknown (Local Only)	2	2	2	3
Total Op-Eds	77	100	76	100
Local Op-Eds	47	61	46	60
Wire Op-Eds	30	39	30	40
Local Op-Eds/Local-Focus	33	71	36	78
Local Op-Eds/National-Focus	10	22	4	9
Local Op-Eds/International-Focus	3	7	6	13
Wire Op-Eds/Nationals-Focus	22	73	21	70
Wire Op-Eds/International-Focus	8	27	9	30
Letter to the Editor	170	100	151	100
Enterprise News (Local Stories Only)	0	0	0	0
Controversy News (Local Stories Only)	10	11	16	24

**Volume and Origin
A Section
Honolulu Star-Bulletin
Table 4.2**

	Pre		Post	
	N	%	N	%
Total Pages	191	100	197	100
Total News Stories	262	100	304	100
Local	82	31	95	31
Wire	180	69	209	69
Male Authored (Local Only)	47	57	49	52
Female Authored (Local Only)	28	34	39	41
Co-written-Both Genders (Local Only)	2	3	1	1
Authors Gender Unknown (Local Only)	5	6	6	6
Total Op-Eds	82	100	80	100
Local Op-Eds	51	62	44	55
Wire Op-Eds	31	38	36	45
Local Op-Eds/Local-Focus	29	57	23	52
Local Op-Eds/National-Focus	12	23	16	36
Local Op-Eds/International-Focus	10	20	5	12
Wire Op-Eds/Nationals-Focus	24	77	33	92
Wire Op-Eds/International-Focus	7	23	3	8
Letter to the Editor	90	100	89	100
Enterprise News (Local Stories Only)	0	0	0	0
Controversy News (Local Stories Only)	10	12	16	17

As tables 4.1. and 4.2 indicate, both the total number of pages and stories in *The Honolulu Advertiser*, within the ‘A’ section, decreased after March 15, 2001, while the number of pages and stories in the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin’s* ‘A’ section increased. It must be noted, however, that the two papers were not equivalent in size when publishing under the JOA. The *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* had been the smaller of the two for several years. Given this initial differentiation in size, the percentage category in these tables more accurately reflect shifts in volume.

The ratio of locally produced stories to wire service stories remained relatively stable for both papers with only a slight increase in *The Honolulu Advertiser’s* reliance

upon wire services. Although both papers had more stories authored by men than women prior to the transition, the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* substantially lessened the gap under its new owner, David Black, whereas *The Honolulu Advertiser* continued in its discrepancy pattern of almost 2:1 in favor of male authors. Both newspapers' op-ed sections remained overall constant in relation to the amount of opinions published. But, the emphasis of locally written op-eds shifted. *The Honolulu Advertiser's* local op-eds focused more upon international issues after head-to-head competition. The *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, on the other hand, decreased its opinions on international events and increased its emphasis upon national issues. The same pattern emerged for the *Honolulu Star Bulletin's* syndicated/wire op-eds, as well.

Volume of 'controversy' stories increased within the 'A' sections of both newspapers after March 15, 2001. Neither paper, either pre or post, published what could be strictly labeled an 'enterprise' story. Again, enterprise stories are often considered the cornerstones of investigative journalism and the hallmark of a 'quality' press. One only has to think of the Pentagon Papers, Watergate and, closer to the citizens of Hawaii, the Bishop Estate story, to understand the importance of 'enterprise' in the functioning of a healthy press within democratic societies. As noted in Chapter Three, the Bishop Estate (now called Kamehameha Schools) is the chief funding source for the private education of Native Hawaiian children and controls millions of dollars worth of land in the state of Hawaii. As the result of enterprise investigation by the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, under the JOA, the trustees of the Bishop Estate were removed for mismanaging the trust which led to several individual criminal indictments and convictions.

**Volume and Origin
Hawaii Section
The Honolulu Advertiser
Table 4.3**

	Pre		Post	
	N	%	N	%
Total Pages	71	100	94	100
Total Stories	181	100	154	100
Local	180	99	151	98
Wire	1	1	3	2
Male Authored (Local Only)	109	60	73	48
Female Authored (Local Only)	57	32	63	42
Co-written-Both Genders (Local Only)	11	6	0	0
Authors Gender Unknown (Local Only)	3	2	15	10
Enterprise News (Local Stories Only)	0	0	0	0
Controversy News (Local Stories Only)	33	18	24	16

**Volume and Origin
Hawaii Section
Honolulu Star-Bulletin
Table 4.4**

	Pre		Post	
	N	%	N	%
Total Pages	59	100	71	100
Total Stories	121	100	104	100
Local	119	98	99	95
Wire	2	2	5	5
Male Authored (Local Only)	42	35	40	41
Female Authored (Local Only)	59	50	41	41
Co-written-Both Genders (Local Only)	4	4	2	2
Authors Gender Unknown (Local Only)	14	11	16	16
Enterprise News (Local Stories Only)	0	0	0	0
Controversy News (Local Stories Only)	23	19	15	15

Tables 4.3 and 4.4 trace the shifts in volume and origin for the ‘Hawaii’ sections. Although both *The Honolulu Advertiser* and the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* increased their pages in this section, the number of stories decreased. There are several possible reasons for this apparent and/or actual decrease in the newshole such as an increase in space devoted to advertising, larger or more photographs and/or graphics or longer stories. These possibilities and probabilities in relation to the topical results of this study will be discussed within the last section of this chapter. The ratio between local and wire stories remained approximately the same for both papers, as did the volume of controversy and enterprise stories. The number of stories authored by men in the ‘Hawaii’ section decreased in *The Honolulu Advertiser* but increased in the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*. Conversely, female authorship rose by 10% at *The Honolulu Advertiser* and fell by 9% at the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*.

**Grand Total Amounts
Volume and Origin
The Honolulu Advertiser
Table 4.5**

	Pre		Post	
	N	%	N	%
Total Daily Pages	917	100	884	100
Total Pages in Two Sections	309	100	302	100
Number of Stories in Two Sections	498	100	414	100
Local	270	54	217	52
Wire	228	46	197	48
Male Authored (Local Only)	163	60	113	52
Female Authored (Local Only)	84	31	85	39
Co-written-Both Genders (Local Only)	18	6	2	1
Authors Gender Unknown (Local Only)	7	3	17	8
Enterprise News (Local Stories Only)	0	0	0	0
Controversy News (Local Stories Only)	43	16	40	18

**Grand Total Amounts
Volume and Origin
Honolulu Star-Bulletin
Table 4.6**

	Pre		Post	
	N	%	N	%
Total Daily Pages	743	100	—*	—
Total Pages in Two Sections	250	100	268	100
Number of Stories in Two Sections	383	100	408	100
Local	201	52	194	48
Wire	182	48	214	52
Male Authored (Local Only)	89	44	89	46
Female Authored (Local Only)	87	43	80	41
Co-written-Both Genders (Local Only)	6	4	3	2
Authors Gender Unknown (Local Only)	19	9	22	11
Enterprise News (Local Stories Only)	0	0	0	0
Controversy News (Local Stories Only)	33	16	31	16

*The *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* ceased printing the daily page count on March 15, 2001.

Tables 4.5 and 4.6 combine the ‘A’ and the ‘Hawaii’ sections in the service of garnering a more complete picture of the consequences of market competition upon volume, provenance and resource (re)allocations. The combined data on *The Honolulu Advertiser* shows a decrease in the number of pages printed per day and a decrease in the number of pages and stories within the two sections analyzed. This is interesting to note in light of the public pronouncements by *The Honolulu Advertiser*, prior to the transition, that they intended to increase the size of the paper. They did, in fact, add several more sections after the data gathering for this project had already been completed. But, the sections added were in the soft news and/or ‘fluff’ genre, such as food, entertainment and technological gadgetry which were not included within the corpora of this study and therefore would not have effected the results. Furthermore, as one interviewee stated,

approximately 35% of their overall resources are invested in the Sunday edition (not included within this prong of the study) which produces the majority of advertising revenue. In essence, the two most important sections for political communication were reduced under the competitive arrangement.

The percentage of change and, in turn, resource (re)-allocation, for the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* is impossible to calculate because they ceased printing the number of daily pages when David Black began publishing. A call to the paper in an attempt to locate that information proved futile as they stated that they did not have that specific information. It can be noted, nevertheless, that the number of stories printed, within the two sections, did increase after March 15, 2001 to a level comparable to *The Honolulu Advertiser*. Both papers' ratio of wire to local remained approximately the same, as did the volume of controversy and enterprise stories. Overall, these findings suggest that market competition affected volume and editorial focus of the two papers in different ways. Whereas the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* increased its pages and stories in the 'A' and 'Hawaii' sections (now comparable to *The Honolulu Advertiser's* size), *The Honolulu Advertiser* decreased theirs. And, whereas *The Honolulu Advertiser* increased its international emphasis within locally written op-eds, the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* decreased its international focus and increased its attention to national issues. All other indices indicate little, if any, significant changes. But, this level of content analysis is only one aspect of the analysis necessary to assess the changes between and within the two papers. It does not address topical shifts nor breadth of perspective.

Topical Results

The following seven tables, therefore, present the results of the topical content analysis for the 'A' and 'Hawaii' sections, photographs/graphics and overlapping stories. These tables are each divided into two genres, 'hard news' and 'soft news', and highlight those areas of undercovered and/or 'missing news' in both genres. 'Hard news' refers to those stories that are either political in orientation — most often prescheduled, such as legislative sessions, trials and speeches by politicians — or unscheduled events, such as fires, earthquakes, plane crashes and coups, where the timeliness of their presentation is of great importance. Conversely, 'soft news' refers to stories that possess entertainment value, such as food, fashion, pets and celebrities, or 'news you can use' in the form of consumer advertorials. 'Soft news' is more often than not nonscheduled and therefore can be published when the news organization determines (Tuchman, p.73).

'Low representation' and/or missing news' refers to those subjects that are of political and public relevance, but are either not covered or not adequately covered (Hackett & Gruneau, 2000; Project Censored Canada, 1996). For example, most daily newspapers offer a business section of some sort to announce the winners and losers in the market. But, rarely do newspapers offer a labour section to explore the human costs of these wins and losses (Schechter, 1998, p. 23). This category tends to signal how power relations are expressed in society and, in turn, inscribed within the commercial news media. The process by which people and issues are deemed not worthy of press coverage has been referred to as a form of 'symbolic annihilation.' As Tuchman stated: "The media have the ability to express lack of power by minimizing people through symbolic annihilation — by under or misrepresenting them (Tuchman, 1981, pp.169-185).

Conversely, however, low representation can also signal immense power as in the cases of corporate fraud and malfeasance (Bakan, 2004). This specific category is of particular importance to this study as ‘missing news’ is a reflective index of diversity in general, and therefore can reveal some of the consequences of market competition. For design purposes, the demarcation between ‘low representation’ and ‘represented’ was set at 1%.¹⁸ Therefore, those areas and/or topics that were reported as being 1% or less of the time, either before or after competition, are highlighted by italics in the following tables.

¹⁸ Percentage results depend upon the divisions between topic categories. Slice any topic into enough smaller categories and all might be considered ‘low representation.’ However, the categories used in this study are consistent with those used in other studies of its kind and therefore can be used for comparative purposes. Also, further statistical analysis on this data was deemed unnecessary due to the differences between and within the two newspapers being quite small and the fact that the monitoring times were not strictly a sample from some longer period of time, but rather a corpora. Furthermore, the directions of the shifts that did occur are clearly evident using percentages.

**Topical Results
A Section
The Honolulu Advertiser
Table 4.7**

	Pre		Post	
	N	%	N	%
Hard News				
International	76	24.0	54	20.8
Disaster/Accidents	43	13.6	17	6.5
National & Federal Politics	38	12.0	16	6.2
Crime/Courts	37	11.7	39	15.0
Military	26	8.2	19	7.3
Business	17	5.4	17	6.5
Health	13	4.1	15	5.8
Education	10	3.2	4	1.5
Environment	8	2.5	3	1.2
Science & Technology	8	2.5	13	5.0
Labour	5	1.6	5	1.9
State Politics	4	1.3	9	3.5
Tourism	3	0.9	2	0.8
Civic Affairs	3	0.9	6	2.3
Hawaiian Affairs	2	0.6	2	0.8
Race Relations	1	0.3	4	1.5
Women's Issues	1	0.3	1	0.4
Social Policy	0	0.0	1	0.4
Land Use/Development Issues	0	0.0	0	0.0
Culture	0	0.0	8	3.1
Agriculture	0	0.0	2	0.8

	Pre		Post	
	N	%	N	%
Soft News				
Entertainment	9	2.8	8	3.1
Lifestyle	5	1.6	5	1.9
Sports	1	0.3	4	1.5

	Pre		Post	
	N	%	N	%
Other*	7	2.2	6	2.3
Total	317	100.0	260	100.1

**Topical Results
A Section
Honolulu Star-Bulletin
Table 4.8**

	Pre		Post	
	N	%	N	%
Hard News				
International	74	28.2	70	23.0
National & Federal Politics	33	12.6	31	10.2
Disaster/Accidents	28	10.7	20	6.6
Crime/Courts	25	9.5	37	12.2
Military	15	5.7	11	3.6
Business	13	5.0	13	4.3
Health	13	5.0	20	6.6
Education	8	3.1	11	3.6
Tourism	4	1.5	0	0.0
Race Relations	4	1.5	5	1.6
Civic Affairs	4	1.5	8	2.6
Science & Technology	4	1.5	13	4.3
Hawaiian Affairs	3	1.1	3	1.0
Environment	3	1.1	3	1.0
State Politics	3	1.1	8	2.6
Labour	2	0.8	4	1.3
Women's Issues	2	0.8	2	0.7
Social Policy	2	0.8	0	0.0
Land Use/Development Issues	1	0.4	4	1.3
Culture	0	0.0	4	1.3
Agriculture	0	0.0	2	0.7

	Pre		Post	
	N	%	N	%
Soft News				
Lifestyle	11	4.2	18	5.9
Entertainment	4	1.5	10	3.3
Sports	1	0.4	5	1.6

	Pre		Post	
	N	%	N	%
Other*	5	1.9	2	0.7
Total	262	99.9	304	100.0

*Other: Obituaries, Religion and Road Work Stories

**Topical Results
Hawaii Section
The Honolulu Advertiser
Table 4.9**

	Pre		Post	
	N	%	N	%
Hard News				
Crime/Courts	52	28.7	33	21.4
Civic Affairs	22	12.2	17	11.0
State Politics	17	9.4	8	5.2
Land Use/Development Issues	13	7.2	2	1.3
Education	11	6.1	13	8.4
Disaster/Accidents	11	6.1	12	7.8
Business	7	3.9	9	5.8
Environment	6	3.3	8	5.2
Labour	6	3.3	5	3.2
Military	6	3.3	11	7.1
Health	4	2.2	1	0.6
Agriculture	4	2.2	1	0.6
Hawaiian Affairs	4	2.2	2	1.3
Social Policy	1	0.6	1	0.6
Science & Technology	1	0.6	3	1.9
Race Relations	0	0.0	0	0.0
International	0	0.0	1	0.6
National & Federal Politics	0	0.0	0	0.0
Tourism	0	0.0	2	1.3
Women's Issues	0	0.0	3	1.9
Culture	0	0.0	4	2.6

**Topical Results
Hawaii Section
Honolulu Star-Bulletin
Table 4.10**

	Pre		Post	
	N	%	N	%
Hard News				
Crime/Courts	29	24.0	25	24.0
State Politics	16	13.2	8	7.7
Disaster/Accidents	12	9.9	6	5.8
Civic Affairs	12	9.9	9	8.7
Land Use/Development Issues	7	5.8	3	2.9
Education	7	5.8	5	4.8
Hawaiian Affairs	5	4.1	3	2.9
Labour	5	4.1	1	1.0
Business	4	3.3	9	8.7
Health	3	2.5	4	3.8
Science & Technology	3	2.5	3	2.9
National & Federal Politics	2	1.7	0	0.0
International	2	1.7	2	1.9
Military	2	1.7	6	5.8
Culture	2	1.7	1	1.0
Environment	1	0.8	1	1.0
Agriculture	1	0.8	1	1.0
Women's Issues	0	0.0	0	0.0
Social Policy	0	0.0	0	0.0
Tourism	0	0.0	0	0.0
Race Relations	0	0.0	1	1.0

	Pre		Post	
	N	%	N	%
Soft News				
Lifestyle	7	3.9	4	2.6
Entertainment	5	2.8	4	2.6
Sports	1	0.6	4	2.6

	Pre		Post	
	N	%	N	%
Soft News				
Lifestyle	3	2.5	10	9.6
Entertainment	3	2.5	4	3.8
Sports	1	0.8	1	1.0

	Pre		Post	
	N	%	N	%
Other*	3	1.7	6	3.9
Total	181	100.3	154	99.5

	Pre		Post	
	N	%	N	%
Other*	1	0.8	1	1.0
Total	121	100.1	104	100.3

*Other: Obituaries, Religion and Road Work Stories

Topical Results
Photographs/Visual Images
The Honolulu Advertiser
Table 4.11

	Pre		Post	
	N	%	N	%
Hard News				
International	39	15.2	64	23.8
Disaster/Accidents	38	14.8	17	6.3
Military	28	10.9	22	8.2
Crime/Courts	26	10.2	27	10.0
Education	15	5.9	10	3.7
Science & Technology	8	3.1	6	2.2
Environment	8	3.1	3	1.1
Land Use/Development Issues	7	2.7	3	1.1
Business	6	2.3	14	5.2
National & Federal Politics	6	2.3	3	1.1
Tourism	5	2.0	2	0.7
Civic Affairs	4	1.6	19	7.1
Labour	3	1.2	0	0.0
State Politics	3	1.2	6	2.2
Health	3	1.2	5	1.9
Agriculture	1	0.4	0	0.0
Race Relations	1	0.4	0	0.0
Hawaiian Affairs	1	0.4	2	0.7
Culture	1	0.4	5	1.9
Women's Issues	1	0.4	3	1.1
Social Policy	0	0.0	0	0.0

	Pre		Post	
	N	%	N	%
Soft News				
Entertainment	20	7.8	21	7.8
Lifestyle	15	5.9	16	5.9
Sports	3	1.2	9	3.3

	Pre		Post	
	N	%	N	%
Other*	14	5.5	12	4.5
Total	256	100.1	269	99.8

Topical Results
Photographs/Visual Images
Honolulu Star-Bulletin
Table 4.12

	Pre		Post	
	N	%	N	%
Hard News				
Disaster/Accidents	30	17.6	32	11.5
International	28	16.5	50	18.0
Crime/Courts	15	8.8	18	6.5
Business	13	7.6	13	4.7
Culture	11	6.5	11	4.0
Military	11	6.5	9	3.2
Science & Technology	6	3.5	11	4.0
Health	5	2.9	5	1.8
Labour	5	2.9	0	0.0
Environment	4	2.4	1	0.4
Hawaiian Affairs	4	2.4	5	1.8
Education	3	1.8	7	2.5
National & Federal Politics	2	1.2	8	2.9
Civic Affairs	2	1.2	2	0.7
Women's Issues	1	0.6	2	0.7
Tourism	1	0.6	0	0.0
Race Relations	1	0.6	3	1.1
Land Use/Development Issues	1	0.6	5	1.8
Social Policy	0	0.0	0	0.0
State Politics	0	0.0	3	1.1
Agriculture	0	0.0	5	1.8

	Pre		Post	
	N	%	N	%
Soft News				
Lifestyle	11	6.5	45	16.2
Entertainment	9	5.3	26	9.4
Sports	3	1.8	13	4.7

	Pre		Post	
	N	%	N	%
Other*	4	2.4	4	1.4
Total	170	100.2	278	100.2

*Other: Obituaries, Religion and Road Work Stories

**Topical Results
Overlapping Stories
Table 4.13**

	Pre		Post	
	N	%	N	%
Hard News				
International	28	16.4	28	16.5
Business	28	16.4	34	20.0
Disaster/Accidents	25	14.6	14	8.2
Crime/Courts	20	11.7	19	11.2
National & Federal Politics	15	8.8	12	7.1
State Politics	9	5.3	9	5.3
Military	8	4.7	8	4.7
Labour	7	4.1	4	2.4
Education	5	2.9	3	1.8
Civic Affairs	5	2.9	7	4.1
Land Use/Development Issues	4	2.3	2	1.2
<i>Environment</i>	3	1.8	0	0.0
Health	2	1.2	6	3.5
Race Relations	2	1.2	3	1.8
<i>Agriculture</i>	2	1.2	0	0.0
Hawaiian Affairs	2	1.2	3	1.8
<i>Tourism</i>	1	0.6	1	0.6
<i>Science & Technology</i>	1	0.6	8	4.7
<i>Social Policy</i>	0	0.0	0	0.0
<i>Culture</i>	0	0.0	0	0.0
<i>Women's Issues</i>	0	0.0	1	0.6

	Pre		Post	
	N	%	N	%
Soft News				
Lifestyle	2	1.2	3	1.8
<i>Entertainment</i>	1	0.6	2	1.2
<i>Sports</i>	0	0.0	0	0.0

	Pre		Post	
	N	%	N	%
<i>Other*</i>	1	0.6	3	1.8
Total	171	100.3	170	100.3

*Other: Obituaries, Religion and Road Work Stories

Note: 19.4% of the A and Hawaii section articles overlapped between the two papers prior to the competitive arrangement. 20.7% overlapped after head-to-head competition.

Tables 4.7 and 4.8 highlight the topical shifts in the 'A' sections of *The Honolulu Advertiser* and the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* from the pre head-to-head competitive arrangement of the JOA to post competition. The data indicate several slight to moderate variations within each paper from pre to post but no overall substantial changes within the 'A' sections. Furthermore, all shifts in topical content were in the *same* direction for each paper, with the exception of *Education and Business*. *International* coverage decreased in both, as did *National and Federal Politics*. *Disasters and Accidents* stories were substantially fewer in the past analysis but this is most likely due to the fact that the accidental sinking of the Japanese ship, Ehime Maru, by an American submarine in Hawaiian waters, occurred during the pre-competitive period. Coverage of *Crimes and Courts*, *Science and Technology*, and *State Politics* slightly increased in both papers, as did all 'soft news' categories. The 'low representation' categories remained relatively stable in both papers. These issues included *Womens' Issues*, *Social Policy*, *Race Relations* and *Native Hawaiian Affairs*.

The same general pattern also emerged from the 'hard news' data on the 'Hawaii' sections in tables 4.9 and 4.10. Overall, those shifts that did occur within each paper, again, did so in the same direction with the few notable exceptions of *Health*, *Education*, *Disasters and Accidents*, and *Agriculture*. There was, however, an increase in *Business* coverage by both papers. This is noteworthy because, like *Sports*, *Business* has its own separate section within the newspaper and was expanded in both papers after competition. *International*, *National and Federal Politics*, and *Tourism* were minimally covered because the former two are predominantly covered in the 'A' section and, given Hawaii's economic over-reliance upon tourism, stories on tourism are most often located

in the *Business* sections of both papers. On the other hand, the ‘soft news’ categories, in combination, more than doubled in the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* but remained relatively the same within *The Honolulu Advertiser*. Again, this is important as both papers either added or increased their sections about entertainment and/or lifestyle shortly after head-to-head competition.

Tables 4.11 and 4.12 reflect the most dramatic changes in volume from pre to post. These tables show the volume and subject of visual images and photographs used by each paper. Whereas in the previous tables, sections ‘A’ and the ‘Hawaii’ sections were analyzed separately, these tables combine the two sections for analysis. Both papers increased their use of photographs and charts. *The Honolulu Advertiser*, although, decreasing its number of pages within the two sections after March 15, 2001, increased their use of images. Similarly, the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* which increased its daily pages after the competitive arrangement, also increased its use of images. But, *proportionately*, the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* used substantially more images — mostly color — than *The Honolulu Advertiser*. The largest topical increase from pre to post in the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* was in the ‘soft news’ categories, especially *Lifestyle*. The largest topical increase in *The Honolulu Advertiser* was in its use of *International* photos and graphics.

The final table, 4.13, illustrates the volume and topics of those stories that appeared in both papers within two days of one another (i.e. overlapping stories). Again, the two sections, ‘A’ and ‘Hawaii,’ were analyzed in combination. The total number of overlapping stories was approximately the same between both papers for the pre and post periods of analysis. In other words, the amount of stories and the topics of those stories that overlapped between the two papers under the JOA arrangement were nearly identical

to those after competition. This latter finding can be interpreted in two ways. On the one hand, it could be argued that because nearly 80% of each paper's content within the 'A' and 'Hawaii' sections is unique, the existence of two newspapers does offer at least some diversity. On one level this is probably true. On the other hand, since the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* shifted towards publishing more 'soft' news, the level of substantive diversity in the political realms is questionable (issues such as these are explored more fully in Chapter Five). Given these findings, in addition to the preceding tables presented earlier in this chapter, the five questions posed at the beginning of this chapter can now be addressed.

Discussion

Did Market Competition Improve the Quality of Both Papers and, In Particular, Did it Broaden the Range of Politically Relevant Topics to Which the Citizens of Hawaii are Exposed?

If we measure 'quality' by the seven specific indicators detailed earlier in this chapter — size of newshole, size of editorial newshole, amount of enterprise and controversy stories, amount of hard vs. soft news, the proportion of local news to total news and the range of topics and perspectives covered (range of perspectives are addressed in Chapter Five) — and as suggested by newspaper editors themselves and by previous research of this nature, the answer to both questions is 'no' (Alger, 1998, p. 181; Picard & Brody, 1997, p. 57). To be sure, the size of the newshole was not *directly* measured. However, other variables that were measured, such as volume of pages and stories, indicate that the newshole within the 'A' and 'Hawaii' sections decreased as a consequence of market competition. In any given three-week period (weekdays only),

before head-to-head competition, the citizens of Hawaii were offered an average of 559 pages of news and 881 stories in the 'A' and 'Hawaii' sections, between the two papers. After competition, they were offered 570 pages or 11 more pages on the average, but only 822 stories or 59 less stories — averaging to approximately four stories less a day. Again, without actually measuring the column inches of the newshole, it could be argued that other factors could account for this variation — such as an increase in the length of stories. But, a keen perusal of both papers before and after competition, in addition to the results of the topical analysis — especially the 'photographs and images' measurements — suggests that the newshole did, in fact, decrease in the two sections.

The size of the editorial newshole remained relatively the same within each paper, both before and after competition, as did the amount of 'controversy news' (16%-18 % of total news) and 'enterprise news' (0%). But, the proportion of local news to total news slightly decreased. The ratio of 'hard news' to 'soft news,' however, dramatically shifted in the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*. Whereas before market competition, approximately 12% of stories in the 'A' and 'Hawaii' sections could be categorized as 'soft,' after competition, 'soft news' rose to 25%. One out of four stories is now entertainment oriented. *The Honolulu Advertiser*, on the other hand, also increased its use of 'soft news' but only by 2% — from 12% to 14%. The range of topics covered (to reiterate, range of perspectives will be discussed in Chapter Five) remained approximately the same both within and between the two papers. What each paper tended to cover and not cover before competition, they tended to cover and not cover after competition. Furthermore, the amount of overlapping stories remained stable despite many of the interviewees speaking about the pressures of not being 'scooped' by the other paper. Logically, these pressures

might have led to an increase in overlapping stories but, as the results show, they did not. Overall, market competition did not improve the quality of either paper as measured by the seven aforementioned indicators. If anything, it seems to have undermined the quality of both, but especially for the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*.

How Are the Two Papers Differentiated?

The data yielded by the two levels of content analysis suggest that the two papers are more alike after head-to-head competition than not; yet, more different than they were before. The initial enthusiasm for market competition between two papers and all that was foreshadowed, such as increased investigative journalism and ‘quality’ in general, simply did not come to pass. The content analysis prong of this research supports previous research, as detailed in Chapter Two, which found that when two newspapers compete in the same market, they tend to differentiate themselves while trying to remain substitutes for each other (Rosse, 1980). Those differences that did emerge, however, are important to discuss in the service of tracing some of the specific consequences of market competition upon newspapers.

First, of the two papers, the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* (smaller and less capital-infused) changed the most. Second, it changed in a way that it now resembles a tabloid press or more of a sensationalistic newspaper, as evidenced by a two-fold increase in the use of big, colorful photos and in publishing ‘soft news.’ The increases in these two categories further support studies (also discussed in Chapter Two), which found that in those few cities that continue to publish two market-based papers, one — out of commercial necessity — will need to produce more fluff for profit, which then stratifies the two existing papers into *relatively* information rich and information poor (Schlesinger, 1999).

Market stratification also has the tendency to result in the eventual loss of the second paper due to what is called the ‘circulation spiral phenomenon.’

In markets in which two or more daily newspapers compete, the newspaper with the largest circulation and highest market penetration receives a disproportionate amount of advertising revenue, even when the circulation differences are small. Thus, competitive papers must continually seek to increase circulation lest they fall prey to the circulation spiral phenomenon, caused by the newspaper with the largest circulation share getting a disproportionate share of advertising. Because secondary paper(s) have fewer financial resources, they then cannot provide content that is ‘attractive’ to readers, resulting in a decline in circulation, which in turn causes a decline in advertising, putting the paper into a downward spiral of circulation and advertising losses until it ceases publishing.

(Picard & Brody, 1997, p. 89)

This phenomenon leaves most cities with a monopoly situation where one press, usually a chain, controls both the flow of political communication and advertising rates.

One contemporary practice that is often employed to attract a readership of an ‘appropriately’ large scale for advertisers, is to increase ‘soft news’/‘news you can use’ at the expense of political news. This can be done overtly as in the case of the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* or more covertly by inserting promos into stories which pose as ‘hard news’ items. This latter revenue garnering strategy can often be found in such areas as health, technology and business where selling can easily dominate telling. Regardless, however, of being covert or overt, the consequences appear to be the same — the encouragement of consumerism and the discouragement of civil participation. This proliferation of ‘soft-oriented’ news over the past decade has been referred to, by some, as the ‘narcissism bias’ as these types of stories act more as a magnifying mirror to look at ourselves — or the personal image we want to project — instead of a larger window to look outside

(Douglas, 2003). As one communication researcher recently lamented, "... to build news around something other than public affairs, is to build it on sand" (Patterson, 2001, p. 8).

How Do the Two Papers Resemble One Another?

In relation to volume, origin of stories and diversity of topical content, the two papers continue to be relatively homogenous, even though one is a chain newspaper and the other an independent, and notwithstanding those differences just discussed. They lean toward uniformity in the following areas: ratio of wire to locally written stories, number of op-eds, percentage of local versus wire op-eds, percentage of controversy news, lack of enterprise news and percentage of most topical categories to total news. However, and perhaps most importantly, they are also alike with regards to the issues that are low in representation and/or not covered, such as *Women's Issues*, *Race Relations*, *Social Policy* and *Native Hawaiian Affairs*. The exclusion of these topics, by both newspapers, is important to note because each are sufficient in scope to warrant coverage — either by way of constituting a large segment of society or by way of reflecting systemic unequal social arrangements. The information associated with each of these categories is vital for *democratic* decisions in a self governing society.

As previously detailed, news gathering practices can account for some of the homogeneity found in this study. Most influential are the reliance upon bureaucracies for the bulk of information (Fishman, 1980), a narrow news net as constituted by traditional beats (Tuchman, 1978), and an overuse of those sources holding various positions of power (Sigal, 1986; Gans, 1980). Yet, as other studies have found, these news gathering practices are directly influenced and governed by the logic(s) of the market — demand for ever increasing profits (Bagdikian, 2000; McChesney, 1999). These latter studies, however, have mostly focused upon monopoly situations and concentration of ownership. Some research has found that big media chains, such as Gannett, for example, have a

deleterious impact upon diversity of content and editorial independence due to their profit orientation (Akhavan-Majid, Rife & Gopinath, 1991, pp. 59-66). Still, other studies have found that there is little difference in news content between those newspapers which hold a local monopoly and large chains that are engaged in competition (Compaine, 1982, p. 44; Grotta, 1971, pp. 245-250). The homogeneity of content that emerged during this study, however, cannot be directly attributed to either a monopoly situation or to two chains in rivalry, given that the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* is owned by an independent. This set of data, rather, suggests that diversity is not automatically ensured by pluralism of commercial ownership and that uniformity may result from the economics of news production and the logics of commerce and the market.

What Were the Low Representation Areas of Inquiry and/or Blind Spots in Hawaii Under the JOA? And, Did These Shift as a Result of Market Competition?

The most prevalent areas of low representation and/or missing news — *Women's Issues, Race Relations, Social Policy and Native Hawaiian Affairs* — were nearly identical both before and after head-to-head competition. Some of these areas are specific to Hawaii, such as *Native Hawaiian Affairs* and the relationship(s) of Hawaiians to *Land Use and Development*.¹⁹ Other areas, not specific to Hawaii, have also been identified as missing news in many commercially-based daily newspapers throughout North America (Phillips, 2003, 2001, 1999, 1998; Hackett & Gruneau, 2000). To better understand some of the reasons why there might be a consistent pattern of missing news, regardless of geographic location and specific ownership, it is best to begin by assessing what the four areas/categories have in common.

¹⁹ Some Hawaiian sovereignty groups consider Hawaii as occupied land and not as a US state. As a consequence, the use of what land, by whom and for what use are highly volatile issues in the state of Hawaii.

The first commonality among these categories is that they are all potentially politically contentious subjects. What makes these issues 'political' are the societal inequalities associated with each. Economic, political and cultural resources are far from being equally distributed within North America and the fault lines generally surround those areas of missing news. Making the invisible visible and giving coverage and voice (two different dimensions of missing news — a group, for example, may receive coverage but not be given voice within that coverage) to those majorities not in possession of often vital and necessary resources has the potential to challenge the status quo. In a medium that relies upon advertising revenue for survival and profit — and often from those receiving the lion's share of society's resources — challenging the status quo could prove costly. As previously covered, news texts have been found to be increasingly tailored so as to create a buying mood that will induce readers to have favorable reactions to advertisements and to make news content less partisan and less controversial and, in turn, more conservative in order to avoid offending advertisers' potential customers (Bagdikian, 2000, pp.134-152).

The second commonality between the low representation and/or missing news categories is that these subjects demand a kind of complex scrutiny — and therefore more costly — that views the problems associated with each as a historical 'process' rather than as an 'event' requiring a news peg. Complexity is not easily 'captured' by dominant news values and institutional routines. In other words, the narrow focus, by news organizations, upon perceptible events directs attention away from often imperceptible long-term determinants of injustice, repression and exploitation. This event-orientation by the media often precludes the in-depth inclusion of certain topics, such as those undercovered and/or missing news categories that emerged within this study. As a consequence, it also prevents political efficacy in solving these social problems. As one

way to correct for such shortcomings, it has been suggested that there be some kind of statistical index — on a daily basis — on the level of violence, exploitation and repression somewhere on the front page, just like meteorological temperatures and pressures, to serve as a reminder of slow changing processes that cannot easily be connected to a current event or a news peg (Galtung & Vincent, 1992, p.11).

The two commonalities just detailed between the low representation and/or missing news — non-event oriented and complex, and potentially divisive as a challenge to the status quo — can be said to act as filters in the process described in Chapter Two and known as ‘structural censorship.’ Unlike *direct censorship*, which usually originates outside media organizations and/or in the upper echelons of the organization itself and is backed by explicit threats, or *self-censorship*, which occurs when a reporter or editor spikes a newsworthy story because of the anticipation of negative reactions from people or institutions which have power over them, *structural censorships* are institutional biases which lead to systematic omissions in news content.²⁰ “Such omissions do not necessarily reflect specific decisions to spike particular news stories; they may be a by-product, perhaps quite unintended, of decisions made in the interests of stability, efficiency, profitability or other quite rational objectives” (Hackett, R. & Gruneau, R, 2000, pp. 226-227).

One such example of *structural censorship* (and possibly *direct* and *self censorship* as well) — as it relates to missing news, and regrettably not a category included within this particular study — is the media itself in relation to the de-regulation of the remaining media ownership rules by the FCC, which gives even more power to the handful of corporate media giants as listed in Chapter Two. In June of 2003, three out of

²⁰ For an excellent chronicle of recent accounts of direct censorship see Borjesson’s [Into the Buzzsaw](#) (2002).

five unelected FCC regulators voted to weaken the broadcast-newspaper, cross-ownership rules that have prohibited the three key sources of information in a community from being owned by the same company. This recent ruling allows for a newspaper, locally-owned or absentee, to also own local TV and radio stations. Similarly, the national TV ownership rule, which limited companies from controlling stations that collectively reach 35 percent of all TV households and the dual network rule, which prevents one of the four major networks — ABC, CBS, NBC and Fox — from buying another network, were also overturned (CWA, 2003, pp. 6-7). But, although the networks and several newspaper chains filed FCC comments in favor of these proposals, a search of The Nexis news database turned up scant to no coverage within both media (FAIR, 2003). Hence, it could be argued that because the overturning of these rules benefited media corporations and not citizens, and that the media had nothing to gain by encouraging public examination, the topic of media consolidation was therefore regulated to ‘missing news’ as a by-product of an economically driven news media. Structurally speaking, war, terrorism and taxes are appropriate fodder for news, but not the filters nor the consequences of these filters through which we are apprised of these topics. By contrast, many non-conglomerate owned publications, like *The Nation*, consistently published, and continue to do so, stories on the FCC in addition to many of the low representation topics that emerged from this study.²¹

Did the Results of the Content Analysis Reflect the Predictions and Opinions of Journalists and SOS Participants?

The answer to this last question is both yes and no. The greatest levels of correspondence between respondents’ perceptions and the results of this study were in the

²¹ For an extensive resource guide to independent news resources, see Peter Phillips and Project Censored’s Censored 2003 and 2004.

areas of low representation topics and the noted lack of enterprise reporting. The reasons cited for these problematic areas and gaps in coverage tended to parallel findings from previous research on news organizations and those specific journalistic practices that restrict diversity of topics. Furthermore, perceptions by respondents that diversity and critical analysis tend to erode under a monopoly press are also reflected in previous research, as cited earlier.

The two most divergent areas between respondents' perceptions and the results of this study are as follows: 1) the power that journalists attributed to themselves in determining the range of coverage; and 2) the overall consequences of market competition. In relation to the first, it is highly unlikely that the experienced and dedicated staff of the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* consciously and collectively decided to increase 'soft news' at the expense of quality journalism. This scenario, however, would be the logical conclusion to the self-reported level of power by journalists over content and therefore can be considered a misattribution on the part of the respondents in light of the content analysis results. Second, some respondents predicted overall greater diversity of content, opinions and ideas under conditions of market competition, consequences which did not manifest within this level of analysis. It would appear that these predictions of increased diversity were guided more by the general cultural value of competition — an arrangement ideally thought to benefit multiple societal processes — than by this specific situation, as evidenced by the seemingly contradictory comments made by half the respondents who reported that they did not think citizens were better informed on political issues as a result of market competition. On the one hand, competition was heralded as the buttress against the homogeneity of a monopoly press. Yet, on the other hand, half reported shortcomings of those desired ends. Again, this appears to be further evidence of how there exists co-mingling and often contradictory strands of thought,

which are operative not only within individuals but also within the community as a whole.

Summary

In summary, the results of the two levels of content analysis, in combination, suggest that market competition not only did *not* broaden the range of *politically relevant* topics within and between the two papers, but it also was catalytic in one of the two papers moving in the direction of becoming more of a tabloid press. These results run contrary to popular sensibilities about the affects of competition in general, and about market competition between newspapers, specifically. Moreover, the results indicate that overall homogeneity in politically relevant topical content between the two papers remained relatively stable from the JOA arrangement to head-to-head competition. Although previously cited research on monopoly presses in relation to homogeneity of content and advertising rates affirms the concerns of the SOS over Gannett's potential monopoly in Hawaii, the results of the content analysis prong of this study also suggest that market competition is not necessarily a 'meaningful' alternative to monopoly, regardless of ownership specifics (i.e. JOA, Chain, Independent, etc...).

Homogeneity between newspapers, rather, seems to be one of the multiple consequences of the market model of newspapering that is overwhelming the journalistic and/or public-service model. The market model tends to use the same wire services, the same types of sources, and the same newsgathering practices, and have the same orientation towards audiences and advertisers which results in various forms of homogeneity.²² This situation threatens the functioning of an open society because

²² An example of the level of homogeneity resulting from the market model of newspaper occurred on September 14, 2003 in Honolulu, Hawaii when both *The Honolulu Advertiser* and the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* published the same syndicated article on the front page of their Sunday editorial sections.

without diverse information, the political process and other social exchanges — based on information as presented in the press — may be impaired, which leads to a limited ability in making appropriate decisions.

However, as explained earlier in this chapter, the method of content analysis has several limitations. In relation to this study, it does not address the range of perspectives *within* the topical categories nor the specific narratives about specific issues. Therefore, the next chapter, using aspects of critical discourse analysis, assesses and compares the range of perspectives within and between *The Honolulu Advertiser* and the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, both before and after competition.

Making the Familiar Strange: Critical Discourse Analysis

It is a necessity to question over and over again what is postulated as self-evident, to disturb people's mental habits ... to dissipate what is familiar and accepted and to re-examine rules and institutions.

(Michel Foucault, 1980, p. 258)

Language is an organ of perception.

(Richard Jones, 1979)

Chapter Five presents the results of the critical discourse analysis conducted on *The Honolulu Advertiser* and the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*. The analysis was designed to compare the range of perspectives between and within the two newspapers before and after head-to-head competition. In the service of assessing the breadth and depth of the news discourse, both 'hard news' items and editorials/opinion pieces are analyzed. In contrast to Chapter Four, which utilized quantitative measures to ascertain the shifts in volume and topics between and within the two dailies, Chapter Five employs qualitative techniques to assess the range of diversity. The salient features of these techniques, their theoretical origins and methodological approaches are also detailed in this chapter. Again, if market-liberal and reformist liberal premises about the affects of commercial competition are reflected in textual evidence, the results should show a greater breadth of perspectives, opinions and views under the competitive circumstances than existed under the former JOA arrangement.

Consistent with the critical paradigm and methodological approach chosen for this prong of the study, newspapers are conceptualized as a structure of meanings connected

to power in linguistic and visual form, rather than as a channel for the transmission and reception of information (Smith, 1975, p. 7). It is presupposed that journalists do more than just present the 'facts' of any given event; they necessarily present those 'facts' from a certain perspective, depending upon the sources quoted, the specific use of nouns and verbs, the choice of active or passive voice and such stylistic conventions as objectivity, for example. In other words, journalists do not merely report news, but instead make snapshots of political and social experience meaningful as 'news.' How experience is made meaningful is, in part, a matter of perspective which is always present and always 'seen' but not always noticed. Accordingly, critical discourse analysis has been and continues to be a useful tool in unearthing latent patterns of meanings and perspectives within news texts which are otherwise often obscured by 'habits of the mind.'

Salient Features of Critical Discourse Analysis and Its Theoretical Origin

Western discourse analysis is said to have formally originated in 1927 with Vladimir Propp's analysis of the Russian folktale. Propp's study was unknown in Europe and the U.S. for decades, but was eventually discovered and expanded upon in the 1960s by structural anthropologist, Claude Levi-Strauss. Propp's work, as interpreted by Levi-Strauss, eventually became catalytic in the formation of the movement known as French Structuralism (Berger, 1982, pp. 23-33). In general, this movement was bound by its interest in analyzing narratives and the use of semiotics — the study of signs, originating with Saussure — which asserts that meaning is not determined by an external referent, but instead by relations *within* the system and that signs (signified and signifier) gain capacity for meaning through opposition and association. In other words, the

structuralists applied linguistic concepts to texts to determine how language *produces* meaning, as opposed to the consequences of meaning.

Contemporary discourse analysis (hereafter referred to as “DA”), however, is a multidisciplinary framework of both theory and method, which extends its explanatory reach well beyond structuralism and has arisen from several schools of thought and from various disciplines. As a consequence, the term ‘discourse’ can have varied meanings depending upon its application. For the purpose of this chapter, however, and consistent with its previous usage throughout this text, the term ‘discourse’ is consistently used to mean: “.... a way of referring to or constructing knowledge about a particular topic or practice; a cluster or formation of ideas, images and practices that provide ways of talking about forms of knowledge and conduct associated with a particular topic, social activity, or institutional site in society” (Henry & Tator, 2002, p. 26).

More simply stated, discourses are the stories we tell each other and ourselves about ‘how it all works,’ and where we and others fit into the scheme of those workings. They include what is considered important and exclude what is not. They are the narratives we overlay upon experience that give meaning to occurrences. Meaning is made and reproduced through both the use of language and action, which is the necessary result of thought and communication. Thus, discourse as a term can be used both as a noun and a verb. Its current uses are predominantly for exploring the socially situated and systematic uses of language (Van Dijk, 1997). To illustrate, in specific historical circumstances, African American men were routinely referred to as ‘boys’ and adult women of all races and ages, ‘girls.’ These particular referents helped shape the specific narratives and general discourses about their places and roles in society, impacting

individual behavior as well as public policies. “Discourse thus carries social meanings, which usually are politicized in the sense that they carry with them power that reflect the interests of the power elite” (Henry & Tator, 2002, p. 25).

DA’s applications traverse the spectrum between micro and macro analysis. For example, microsociologists have used DA to study such dialogic interactions as doctor-patient and teacher-student discourses. These studies tend to draw upon psycholinguistics and cognitive psychology for their theoretical base (Coulthard, 1994). At the other end of the spectrum, the more macro-oriented theoreticians and practitioners, such as Bakhtin, Foucault and Habermas, have focused more upon how broad discursive practices are linked to such extra-linguistic ‘realities’ as the discourses and practices about and around death, sexuality, political communication and gender, to name but a few. The thread that unifies these macro scholars is the base assumption that studies of texts must always go outside those texts as there are values, norms, attitudes and behavioral practices associated with every specific discourse (Henry & Tator, 2002, pp. 71-77). The analysis conducted in Chapter Five draws from both the micro and macro traditions in that it looks not only at the micro levels of news texts in search of features of diversity and/or lack thereof, but it also explores the possible relationship between these features and various extra-linguistic practices.

What distinguishes the structural and micro-oriented DA from what is referred to as *critical discourse analysis* (CDA) is the latter’s insistence upon the dialectical

inclusion of notions of power and ideology as related to and embedded within the uses and consequences of language.²³

As an articulation of this dialectic, D. Harvey explains:

Discourse is but one moment of six that constitutes the social process: discourse/language; power; social relations; material practices; institutions/rituals; and beliefs/values/desires. Each moment internalizes all the others — so that discourse is a form of power, a mode of formation of beliefs/values/desires, an institution, a mode of relating, a material practice. Conversely, power, social relations, material practices, institutions, beliefs, etc. are in part discourse.

(Harvey in Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999, p. 6)

The relationship of discourse to extra-linguistic structures and processes, according to CDA, is not just representative but also constitutive. This dialectical model asserts that discourses are both socially-shaped and socially-shaping. In academic parlance, this is often expressed as, ‘as we speak language, language speaks us,’ because language is not under the conditions of our own making. As a consequence, specific discourses, and/or such ideologies as patriotism and/or nationalism, for example, are viewed as exerting pressures and setting limits on what can and cannot be said by shaping what can and cannot be imagined (Mosco, 1997, pp. 5-9; Sumner, 1979). Ideologies, then, not only help in making sense of the social world in specific interests, but they also regulate social practices in those interests.

The overarching tasks and aims of CDA is to make visible the interconnectedness among specific discourses, ideological positions and the social practices and processes

²³ Ideology as defined in Chapter Two: “the ways in which meaning serves to establish and sustain relations of power which are systematically asymmetrical — meaning in the service of power” (Thompson, 1990, p. 7).

they engender and that engender them. The method and theory are designed to study how social power and inequality are produced and reproduced in talk and text. More specifically, CDA tends to explore and analyze the ‘taken-for-granted’ features of discourse — the unsaid or implicit propositions that must be assumed for a discourse to be meaningful and/or legitimate. CDA looks for what is known, but hidden, and for those ‘naturalized’ ideological representations (i.e. ideological representations which come to be seen as non-ideological or ‘common sense’). Common sense also aptly includes that which gets left out of a story — that information considered irrelevant to the narrative but which, from another perspective, is relevant. “Adopting critical goals means aiming to elucidate such naturalizations and to make clear social determinants and effects of discourses which are characteristically opaque to participants” (Fairclough, 1995, p. 28). Moreover, CDA can also be characterized and distinguished from other kinds of DA and textual analysis by its commitment to research as a *political* project and activity. Practitioners often take an explicit political stance in attempts to produce counter-discourses that contribute to social equality (Riggins, 1997). In essence, intellectual practice is viewed, ideally, as *political* practice.

The critical approach used in this prong of the study has its theoretical underpinnings in British cultural studies beginning in the early 1970s. The nascent stages of British cultural studies are customarily identified with the works of those associated with the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham, where literary texts played a leading role as the object of study. The writing of Richard Hoggart, Raymond Williams and E.P. Thompson informed much of the Centres’ lines of inquiry (Hardt, 1992, p. 174). Subsequently, however, cultural studies broadened its

scope of inquiry to include communications, in general, which utilized sociology and political science for its theoretical backdrop. Media, in specific, eventually became a focal point following the influence of Stuart Hall, a central theoretician in the re-formation of cultural studies, who asserted that media are critical sites for the production, reproduction and transformations of ideology (Henry & Tator, 2002, p. 19).

“Scholarly considerations of the relationships between individuals, classes, media and the state supplied important lines of questioning for a critique of contemporary society” (Hardt, 1992, p.177).

These lines of questioning were rooted in a strong theoretical interest in a Marxist interpretation of society and based upon such writers engaged in a dialogue with Marxist theory as Lukács, Benjamin, Gramsci and Althusser. According to Hall, British cultural studies advanced within the ‘problematics’ of Marxism:

From the beginning there was always — already
the great inadequacies, theoretically and politically,
the resounding silences, the great evasions of Marxism
— the things that Marx did not talk about or seem
to understand which were our privileged object of study:
culture, ideology, language, the symbolic.

(Hall, 1996, p. 25)

Perhaps no other writer/theoretician has influenced the development of contemporary cultural studies more than Antonio Gramsci with the incorporation and expansion of his term ‘hegemony.’ As explained in Chapters Two, the process of hegemony is conceptualized as the naturalization of what is historically a class ideology and the rendering of that ideology into a form of common sense (Hall, 1996, pp. 262-276). Power is viewed as being exercised not through force or even *overt* economic

control, but rather through the authority and legitimacy of those institutions which are supposedly impartial and neutral, such as law, education and the news media.

Thus the process of hegemony is a vehicle through which ideology and power are seen as being simultaneously made operative and masked. The notion of power within the context of cultural studies is often thought to be a productive force as well as a repressive force. Power is viewed as productive in the sense that it tends to 'produce' forms of knowledge, practices and discourses which control and discipline by the internalization of 'norms' — an invisible form of self-discipline (Foucault, 1972). Therefore, power is said to be overwhelmingly exercised through re-presentation(s) which guide perceptions toward making sense of the world in certain ways and not others.

With this said, however, it is important to note that cultural studies is not a unified school of thought. It might more accurately be described as a 'bifurcated field of inquiry' which, unlike traditional academic disciplines, has never had, nor sought, a well-defined intellectual domain (Frith, 2000, p. 202). The theoretical and conceptual features described thus far are characteristic of what can be thought of as the 'critical' arm of cultural studies, which tends to be concerned with sites of media *production* and the link(s) amongst material conditions, ownership, ideology and power. The other arm is more associated with questions of 'cultural' and is more concerned with sites of media *consumption* and the pleasures derived from that consumption. In general, the cultural arm addresses issues of subjectivities and identity formations. The loci of debate between these two tend to revolve around the degree to which individuals are able to produce autonomous interpretations of media texts and images beyond their intended meanings. In

other words, Stuart Hall's now-famous statement, "The world has to be made to mean," is approached somewhat differently (Hall, 1982, p. 67).

As illustrative, on the one hand, there are those within the cultural arm of cultural studies who argue that media power is balanced by audience power and that audiences are capable of producing their own meaning about what they see, hear and/or read if they find any given message objectionable (Fiske, 1994). This particular stance is referred to as the 'active audience' theory and is more often than not associated with the 'limited-effects' model of communication, which views the impact of media as limited and constrained by multiple individual variables, including race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation. Their arguments for giving primacy, or at least equivalency, to audience interpretation is based, in part, upon the pluralist tenet (one aspect of the liberal pluralist paradigm discussed in Chapter Two) that the 'masses' are not a homogeneous social group but a set of heterogeneous social sub-groups with their own histories, experiences and interests — a plurality. Moreover, they argue that because no one group is dominant or governs for any long period of time, but instead continuously changes and shifts, it is irrelevant to attempt to identify dominant discourses and ideologies. In the extreme, this theoretical posture sheds the need for concern about diversity within the press and the press' relation to democracy because diversity of perspective is provided by the audience through its pluralistic nature. This entire project could therefore be rendered a moot exercise according to some adherents of the 'active audience' theory.

On the other hand, the critical arm of cultural studies and the critical paradigm, in general, tend to view the notion of 'active audience' as oxymoronic, if by 'audience' is meant 'consumers of spectacles' (Schiller, 1989, p. 146).²⁴

These theoreticians take to task the notion of 'active audience' on three main grounds. First, they tend to agree with the early writings of Hall who, in response to Marxist economic reductionism, stressed the struggle over meanings by *active* participants in the process of communication, as opposed to a *mechanistic* reproduction of dominant ideologies. But, this struggle for meaning is not universally available, open-ended and free-floating in that one cannot interpret a text from a perspective to which one has never been exposed. As Hall argues, there exists 'preferred' readings — "a determinacy but without guaranteed closures" (Hall, 1986, p. 43). Audiences, active or not, are always on the receiving end and to equate individual interpretations of texts with being the 'producers' of texts stretches the limits of logic.

Secondly, the active audience theory tends to assume all individuals have equal and unlimited cultural resources to draw upon for the 'production' of interpretations. Given that the news often presents stories about events, processes and peoples with whom the majority of readers/viewers have never had actual contact, that imaginary and universal well spring of experience is, for the most part, actually dry. And third, critiques have been leveled against the theory's exclusion of the unconscious and its role in processing the entire media landscape to which people are daily bombarded, and with which most are absorbing with only half an ear or eye.

²⁴ The prolific work of the late Herbert Schiller is associated with political economy and not with cultural studies. His criticisms of certain strands of thought within cultural studies, however, were impressively lucid and therefore worth noting.

Much like the consumer sovereignty argument, as traced in Chapter Two, which asserts that the content of the press is determined by its readers via individual choice of purchase, the active audience theory assumes that diversity of opinions and perspectives about worldly occurrences and processes are located within the individual via differences of cognitions. The theory therefore obscures the role of market forces above and beyond the 'individual' in determining availability of content and cognitive resources. It also tends to obscure how these forces create and sustain habits of the mind and their attendant behaviors. "Whatever the unique experiential history of each of the many subgroups in the nation, they are all subject to the rule of market forces and the domination of capital over those market forces. This is the grand common denominator that insures basic inequality in the social order, an inequality that the pluralists and active-audience culturalists most often overlook" (Schiller, 1989, p. 153).

Methodological Approaches: 'The Third Ear'²⁵

The specific design and aims of any given research project determine the linguistic traditions employed and level of DA to be conducted. There are several approaches, some of which can be used in combination, from which most analysts engaged in such an undertaking have to choose. One of these methodological approaches is anchored in the traditions of critical linguistics, as exemplified by the works of Fowler, Kress and Hodge. This approach tends to be grammatical in nature and analyzes such features as lexical processes (what concepts are furnished with names and which ones are not), transitivity (predicates that communicate action), syntax (who is the subject of an

²⁵ "Listening with the third ear" is a phrase which originated from psychoanalysis and means the process by which one hears and interprets the implicit story underlying a patient's explicit narrative.

action and who is the object) and modality (speakers' attitude such as deference or assertiveness) (Fowler, 1991).

A second approach is from the socio-cognitive tradition and is represented by the works of Teun Van Dijk, who initially uses similar critical linguistic grammatical signifiers in his analysis of news text. But, in the final stages of analysis, he also takes into consideration overall schematic structures and rhetorical strategies. According to Van Dijk, the fact that the majority of news narratives present the effects of a given event prior to its causes has important consequences for the meaning conveyed by that story. For instance, a disturbance following an eviction becomes more important than the eviction and the reasons for it. Because of the sequence of presentation, attention is directed toward the actors in the disturbance rather than the structural causes of the event/eviction. Van Dijk has also analyzed specific rhetorical strategies that signal the translation of 'opinion' to 'fact,' such as the selective use of quotation marks and also those strategies which serve to undermine credibility, such as the insertion of 'reportedly' and 'allegedly' prior to a given assertion (Van Dijk, 1997).

A third approach to reading ideology in news discourse is that of social semiotics which is often associated with the works of John Hartley. This form of analysis focuses upon the juxtapositions between signs and complex patterns of associations — often seeking to identify how 'other' is linguistically and visually constructed. Typical lines of inquiry include: What is the meaning derived, for example, from one person being interviewed at an orderly desk and another in a chaotic street? What are the implicit assumptions in relation to such juxtapositions as police/criminal, management/striker or 'support our troops'/'anti-American'? Does a descriptive term like 'economic refugee' signal an illegitimate status because refugee is commonly associated with 'political' and

not ‘economic?’ The underlying supposition to social semiotic analysis is that news becomes ideological when it presents an evaluative difference as a difference of ‘fact’ (Hartley, 1982).

The remaining methodological approaches tend to be more historically-oriented and concentrate upon what are referred to as ‘meta-narratives’ or ‘meta-discourses;’ those deep structures of stories that underlie the manifest content — structures that reveal a culture’s mythological, philosophical and religious belief systems, which may or may not be explicit within the field of awareness of those inhabiting a given culture. Although this level of discourse analysis is widely practiced by many notable scholars, it is often associated with Johan Galtung and Norman Fairclough on the European side of the Atlantic and with James Carey on the North American side. Galtung is most known for his articulation of the American master narratives as described in Chapter Two and again later discussed in this chapter. Along similar lines, Carey has written extensively on the parallels between the functions of the news narrative and the function of myth. Some of these parallels include the human ordering of elements from disorder, the transformation of knowing into telling, the offering of reassurance and familiarity in shared community experiences, the creation of normative contours, and the repetitiveness of the crime story and its role as part of a larger myth about values (Carey, 1988).

Fairclough, in a somewhat different vein from the previous two researchers, focuses upon what he describes as ‘sets of tendencies’ in contemporary public discourse. What is meant by ‘sets of tendencies’ is that these discourses may or may not necessarily be located in any one text, but have become prevalent across the social space of text production and ways of speaking. One of the primary tendencies that Fairclough has

identified through critical discourse analysis is the ‘marketization’ of public discourse — the absorption of private and public discourses by the discourse of commodity production and the extension of economic values into non-economic domains (Fairclough, 1995). Recent evidence of the marketization of public discourse abounds during the coverage of the war in Iraq. For example, on March 21, 2003, CNN reported that “audiences were finally seeing the ‘shock and awe’ that had been so widely *advertised*.” The following day, in response to a question regarding the number of journalists embedded with the allied troops, a CNN commentator stated, “We will show the *consumers* of our business, the TV viewer, just what it’s like in war — this is great for business.” A week later, during an interview with a US soldier in Iraq, Fox news referred to the man as a “sponsor of their programming.”

Regardless, however, of what specific level of analysis or approach a researcher chooses, the technique requires listening with a ‘third ear’ and seeing with a ‘third eye.’ As in the process of psychotherapy, critical discourse analysis involves interpreting the interpretations. Like content analysis, when deciding which categories to include and which ones to exclude, there is always an element of subjectivity inherent in discourse analysis. But, unlike content analysis, where the emphasis is upon manifest content, discourse analysis emphasizes the relationship(s) to that content. Accordingly, there are normally very few, if any, pre-existing categories in the initial stages of analysis. The categories of characteristics and features emerge only later and after several immersions into the text(s). Therefore, the categories presented in the following section of this chapter were constructed during the analysis and not before. The categories were, however, constructed using Galtung and Vincent’s forty proposals for democratic, peace

and development-oriented media as a guidepost. These proposals include the following:

- 1) Whenever there is a conflict, give voice to both or *all* parties involved in the conflict;
- 2) Try to make explicit some theories, the intellectual frame of reference, the “discourse” or “paradigm” within which a conflict is to be understood;
- 3) Mere economic growth data will never do, dispersion data is also needed;
- 4) Never forget the dimension of democracy;
- 5) Whenever there is a reference to development make it concrete, in terms of human beings; and
- 6) Be less victim of the four key tendencies in news reporting: over-emphasis on elite countries, over-emphasis on elite persons, over-emphasis on personalization and over-emphasis on negative events (Galtung & Vincent, 1992).

The critical discourse analysis portion of this study is sliced into two parts to increase its exploratory reach. First, for comparative purposes, six overlapping stories were selected: three topics that appeared in both papers within a day of each other during the pre-competitive monitoring period and three topics using the same criterion during the post-competitive monitoring period. All 12 stories selected are ‘controversy’ articles as defined in Chapter Four, are locally authored and were publicly significant at the time of publication. Each table consists of 12 categories. These categories include the following: *Headline*, *Photo*, *Cast of Characters* (all people(s), groups and/or institutions referred to within the article); *Main Actors* (those who are spoken about or are quoted at length); *Oppositional Actors* (those in opposition to the issue(s) in question who are referenced within the article); *Missing Actors* (those not mentioned, referenced and/or quoted within the article, but who have or most likely have political interests in the issue(s) in question); *Significant Use Of Quotes* (who is quoted, who is not and about what); *Descriptive Terms/Phrases* (phrasings and terms, either through direct quotes or as

written by the journalist, which sets the tone of the article); *Attribution Of Problem and/or Potential Problem* (inferred or stated cause of the problem); *Privileged Voices* (those who control and disseminate the bulk of information provided within the article); *Context and/or Analysis Offered* (background information); and *Overall Frame(s)* (general pattern of the information presented, what is emphasized and what is excluded).

The second slice of the analysis broadens the scope of inquiry by including a comparison of editorial coverage of the days leading up to the war in Iraq between the two locally-based newspapers and several other national periodicals. The escalating tensions with Iraq were not covered during the pre-post-competition monitoring periods and, as a consequence, a pre-post comparative analysis between the two papers on this particular international topic was not possible. However, by comparing the two locally-based newspapers and contrasting these results with other publications as external benchmarks, the range of perspectives to which newspaper readers in Hawaii were exposed was ascertained, as well as the differences between *The Honolulu Advertiser* and the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*.

Results of ‘Hard’ News Analysis

The following three tables are the results of the critical discourse analysis conducted upon the hard news genre during the pre-competitive monitoring period.

**PRE-Competitive Monitoring Period
Overlapping Story I
February 26, 2001
Table 5.1**

Subject/Issue(s) of Debate: Proposal to add 117,000 acres to Volcanoes National Park and thereby expand federal control over the island of Hawaii

	<i>The Honolulu Advertiser</i>	<i>Honolulu Star-Bulletin</i>
Headline	Support split on plan to add to Volcanoes	Want Volcanoes park to grow? Speak up
Photo	NONE	Graphic of Volcanoes Park
Cast of Characters	Park Officials (M), Ranch Employees (M)	Park Officials (M)
Main Actor(s)	Federal Government, Ranch Officials	Federal Government, Ranch Officials
Oppositional Actor(s)	Ranch Employee	Unnamed: Referred to as: 'those who oppose'
Missing Actor(s)	General Community, Native Hawaiians	General Community, Native Hawaiians
Significant Use of Quotes	All quotes by park officials; opponent's brief views were 'characterized'	All quotes by park officials; opponents views were 'critical'
Descriptive Terms/Phrases	Park Officials: land of opportunity, world-class resources Unnamed: 'disturbed by land grab'	Park Officials: a dream into a reality; a treasure trove
Attribution of Problem and/or Potential Problem	Protests/Opposition	Protests/Opposition
Privileged Voice(s)	Federal Government	Federal Government
Context and/or Analysis Offered	NONE	NONE
Overall Frame(s)	Boosterism: for 'economic development'	Boosterism: for 'economic development'

(M)=Male

(F)= Female

**PRE-Competitive Monitoring Period
Overlapping Story II
March 2, 2001
Table 5.2**

Subject/Issue(s) of Debate: The U.S. Army's use of land for live fire military training. The Army requested a dismissal of a lawsuit that challenged their assessment that use for training would not affect the Makua Valley — home to 34 endangered species and several Hawaiian archaeological sites. The Army had been sued by environmental groups for not conducting an environmental impact assessment.

	<i>The Honolulu Advertiser</i>	<i>Honolulu Star-Bulletin</i>
Headline	Makua lawsuit stands Army tried to get case Dismissed	Judge rejects government bid to halt Makua suit
Photo	Army spokesperson talking to community Members at Makua Valley Army standing — Community sitting	NONE
Cast of Characters	Judge (F); Army Spokesperson (F); Attorney (M); Brigadier General (M); Resident of Community (F); Community Board Chairperson (F)	Judge (F) Environmental Group (M) Brigadier General (M)
Main Actor(s)	U.S. Army	U.S. Army
Oppositional Actor(s)	Community Environmental Groups	Community Environmental Groups
Missing Actor(s)	Native Hawaiians	Native Hawaiians
Significant Use of Quotes	First quote by Army	Only one quote — by Army
Descriptive Terms/Phrases	“Army angered community.”	“Army determined what needs discussion.”
Attribution of Problem and/or Potential Problem	Conflicting needs between defense preparedness and the protection of the environment and cultural traditions	SAME
Privileged Voice(s)	US Army	US Army
Context and/or Analysis Offered	Same background presented: precedented tensions with the army	Same background presented: precedented tensions with the army
Overall Frame(s)	National defense vs. Environmentalism	National defense vs. Environmentalism

(M)=Male
(F)= Female

**PRE-Competitive Monitoring Period
Overlapping Story III
March 13, 2001
Table 5.3**

Subject/Issue(s) of Debate: The need to double the state budget for services to seriously mentally ill adults. In 1991, the U.S. Justice Department sued the state over conditions in Hawaii's state hospital. The state agreed to a 'consent decree' in which it promised to make improvements.

	<i>The Honolulu Advertiser</i>	<i>Honolulu Star-Bulletin</i>
Headline	Mentally ill needs unmet	Health Department: Double budget to help mentally ill
Photo	Small insert of state health director	NONE
Cast of Characters	State Health Director (M); Senior Consultant for Assessment Firm (M); Court Appointed Monitor (M); Legislative Committee Chairperson (M)	State Health Director (M); Court Appointed Monitor (M); Legislative Committee Chairperson (M); House Speaker (M); Senate Majority Leader (M)
Main Actor(s)	The state lawmakers	The state lawmakers
Oppositional Actor(s)	Court appointed monitor	court appointed monitor
Missing Actor(s)	Hospital staff; hospital patients; patients' families; mental health workers	SAME
Significant Use of Quotes	"Money is the essential piece here."	"... raises issues about spending money but with no end in sight."
Descriptive Terms/Phrases	From 61 million to 122 million; 50 million balance; 8 million now	122 million by 2006; an increase by 88.3 million; 27.4 million
Attribution of Problem and/or Potential Problem	Money in the service of compliance	Money in the service of compliance
Privileged Voice(s)	Lawmakers/health dep't.	Lawmakers/health dep't.
Context and/or Analysis Offered	NONE	NONE
Overall Frame(s)	Legislative	Legislative

(M)=Male

(F)= Female

Overlapping story I exhibits more similar features than differences. The most noticeable parallel between the two articles is the lack of quotes by those who were not federal spokespersons. Those who opposed the addition to Volcanoes National Park were unnamed, except for one ‘ranch hand,’ whereas park officials were not only named but further legitimized by publishing their titles. Opponents’ views, briefly sketched, were ‘characterized as,’ rather than quoted. All quoted sources were male. The privileged voices were clearly ‘official’ men. Opposition was implicitly discredited by its absence. Land use, ownership and protection of the environment are highly contentious issues within the state of Hawaii due to the spiritual relationships of native Hawaiians to the land (*aina*), its limited availability and therefore high cost, and because of the historical struggles *against* ‘statehood’ by some groups. More than one sovereignty group views the state of Hawaii as occupied territory. Accordingly, adding 117,000 acres to a federally-controlled park is a controversial proposal. Both articles, however, omit most of the context within which this might be understood. Rather, the stories reflect a type of ‘boosterism’ — enthusiastic support for a person, organization, community and/or cause — on behalf of existing power centers. The implicit assumption underlying both stories is that the additional land would be good for tourism and that the increased business activity resulting from tourism would be good for all peoples of Hawaii.²⁶

Overlapping story II also shows more similarities in perspective than differences. The army for example, was the privileged voice in both newspapers, as evidenced by amount and positioning of their quotes in addition to such statements as, ‘the army angered the community’ and the ‘army determined the discussion.’ In such phrases, the

²⁶Volcanoes National Park expanded in 2003 by adding the proposed acreage.

army becomes the subject and those opposed to its actions become the object. The accompanying photo in *The Honolulu Advertiser* also reflects this hierarchy in that the army officers (mostly male) were depicted standing and speaking, whereas the community members (mostly female) were seated and listening. It is not always the case, however, that those groups portrayed as 'active' are also portrayed as 'legitimate.' One Canadian study, for example, which looked at the depiction of industrial relations in times of dispute, found that although unions were portrayed as the active party and management as the more passive party, the actions of the unions were associated with negative consequences — the disruption of 'normal' production. Therefore, by ascribing both power and negativity to the unions, they were effectively discredited and delegitimized (Hackett, 1983, pp. 5-50). The same could be argued for the portrayal of the army in these articles. Inscribed within the depiction of the army as the most powerful group was also that of the 'protagonist.' At the very least, the presentation of this conflict, by both newspapers, reflects the ambivalence expressed by many regarding the army's growing presence in Hawaii.

Land issues were more detailed in overlapping story II than those found in overlapping story I but, again, individual Native Hawaiian voices were conspicuously absent in both articles. Furthermore, neither story offered an explanation as to how the army initially gained access to the valley for live-fire training. The only substantive difference between the two papers was in the style of presentation. The *Honolulu Star-Bulletin's* article was in more narrative form rather than the inverted pyramid style and used only one quote. *The Honolulu Advertiser*, on the other hand, quoted several sources and presented the details in a traditional hard news format.

Overlapping story III was almost identical in perspective, tone and sources (all male). Both articles are classic examples of Van Dijk's assertion that the typical schematic structure of the news item — presentation of the effects of the given event prior to its causes — often serves more to confuse than enlighten, and to exclude rather than include by way of omitting necessary background information. First, although the topic was the lack of resources to properly care for mentally ill adults who had been catalytic in the federal government suing the state of Hawaii, the only sources cited were high level government appointees and electees. Those involved in providing the proper conditions of treatment such as psychologists, psychiatrists and mental health workers were not sourced. Nor were patients and/or families of patients. Both articles failed to provide any information about the circumstances and/or structural causes of the problem that would have made them understandable to the average reader. Second, the terms of discourse revolved around monetary figures and not people. Figures like 50 million and 122 million tend to be overwhelming to the average reader, whose mean household income in Hawaii, according to the latest statistics from the US Census Bureau (2001), is \$46,590. These types of figures tend to obscure accountability rather than elucidate problem areas.

In combination, these three sets of overlapping stories, six articles in total, exhibit striking similarities. The overall frames and perspectives are the same, as well as privileged voices, cast of characters and lack of context and/or analysis. The pre-competitive critical discourse analysis result suggests that, in the case of overlapping stories, each paper could have substituted for the other. There was little difference in perspectives on the same topic within the hard news genre that was locally-authored and

controversial in nature. The following three tables present the results of the critical discourse analysis, using the same analytical techniques, on the breadth of perspectives between the two newspapers but under competitive circumstances.

**POST-Competitive Monitoring Period
Overlapping Story I
July 5 and 6, 2001
Table 5.4**

Subject/Issue(s) of Debate: Five million dollars allocated from federal funds to help offset expenses of Pacific Island immigration to Hawaii in the areas of health care, education and other social areas. Specific peoples involved were from Micronesia, Marshall Islands and Palau

	<i>The Honolulu Advertiser</i>	<i>Honolulu Star-Bulletin</i>
Headline	Aid to ease migrants cost to Hawaii — Guam fears loss of impact money	Pacific Islanders protest treatment by isle hospitals; Micronesians and Marshallese say some hospitals are refusing them healthcare
Photo	NONE	1 large of 2 female protesters; 1 small of hospital CEO
Cast of Characters	Hawaii Senator (M); Hawaii Governor (M); Guam Governor (M); Guam Delegate (M); Spokesperson for Senator (F)	Protesters (F); Hospital CEO (M); Protest Organizer (F); Spokesperson for Hospital (F)
Main Actor(s)	State of Hawaii	Island Hospitals
Oppositional Actor(s)	Island of Guam	Unnamed Protesters
Missing Actor(s)	Immigrants	Immigrants and Protesters
Significant Use of Quotes	“29 million; 100 million; 64 million”	“The 5 million should go directly to the hospitals.”
Descriptive Terms/Phrases	Many migrants wind up in Hawaii or Guam	“We can’t afford to see their charity care increase every year.”
Attribution of Problem and/or Potential Problem	Lack of money from the federal government	Poor Immigrants
Privileged Voice(s)	State Officials	Hospital Officials
Context and/or Analysis Offered	NONE	NONE
Overall Frame(s)	Financial/Legislative	Immigrants as burdens

(M)=Male
(F)= Female

**POST-Competitive Monitoring Period
Overlapping Story II
July 10, 2001
Table 5.5**

Subject/Issue(s) of Debate: Two subpoenas issued by a legislative investigative committee in order to investigate how 400 million dollars was being spent on special education were under question. The two people subpoenaed were representatives of a federal court and therefore might have had immunity. The State of Hawaii had been found in federal violations in the area of special education and therefore was under federal monitoring. The promise made by Hawaii to the federal government to improve services is referred to as the “Felix Decree.” Two issues were under discussion — the legitimacy of the subpoenas and how 400 million dollars was being spent.

	<i>The Honolulu Advertiser</i>	<i>Honolulu Star-Bulletin</i>
Headline	Judge urged to quash subpoenas in special-ed inquiry	Felix witness may be off the hook with legislative committee
Photo	NONE	NONE
Cast of Characters	Court Appointed Monitor (M); Director of Felix Monitoring Project (F); Special Master (M); US District Judge (M); Asst. US Attorney (M); State Representative (M); State Senator (F); Attorney (M)	Court Appointed Monitor (M); Director of Felix Monitoring Project (F); Special Master (M); US District Judge (M); State Representative (M); Deputy Attorney General (M); Attorney (F)
Main Actor(s)	State Officials	State Officials
Oppositional Actor(s)	State and Federal Officials	State and Federal Officials
Missing Actor(s)	Special Education Workers/ Teachers; Families of Special-Ed Students	Special Education Workers/ Teachers; Families of Special-Ed Students
Significant Use of Quotes	Multiple quotes	Multiple quotes
Descriptive Terms/Phrases	Bureaucratic and legalistic	Bureaucratic and legalistic
Attribution of Problem and/or Potential Problem	Federal blockage to investigation	Federal blockage to investigation
Privileged Voice(s)	State Officials	State Officials
Context and/or Analysis Offered	NONE	NONE
Overall Frame(s)	Legislative	Legislative

(M)=Male;
(F)= Female

**POST-Competitive Monitoring Period
Overlapping Story III
July 13, 2001
Table 5.6**

Subject/Issue(s) of Debate: Federal judge dismissed a lawsuit challenging state-backed Hawaiians-only entitlements. A non-Hawaiian applied for a small business loan from the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) and was denied. He, in turn, filed a lawsuit challenging the legality of a 1978 state constitutional amendment that created OHA. His suit charged that the existence of OHA violated the 14th Amendment which guarantees equal protection under the law.

	<i>The Honolulu Advertiser</i>	<i>Honolulu Star-Bulletin</i>
Headline	OHA challenge dismissed; suit was aimed at ending Hawaiian monarch benefits	Barrett loses OHA lawsuit; US Judge David Ezra rules the challenge to Hawaiian programs has no legal standing
Photo	2 small — Attorney walking out of courthouse; Attorney being interviewed	NONE
Cast of Characters	Attorney (M); Judge (M); Plaintiff (M); OHA Chairperson (F); OHA Administrator (M); Co-Counsel (M)	Attorney (M); Judge (M); Plaintiff (M); OHA Chairperson (F); Attorney (F)
Main Actor(s)	OHA	OHA
Oppositional Actor(s)	Plaintiff's Attorney	Plaintiff's Attorney
Missing Actor(s)	Native Hawaiian Community	Native Hawaiian Community
Significant Use of Quotes	First quote by judge	First quote by plaintiff's lawyer
Descriptive Terms/Phrases	Contentious: US vs. THEM	Contentious: US vs. THEM
Attribution of Problem and/or Potential Problem	Further challenges to OHA	Further challenges to OHA
Privileged Voice(s)	OHA	OHA
Context and/or Analysis Offered	Some background presented: OHA formation	Some background presented: OHA formation
Overall Frame(s)	Legal	Legal

(M)=Male
(F)= Female

The analysis conducted upon post-competitive overlapping story I reveals multiple surface differences in the way the same topic was approached by the two newspapers but with underlying similarities. The dominant issue of the articles was how five million dollars, received from the federal government to help offset the cost of immigration from specific Pacific Islands, was to be allocated. *The Honolulu Advertiser* focused upon how the funding was obtained, the legislative wrangling involved and the resultant tensions with Guam, which had also requested funding for the same purpose. All sources quoted were high level elected officials and their spokespersons. Conversely, the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* approached the topic through the coverage of a staged protest by Pacific Islanders the following day. The protest was against unfair treatment by Hawaii hospitals toward Micronesians and Marshallese. However, despite a large color photograph of two women protesters, the protesters themselves were not quoted. The first quote was given to a hospital CEO who framed the issue as, ‘financial problems of the hospitals were due to the amount of “charity” given to these immigrants.’ He is further quoted as saying that the entire five million should go directly to the hospitals. Only one quote was given to an oppositional voice: “It’s the military who did this, people are sick.” This latter reference is in relation to the nuclear testing on Bikini Atoll in 1954 that poisoned many of the island’s inhabitants. Neither paper offered any context or analysis that may help explain the fallout from this testing or the legal links between these islands and the United States. In October 1986, for example, the U.S. signed the Compact of Free Association with the Marshall Islands assuring assistance in the areas of economic development and defense in exchange for certain foreign affairs and defense rights. Part of that agreement included a promise by the U.S. that it would continue its investigation

into the increase in diseases caused by nuclear testing and that the islanders were granted the right to freely move to the U.S. and its territories (Kimura, 2001).²⁷ Important background information such as this was absent in both papers, as was Pacific Islanders' perspectives. Thus, although each newspaper chose different news pegs on which to attach the story, the same information was missing in both.

Post-competitive overlapping story II is very similar to pre-competitive overlapping story III, not only in topic but also in the ways both newspapers present the story. The debate centered around the validity of two subpoenas issued by a legislative investigative committee in hopes of interviewing two federal court appointed monitors, whose task it was to oversee the distribution of 400 million dollars for the care of disabled children. After Hawaii's dismal record of providing special education, a lawsuit was finally filed against the state in 1993. In October of 1994, Hawaii agreed to a federal consent decree known as the 'Felix Decree' and promised to provide all disabled children with free and appropriate education. Much as in the case of mentally ill adults, the state was forced into allocating increased funding to meet its externally imposed goals. Both papers framed the issue as a legislative problem. Both of them chose to interview and quote only high level elected officials and appointees. The voices and perspectives of special education workers, teachers and families affected by the Felix Decree were absent. The language used by the sources was bureaucratic and legalistic and, as a consequence, the legislative process and specific 'personalities' were highlighted while the social aspects were blunted.

²⁷ This information was published by the *Honolulu Weekly*, a free weekly paper, during the same monitoring period used in this study.

The subject matter of this story is, for the most part, *Social Policy* and secondarily *State Politics*, as defined in Appendix H. Yet, both papers chose to cover the subject matter as if it was exclusively state politics. Rather than social analysis, legislative analysis was offered. This shift effectively stripped the texts of their necessarily controversial nature involving how the weakest members of society are treated, cared for and protected. The approach taken by both papers is a good example of what John Hartley terms, “translative moments” as described in Chapter Two. By contrast, the *Honolulu Weekly*, a “free” weekly newspaper, published an article the same week entitled, “When in the course of Human Events — what the legislature’s special investigative committee on Felix will discover is that the Aloha state treats its disabled children like road kill (Rees, 2001).” This well researched and much longer piece put human faces on the needs represented by 400 million dollars. The author interviewed children, families and therapists, as well as state lawmakers. It was, by all accounts, an article on social policy with all the controversy that surrounds who does and does not receive necessary funding and why.

The last post-competitive overlapping story was found to be nearly identical in every feature and characteristic. The specific issue entailed the dismissal of a lawsuit brought by a non-Hawaiian against the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) on the grounds that the existence of OHA violated the Fourteenth Amendment of the US Constitution. Sources and quotes were either identical or similar. The legal framing and the hierarchy of voices were also the same. The local issues of Native Hawaiian rights and the formation and operation of OHA are some of the most volatile and potentially divisive areas in state politics. Yet, they are also some of the least understood due, in part, to the

unwillingness by both major presses to report, analyze and educate — as evidenced by the results of the content analysis in Chapter Four — the general public on the range of sub-issues embedded within these areas, such as the high poverty rates among Native Hawaiians, in addition to a lack of adequate housing, health care and education for many.

Discussion

In summary of the hard news slice of the critical discourse analysis, the comparative results show a consistent and similar pattern of coverage by *The Honolulu Advertiser* and the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, both before and after head-to-head competition, and despite the cosmetic alterations to both. The range of perspectives within the samples of overlapping stories was no greater after the competitive arrangement than before. The one story that was presented differently was done so by drawing upon a different news peg. The omissions, however, were the same. Characteristics and features common to both newspapers both before and after market competition include the following: 1) the bias toward elites as sources and, by extension, a class bias, as evidenced by who was chosen to provide information and opinions on a given topic and who was and was not named; 2) the tendency to blunt the controversies and *real* social conflicts and replace them with elite ‘personality clashes’— a downsizing of politics so to speak; and 3) the lack of necessary background information, context and/or analysis.

In cycling back to Chapter Two, some of the possible forces and pressures that have been identified as shaping such homogeneity of perspectives within and between two papers with different structures of ownership and under competitive market conditions are as follows: 1) over-reliance upon bureaucratic and elite sources; 2) the

‘regime of objectivity’ and its theoretical dependence upon authoritative ‘facts’ for the bulk of news content; 3) the interlocking of media organizations and owners with existing power structures — private and governmental; 4) lack of investigative reporting due to these alignments and the incessant demands for greater profit margins at the expense of the public’s interest and; 5) advertising as the dominant organizing principle which tends to ‘disappear’ those ideas and issues that do not easily adhere to a consumerist frame of mind. In combination, and, over time, these pressures and forces create habits of the mind, not only for readers but also for advertisers and journalists. These habits determine what we see and don’t see, and what we come to expect and not expect. The representations of social inequality as inscribed in the aforementioned news texts are most often not consciously realized, but rather internally naturalized as a form of common sense — what is ‘expected’ when reading a daily American newspaper. Through this transmutation process, news texts become ideological representations by the silencing of entire peoples, classes and their attendant perspectives. But, is this specific problem more prevalent in the hard news genre than in editorials, and possibly more common in local-oriented news than in international? The next section looks at these questions by way of assessing the range of editorial diversity on the subject of the war in Iraq within and between *The Honolulu Advertiser* and the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*.

Results of Analysis Conducted Upon Editorials And Opinion Pieces On the Potential War in Iraq

The reason for choosing the conflict in Iraq as a testing ground by which to assess diversity was three-fold. First, editorials and opinion pieces are an important dimension and/or indicator of diversity. Second, it is difficult to imagine a more important political

topic than the process by which a nation decides to wage or not to wage a war. And third, two years had elapsed since David Black purchased the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*. If any of the previous prongs of this study were premature in regards to their timing, this one certainly would not be.

The initial design and intent of the discourse analysis on the perspectives offered on the situation(s) in Iraq was to focus upon the Sunday editorial sections of both papers — ‘Focus’ (*The Honolulu Advertiser*) and ‘Insight’ (*Honolulu Star-Bulletin*) — three weeks prior to the official beginning of the war. The Sunday editorial sections were selected as the items of study because, in general, they offer more in-depth opinion and argumentation than daily editorials. The three-week period before the onset of the war was chosen due to the assumption that this would be the apex of vigorous debate and therefore, there would be ample material for analysis. However, this proved not to be the case. During the three-week period leading up to the war, *The Honolulu Advertiser* published only five articles on the topic in their Sunday editorial section and the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* only seven. As a consequence, the period of analysis was extended to six weeks — February 9 – March 16, 2003.

During the month of February, *The Honolulu Advertiser* published a section entitled, “Hawaii speaks up on the threat of war,” in which their current and former community editorial board members were invited to give their opinions on the potential war. These opinion pieces are included as editorials in Table 5.7 as they were quite lengthy, unlike letters to the editor. The total number of editorials published by *The Honolulu Advertiser* relating to the conflicts during the six weeks prior to the war was 28 (including community opinion pieces which totaled 18); 18 were published by the

Honolulu Star-Bulletin. Twenty-seven of the 28 editorials published by *The Honolulu Advertiser* were locally-authored. In contrast, only three of the 18 pieces published by the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* were locally authored. The ratio of male to female authors was 22:6 for *The Honolulu Advertiser* and 12:3 for the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*. Three of the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*'s editorials were under the heading "In Our Opinion" and were not by-lined. Gender of author is therefore unknown.

The following table presents the results of the discourse analysis conducted on *The Honolulu Advertiser* and the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* in the service of determining the range of perspectives within and between the two newspapers on the topic of war in Iraq — an international crisis in which the United States was/is the main actor. Table 5.7 is divided into 7 impressionistic categories. These categories include the following: *Pacifist/Ethical Opposition To Any War*; *Tactical Opposition/Cost Benefit* (war is economically too costly and/or it is too costly in terms of the high probability of retaliation); *Opposition Based Upon The Role The US Would Play As An Imperial Power*; *Opposition Based Upon Perceived Abuses of Presidential Power*; *Neutral Because There Were Too Many Unanswered Questions*; *Against Unilateralism But Supportive With United Nations' Approval*; *Supportive Of The War Based upon The Bush Administration's Threat Assessment* (includes clear and present danger/evil, the delegitimization of protesters and their concerns, and the delegitimization of the role of the United Nations); and *Other* (includes all articles that were war-related but not representing the above categories).²⁸ Like the previous discourse analysis conducted upon

²⁸ I am indebted to Robert Hackett for his assistance in the formulation of these categories.

local hard news, the constructed categories are not meant to be exclusive nor exhaustive, but rather reflective of the overarching perspectives and arguments offered by each editorial. Some editorials had multiple supporting arguments but nonetheless coalesced around a dominant theme. The two categories, *Ethical Opposition To Any War* and *Opposition Base Upon Perceived Abuses Of Presidential Power*, which neither paper addressed within their editorials or opinion pieces, were included for reasons of contrast as they were perspectives offered in other US periodicals during the same time period.

Range of Perspectives and Arguments
Sunday Editorial Sections
February 9 – March 16, 2003
Table 5.7

Topics	<i>The Honolulu Advertiser</i>				<i>Honolulu Star-Bulletin</i>	
	With Community Editorials		Without Community Editorials		N	%
	N	%	N	%		
Ethical opposition to any war	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tactical opposition Cost-benefit analysis	7	25	1	10	1	6
Opposition to U.S. imperialism	3	11	1	10	0	0
Opposition to abuse of Presidential power	0	0	0	0	0	0
Neutral Too many unanswered questions	5	18	1	10	0	0
Against unilateralism Support with UN approval	3	11	2	20	4	22
Support for the Bush Administration's threat Assessment and war	6	21	1	10	8	44
OTHER: Technologies of war Strategies of war Tips for business if war Oil costs Religious divisions in Congregations Kurdish fears of Turkey Personal story — war tragedy	4	14	4	40	5	28
TOTAL	28	100%	10	100%	18	100%

Discussion

The first question that must be asked is, “What is the role of an op-ed page/section”? Is it the mouthpiece for newspaper owners and their interests? Is it a point/counterpoint volley structured along the same practices inherent in received notions of objectivity? Or, is it a place that is intended to supply myriad opinions, perspectives and angles on any given topic which educates and improves the quality of debate necessary in a functioning democracy — a place to connect the dots, so to speak? In agreement with the many communication scholars working from both the critical and the liberal pluralist paradigms noted in Chapter Two, this author thinks it should not only be the latter, but it should also be a place where citizens can turn to for help in formulating a more in-depth understanding of contemporary social problems and issues. So, how well did these two papers perform in providing a range of perspectives, both within and between themselves on the issues surrounding the war in Iraq?

The results of the discourse analysis show that *The Honolulu Advertiser* offered a wider range of opinions and analysis than did the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, even when *excluding* the vignettes written by community members (and, the fact that without these vignettes, *The Honolulu Advertiser* published eight fewer editorials than the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*). Table 5.7 indicates that the viewpoints within *The Honolulu Advertiser* were not only more evenly distributed, but that they also offered two perspectives that the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* did not. These perspectives were: 1) At the time of publication, there existed too many unanswered questions about Iraq to decide if war was an appropriate response; and 2) Opposition to the war based upon the conceptualization that the role of the United States in Iraq would be one of imperialism and therefore unethical as well as internationally illegal under United Nations’ charters. Furthermore, *The*

Honolulu Advertiser relied almost exclusively upon local authors, some of whom were University of Hawaii professors from differing fields of expertise. As a consequence, *The Honolulu Advertiser's* opinion pieces tended to be more analytic and historically-based. The *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, on the other hand, relied mostly upon syndicated columnists who are known for their use and over-use of inflammatory rhetoric and hyperbole to assert their positions. The similarities between the two papers were that neither offered a well written and detailed argument of opposition to all war based upon ethical considerations, nor did either one of them offer an oppositional piece based upon the possibility that the decision to wage war by President George W. Bush was an abuse of presidential power within a democratic political system, and upon the potential longterm consequence ensuing from such abuse.

Were the citizens of Hawaii better informed, then, on the situation(s) in Iraq and the threat of war as a result of the two major dailies competing in the marketplace than they would have been under the previous JOA? Although a direct comparison via a pre-post assessment cannot be established due to the two year-gap between the JOA arrangement and the war in Iraq, it can nonetheless be deduced upon several grounds and observations that, except for two specific areas of debate, the overall answer is 'no' — the arrangement of head-to-head competition between the two dailies did not *significantly* enhance nor increase the range of opinions and perspectives on the conflicts in Iraq. First, 44% of the editorials published by the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* were a resound of the Bush administration's official reasonings. These arguments were already detailed in the 'A' sections of both papers due to the necessity of covering White House press conferences, Pentagon briefings and Presidential speeches in times of such crisis.

Second, the remaining perspectives published by the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* were also present within the editorials of *The Honolulu Advertiser*. In other words, every perspective offered by the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* was also offered by *The Honolulu Advertiser*, but not vice versa. The *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* did not publish two of the arguments of opposition as presented by *The Honolulu Advertiser*. Furthermore, *The Honolulu Advertiser's* editorial section leaned towards the exploration of the nuances of the Bush administration's arguments, whereas the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin's* editorial pages resembled an echo chamber for President Bush's views.

Ironically, in relation to many of the predictions and sentiments offered by the survey respondents and interviewees, it was the chain newspaper — and not the independent — that provided the greater range, however minor, of editorial perspectives on this particular issue. So, although there was a difference between the two newspapers in editorial selection and presentation, that difference was not created by the newspaper that was predicted to offer more 'independent news and views' under competitive circumstances; nor was that difference significant enough, especially when compared to other publications, to support the argument that market competition better serves the publics' interests by providing greater depth and breadth of perspectives. The caveat to this assertion, however, is that it is difficult to predict how either daily would have approached these issues had it held a monopoly in the state of Hawaii.

By comparison, the external benchmarks of non-daily press publications — *The Nation*, *In These Times*, *The Progressive* and *The Progressive Populist* — surveyed during the same monitoring period of February 9-March 16, 2003 revealed not only a wider array of reasonings upon which to base opposition, but they also provided more

cogent expositions of oppositional views in general (breadth and depth). Except for the ‘Bush administration’s threat assessment argument, these publications offered editorials in all the listed perspective categories in Table 5.7, in addition to several other political positionings.²⁹ Impressionistically, these additional themes included the following: 1) The outlines of the propagandistic nature of the Bush administration’s arguments, including the contradictory actions and historic double standards of U.S. foreign policy; 2) The suspicions of official motives for war due to the links between several cabinet members and various corporations that stood to benefit from oil and re-construction contracts; 3) The mainstream media’s role as megaphones for official views on the situation in Iraq and the problems associated with lack of alternative views; 4) The dubious historic role of the U.S. within the UN; 5) The links between current direct violence and previous structural violence; 6) The price tags attached to the ‘coalition of the willing;’ 7) The logic(s) of the peace movement and its connections to other global movements and organizations; and 8) The views and oppositional rationales from peoples in countries *other* than the United States on the threat of war.

Since the official proclamation of the end of the war in Iraq in May 2003, several of these themes have been broached by the two Honolulu dailies. Yet, when these perspectives were in most need of dissemination in the service of decision-making and possible dissent — before the war — they were absent from the discourse. Thus, what initially appeared to be a healthy breadth of perspectives within the editorial pages of *The Honolulu Advertiser*, especially when compared to the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, shrank

²⁹ The omission of the Bush Administration’s threat assessment argument is most likely due to the fact that, for the most part, these publications are considered left/progressives.

when contrasted with other publications. Moreover, when comparing the two largest dailies in Hawaii only to each other, *The Honolulu Advertiser* might be considered 'liberal/progressive'-leaning on this particular issue and the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* as more 'conservative.' But, again, with the introduction of external benchmarks for comparative purposes, *The Honolulu Advertiser* revealed itself to be much more 'centrist.' Therefore, the entire spectrum of political debate, as presented by the two most widely read newspapers in Hawaii, traversed across more conservative grounds and excluded, in general, those multiple voices authentically representing the 'liberal/progressive or radical critique' perspectives.

One of the most striking features of the narratives and discourses published by both newspapers on the threat of war in Iraq, with the exception of the four pieces published by *The Honolulu Advertiser* that touched upon issues of U.S. imperialism, was the close parallels between them and the American master narrative, as characterized by Johan Galtung and as described in Chapter Two. Conversely, those narratives not so closely aligned were found in the publications that were used as external benchmarks. To expand upon what has already been detailed, America's master narrative can be thought of as a cluster of identity-forming myths and ideologies. According to Galtung, "These myths are so deeply internalized in the culture as to be taken for granted and constitute the raw material out of which the social cosmology of people is made, the assumptions built into the deep ideology and deep structure never to be questioned" (Galtung, 1987, p. 1). "They are rooted in and built upon the Judaic/Christian/Islamic myths of the Chosen People in exile, a special relationship or covenant with God, a New Beginning in a Promised Land" (Hackett & Zhao, 1994, p. 533). And, although this master narrative can

be broadly categorized as constituting ‘founding myths,’ it is less concerned with history than with visions of the future (Sardar & Davies, 2002, p. 10).

The primary feature inscribed in this narrative is a storyline that positions the U.S. in the center of world space and heralded as the epitome of good, moral and the democratic exemplar. The attendant national, institutional and personal character traits that support the worthiness of such a central position include a competitive free market economy, competitive elections, a competitive free press and the competitive individual — the myth of the rugged, self-reliant hero taming the wilderness in the quest for freedom. In essence, the master narrative is a morality tale or a parable in which the ‘idea’ of America is pure, perfect, innocent and good. Logically, according to this script, all those peoples and nations not in accordance with these values and institutional arrangements — those who do not hold ‘free’ elections, those who do not hold the Judeo-Christian God as monotheistically supreme, those who do not practice free market capitalism and those that are more collectivist than individualist — are ‘demonic’ or, at the very least, living in the devil’s neighborhood. Given, then, America’s moral beneficence and ultimate omniscience as God’s ‘chosen,’ it becomes a duty to ‘share’ the individual, religious, cultural, economic and societal model of being in the world with other peoples and nations. Furthermore, in the process of this ‘sharing,’ the U.S. is accountable to no one by virtue of its *noblesse oblige*. Although most often not as blatant, an exemplary illustration of America’s master narrative is as follows:

Our founders dedicated this country to the cause of human dignity, the rights of every person and the possibilities of every life. This conviction leads us into the world to help the afflicted and defend the peace and confound the designs of evil men ... Americans are a resolute people, who have risen to every test of our

time. Adversity has revealed the character of our country — to the world — and to ourselves. America is a strong nation and honorable in use of our strength. We exercise power without conquest and sacrifice for the liberty of strangers. Americans are a free people who know that freedom is the right of every person and the future of every nation. The liberty we prize is not America's gift to the world, it is God's — and may God continue to bless America.

(Excerpt from President Bush's State of the Union Speech, Jan. 28, 2003)

There are obvious contradictions and falsehoods within this master narrative, beginning with 'domestic' genocide (Native Americans), slavery (Afro-Americans) and oppressions (women, minorities, workers and the poor) and extending to the 'foreign' arena in the case of the Philippines, Angola, Korea, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Chile and Indonesia, to name but a handful. But, within the master narrative, these conflicts, wars, invasions and coups — in which millions have lost their lives either directly or indirectly as the result of the U.S. military and/or foreign policy — are conveniently edited out or re-written to fit the storyline. In the words of George Orwell in his *Notes on Nationalism*, "The nationalist not only does not disapprove of the atrocities committed by own side, but he has a remarkable capacity for not hearing about them." It is as if the master narrative has a built-in psychological (or, in this case, national) defense mechanism that is designed to allow those that evoke it a continuous holiday from history. The defense is that of projection — a mental mechanism, operating unconsciously, whereby that which is emotionally unacceptable in the self is unconsciously rejected and attributed (projected) to others. The attributes so assigned to another are real to the self and the self reacts accordingly.

Being cultural, and arguable ideological in nature, the master narrative systematically excludes that which does not properly 'fit' into its mythic schemata. In

relation to the preponderance of narratives and storylines within the two Honolulu dailies in comparison to several other publications, it becomes apparent that what didn't 'fit' was what could be labeled 'radical political critique,' which contextually and historically called into question the *motives* for the U.S. government's arguments, decisions and behaviors based upon precedent. In re-visiting the constructed categories for the discourse analysis, what did 'fit' were questions of *how* 'we' might conduct war (strategy), questions of *when* 'we' might conduct war (how long might be needed for sanctions to work or not to work) and questions of *under what conditions* 'we' might conduct war (unilaterally or with the United Nations' permission). Only four of 46 editorials and opinion pieces, however, raised serious questions about *why/motives* in a historical context. Questioning the official version of 'why' and responding oppositionally, in addition to non-American views on the subject were, overall, relegated to the 'deviant' sphere of debate, as conceptualized by David Hallin and explained in Chapter Two. Again, Hallin argues that the relegation of certain views into the 'deviant' sphere of discourse by active condemnation or exclusion is one way in which media, in conjunction with the state and other centers of power, maintain ideological boundaries in the service of that power (Hallin, 1986, pp. 116-117).

The results of this portion of the discourse analysis tend to reflect and affirm many of the current concerns of academics and journalists alike, which include the perception that since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the range of debate about the actions of the U.S. government, both domestically and internationally, is narrowing, while those areas deemed 'deviant' are widening. Some have even termed this phenomenon, 'a new McCarthyism.' These concerns are based in the serious implications

for the democratic process when the U.S. dailies embody, wittingly or unwittingly, the master narrative at the exclusion of other perspectives. The more closely aligned press reports and editorials are to the master narrative, the more circumscribed and closed debates become. For example, the term and concept of ‘evil’ simply demands opposition and action rather than analysis or understanding. Within this hermetically-sealed discourse, those seeking understanding through analysis have often been portrayed as ‘unpatriotic.’ Moreover and, most importantly, the master narrative effectively short circuits debates about the ‘idea’ of America itself with all its problems and shortcomings — debates necessary for adaptation and self-correction. As one colleague so succinctly replied when told by a friend that now is not the time to raise uncomfortable questions, “If not now, then ‘now is not the time’ could be the epitaph of democracy” (Hackett, 2003).

In relation to America’s master narrative as inscribed within the mainstream news media, Galtung and Vincent argue:

What is seen is seen because it fits. It is fit to print because it fits the cosmology, it is news because it is fit to print...Ironically, that ongoing production, distribution, and consumption of distortions of reality of which one is not even aware is often referred to as ‘freedom.’ The same could be said about a person born inside a prison, living among others of the same kind, with no check on his/her consciousness: s/he will certainly not refer to the prison as a prison, but as freedom, as it is the only known reality...What happens when people become conscious of the nature of the constraints on news communication, in terms of quantitative over and under representation of certain structural categories, relations and filters favoring certain types of dramatically constituted news compatible with underlying cosmology? ... When someone points out all of this and tries to pry the mass media loose from the extended family of occidental social cosmology articulation? The answer is obvious: any such

effort would be referred to as “interference with freedom” or even as “censorship,” forcing people out of their beloved prisons ... Is it not rather ethnocentric to assume that the image of reality compatible with certain prejudices of one’s own civilization is necessarily correct, and that all other images can only come about because of lack of freedom?

(Galtung & Vincent, 1992, p. 16)

Galtung and Vincent go on to argue for higher quality news media that include less compatible and even incompatible perspectives from that of the master narrative in the service of a greater understanding of those issues necessary to debate and eventually decide upon in democratic and self-governing political systems. One of the many challenges, however, according to Galtung and Vincent, is that such quality news would demand a higher educational level of its readers as well as political tolerance and interest. In effect, their overall argument becomes one of raising the expectations of both education and news. To meet these expectations, both would require institutional reforms, a re-orientation of purpose(s) and a re-organization of funding practices. Quality education and quality news cannot be available only to the wealthy in democratic societies. If they are restricted to these segments of the population, the society cannot wear the label ‘democratic.’

Summary

Why didn’t we find those perspectives published by the benchmark periodicals within our dailies and delivered to our door? Why is it necessary to spend hundreds of dollars annually on other publications in order to receive even the rudiments of contextual information on pressing social problems? Why shouldn’t this be expected from our daily press? Why is it that even the most basic criteria by which to evaluate

news performance — independent sources of factual information; various historical, political and social contexts in which to make sense of those facts; and the exposure to the widest representative range of opinion available in society — was not met in the corpora of this study?

Again, in keeping with the ‘critical’ tradition of critical discourse analysis, it is necessary to look outside the texts to the extra-linguistic structures and processes for possible answers. First, ‘deviant’ perspectives, as defined by the master narrative, are non-profitable. A commercial press has as much, if not more, to sell than to tell.³⁰ Its advertising rates are based upon circulation and circulation is based upon non-offensiveness to both its readers and its advertisers. Therefore, mainstream commercial newspapers did not in the case of this particular study and do not, in general, cover politically-less-correct or non-profitable news and interpretations regardless of how important they may be for the millions (Picard, 1985).

Second, explanation, contextualization and well-informed argumentations demand time, space and resources, all of which are at a premium within the organizational structures of a commercial press. This condition, however, is not necessarily one of necessity but appears to stem from the drive for excessive profit. Whereas the average manufacturing firm has approximately a 7 % operating margin (profit), newspapers currently have operating margins between 18-25 % (Picard & Brody, 1997, p. 48). In

³⁰The four non-daily national press publications used as external benchmarks in this study are primarily funded by subscriptions, donations and foundations. *The Honolulu Weekly*, used as a local benchmark, is a ‘free’ weekly paper that relies on advertising for its revenue, much like the larger dailies. Its staff, however, is comparably small and, like most other ‘alternative’ ‘free’ weeklies, dedicate much of their pages to arts and entertainment. Despite the often excellent and extensive investigative reporting, as evidenced in this study, the *Weekly* does not possess the resources to cover a broad range of topics on a consistent basis. Its existence, nevertheless, does provide another ‘voice’ in Hawaii and therefore, at times, does broaden the range of perspectives.

order to meet these notoriously high profit margins, newspapers reduce their hard news staff and increase their *advertorial* staff, sections and articles. In general, newspapers report a 60/40 ratio between editorial and advertising, respectively, meaning approximately 40% of all space is devoted to advertising. These figures, however, are often misleading as many sections which are in reality paid advertisements (advertorial) — like dining and technology-oriented sections — are counted as ‘editorial.’ Advertising, the driving force behind newspaper production, accounts for 70-85 % of all operating revenue (Picard & Brody, 1997, p. 49). A newspaper’s resources, therefore, are often directed towards the maintenance and expansion of this revenue-generating activity at the expense of better fulfilling its social role. Many presses have even gone as far as “halting the circulation to areas where readers do not interest advertisers — such as inner cities or districts with lower incomes or other unwanted demographics — or where distribution costs are higher” (Picard & Brody, 1997, p. 89). In short, economic interests take precedent over public interests in the contemporary world of newspapering.

And lastly, it could be argued that another reason those discourses less compatible with the master narrative were either not found or underrepresented within the editorials of the two Honolulu dailies is simply that most people, including journalists, want to believe the master narratives’ plot line — both *about* the press and *within* the press. Most Americans want to believe in the notion that American democracy is based upon truth, fairness and responsible power, and that Americans have the freest press on the globe. Most want to believe in the veracity of the habits of their minds. It is only through exposing the great chasm between ‘what we expect and think we are receiving from our news’ and ‘what we are in actuality receiving and why’ will the ‘familiar become

strange.’ It is within this moment of ‘strangeness’ — the interstices between what is and what could be, that moment when we are taken out of our ‘beloved thought prisons’ — that holds the possibility of not only raising our expectations but also of raising the question, ‘Just how free is our free press, considering what is *not* being published *even under the supposedly perfect condition of market competition?*’

Conclusion:

Why We Can't Get 'There' From 'Here': Stories Matter

A popular government without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a prologue to a farce or a tragedy, or perhaps both.

James Madison, 1822
(Herman, 1992, p.2)

It is no longer enough to report the facts truthfully. It is now necessary to report the truth about the facts.

(Commission on Freedom of the Press, 1947)

An old proverb says: “A myth repeated a thousand times is eventually seen as truth.” The results of this study suggest that the notions that the dissemination of political communication is enhanced by free market principles, preferably by two newspapers engaged in competition, and, that the only true free press is a commercially-based press, appear to be just that — a myth — at least at this stage of American history. Contrary to popular ‘wisdom,’ the combined results of the content and critical discourse analysis show that head-to-head competition affected *The Honolulu Advertiser* and the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* in ways that are more detrimental than beneficial to the citizens of Hawaii, and support the hypothesis that competition, within the newspaper industry, tends to promote sensationalism (McChesney, 1997; Picard, 1985; Curran, Douglas & Whannel, 1980).³¹ Furthermore, of the three traditions reviewed in Chapter One, it is the democratic

³¹ Again, ‘sensationalism’ refers to stories that are intended to grab the attention via shock and startle, rather than to inform.

socialist tradition which best explains and/or more accurately reflects the findings of this study. These conclusions are based upon multiple factors and levels of analysis.

First, quality — as measured by the size of newshole, size of editorial newshole, amount of ‘enterprise’ and ‘controversy’ stories, amount of hard vs. soft news, the proportion of locally-authored news to total news and the range of topics covered — either declined within the ‘A’ and ‘Hawaii’ sections or remained relatively stable from the pre- to post-competitive arrangement. In relation to volume, origin of story and diversity of topical content, the two newspapers continued to be fairly homogenous, even though one is a chain newspaper and the other considered an independent, and despite competition. They leaned toward uniformity in the following areas: ratio of wire to locally written stories, number of op-eds, percentage of local vs. wire op-eds, percentage of ‘controversy’ news, lack of ‘enterprise’ stories and percentage of most topical categories to total news. Most importantly, they were also alike with regards to the issues of low representation, such as women’s issues, race relations, social policy and Native Hawaiian affairs. In essence, the two papers are more similar after head-to-head competition than not, yet more different than they were before.

Of the two newspapers, *The Honolulu Advertiser*, the larger and more capital-infused, changed the least with the noted exceptions of a decrease in the total number of pages and stories within the ‘A’ and ‘Hawaii’ sections (theoretically where the ‘hard’ news is located), a slight decrease in local news to total news, and a slight increase in both the use of photographs and in the publishing of ‘soft’ news. The *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, on the other hand, substantially shifted its priorities and focus, as evidenced by the doubling of its publication of ‘soft’ news and a twofold increase in its use of large

colorful photographs. In many ways, it now resembles that of a 'sensationalistic' newspaper or tabloid-type press. In relation to volume, origin of story and diversity of topical content, market competition did not improve the quality of either newspaper. If anything, it seemed to have undermined the quality of both, but especially for the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*.

Secondly, the critical discourse analysis prong of this study revealed a consistent and similar pattern of coverage in the way issues were covered by the two papers, both before and after head-to-head competition within the 'hard' news genre. The range of perspectives within the analyzed overlapping stories was no greater after competition than before. Both dailies tended to use the same sources, similar or identical quotes from those sources, the same framings (with one exception) and the same context and/or lack of context (see tables 5.1-5.6 in Chapter Five). Characteristics and features common to both newspapers both before and after market competition include the following: 1) the bias towards using elites as sources and, by extension, a class bias, as evidenced by who was chosen to provide information about whom, and who was and was not named and/or identified; 2) the tendency to blunt controversies and social conflicts by replacing them with elite 'personality clashes;' and 3) the lack of background information, context and/or analysis necessary for a more comprehensive understanding of social and political issues.

Minor differences between the two newspapers did emerge, however, in the analysis conducted on the range of perspectives offered within the editorials about Iraq during the six weeks leading up to the war. The results indicate that *The Honolulu Advertiser* offered a somewhat broader range of opinions and perspectives on the conflicts in Iraq than did the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*. All perspectives offered by the

Honolulu Star-Bulletin were also offered by *The Honolulu Advertiser*, but not vice versa. And, unlike *The Honolulu Advertiser*, the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* did not present two arguments of opposition to an impending war. But, when comparing *The Honolulu Advertiser* and the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* on the issues surrounding the conflicts in Iraq to several external benchmarks, it became apparent that the two newspapers were more similar than different regarding the breadth and depth of argumentation offered. This contrast served to reveal *The Honolulu Advertiser* as more of a ‘centrist’ press rather than the ‘liberal-progressive’ newspaper it appeared to be when compared exclusively with the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*. Moreover, both newspapers, but more so the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, tended to publish pieces that were compatible with the American master narrative as defined and detailed in Chapter Five. Contrary to many of the sentiments and predictions espoused by the community members as listed in Chapter Three, it was the chain newspaper — and not the independent — that provided the greater range of perspectives on the conflict in Iraq.

The overall results of this study support many of the assertions put forth by the democratic socialist tradition and those scholars who argue that we need to think about new ways of nurturing meaningful diversity (Picard, 2004, 1985; Baker, 2002; Curran, 2000; Hackett, 2001; McChesney, 1999, 1997; Barron, 1973). They, furthermore, support previous research conducted on the consequences of market competition between newspapers, and also those studies which found a lack of significant difference between monopoly newspapers and those in a JOA arrangement, and between chains and independents (Lacy, 1988; Winter & Candussi, 1988; Ghi-glionel, 1984; Daugherty, 1983; Donohue & Glasser, 1978; Grotta, 1971; Borstel, 1956; Nixon & Jones, 1956).

However, as easily noted, much of the latter listed research is dated in so far as advances in technology have moved at an accelerated pace since 1988, and the nature of the newspaper industry itself has mutated since many of these studies were conducted in ways previously described within the *organizational* section of Chapter Two. Both factors could have impacted the results of these types of aforementioned studies if replicated today — but did not. Furthermore, most of this earlier research was designed in response to the growing concerns over the increase in the number of US and Canadian cities under the sway of a monopoly newspaper and therefore traced the changes in content from once-competing newspapers to a monopoly situation. Since the time of most of these previous studies, there have been few opportunities like the set of circumstances in Honolulu, Hawaii to reverse the design, due to the ever-increasing concentration of ownership in all media industries.

These findings do *not* support many of the arguments upon which the SOS based its successful campaign to block the closure of the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*. They do *not* support the assertion that market-based competition within the newspaper industry is a better means than a JOA by which to achieve breadth and depth of public discourse. They do *not* support all those predictions as listed in Chapter Three by community members and published by the two newspapers. And, the results do *not* support the majority of assumptions about the nature of the press as expressed by the journalists and editors interviewed and surveyed within this study. Rather, these findings call into question the rationale behind anti-trust statutes as applied to the newspaper industry and the rationale behind the market-liberal and reformist liberal traditions. They offer new evidence for skepticism about the role of competition in newspapering and they beg a re-evaluation of

the notions that diversity of perspective automatically follows from market competition, and that a free press is equivalent to a commercial press.

In a sense, it could be argued that the SOS did all the wrong things (except, of course, for saving nearly 100 jobs) but for all the right reasons and/or vice-versa. The SOS's diagnosis and prognosis were partially incorrect, which, in turn, led to an inadequate treatment option in correcting for the perceived ills of a potential monopoly situation. They were correct in their assessment of the dangers of a monopoly newspaper which were documented in Chapter Two. And, in agreement with the SOS's assessment, this author is certainly not in favor of a local monopoly newspaper in any town, city or state. They were incorrect, however, in the assumption that market competition was sufficient and/or the solution to those dangers and that a multiplicity of commercial forums would result in a multiplicity of ideas — substantive ideas, not just more and somewhat different content. Rather, as this and other studies suggest, limits to diversity may derive less from monopoly or specific owners/publishers and more from the structural constraints of market-driven journalism. In short, market forces seem to be an insufficient means by which to achieve a 'quality' press and are in need of supplementing.

Accordingly and arguably, those people at the helm of both newspapers appear to have little to do with their respective paper's quality and/or lack of quality. They are, in general, replaceable. The issues surrounding diversity and quality in newspapering seem most often to be structural and not personal. Given the design of this particular study, however, there is no way to 'prove' that the differences and/or lack of differences that emerged from this research were *not* due to David Black personally as an owner (as

distinct from the previous owner, Liberty Newspaper) — just as it cannot ‘prove’ that the observed changes in the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* toward sensationalism was caused exclusively by market competition. However, when comparing these results to the cumulative findings of other projects over the past several decades, it can be deduced that it is highly plausible that market forces and logics, as an attendant condition of full market competition, were primarily responsible for those shifts in content and discourse that did and did not occur, rather than David Black’s personal proclivities.

But how, in light of the evidence presented throughout this text from multiple sources and over many decades, and as empirically supported by this particular study, do apparently false notions about the effects of competition between newspapers continue to be so prevalent within a society in general and even amongst those associated with what has come to be known as the ‘media reform movement?’ For example, many of the current debates regarding the FCC and potential further ‘de-regulation’ generally revolve around if and how to ‘restore’ competition rather than possible alternative ways to achieve one of its mandates — namely, creating the conditions for diversity of opinion, perspectives and ideas (Federal Communications Commission, 2004).

There are three possible intersecting and contributing factors that might help explain such a phenomenon. First, there exists an overall disconnect between universities and the general public. There are no public spaces or easily available and accessible vehicles through which one might learn of recent developments, long-term trends and/or contradictory findings within the social sciences. Unlike medical ‘breakthroughs,’ which are generally covered by multiple commercial outlets and are most often associated with financial gain in some sector, advances within the social sciences are more often than not

ignored by the media. Therefore, unless one subscribes to costly journals that publish and/or discuss the research of social scientists, it is highly unlikely that the research presented and cited in this text would be known. Out of the several reasons why this situation might exist and persist, three seem foremost. First, social science is often perceived as ‘disinterested analysis’ and conducted primarily for academic promotion, rather than as an intrinsic part of finding solutions to social problems. Second, and relatedly, many social scientists write only for other social scientists. The problem becomes one of translation. Trying to read and understand many of these studies is like the average person trying to read about medical treatments in Latin. Only those engaged in the social sciences can correct for these two flaws. Third, many of the benefits derived from social research are long-term oriented and not necessarily capital generating. Within the commercial media system, both features are disincentives for publication.

The second factor that might account for the discrepancies between what many people assume about how the press operates and what social science research tells us about how it operates is the stories themselves *about* the press, as embedded within the classic liberal and reformist liberal traditions — those stories which most Americans simply grew up with and that have come to be internalized as ‘fact.’ In brief review of the general assumptions, the following are of overall significance: 1) Society is composed of diverse groups who come together to lobby for and represent their interests before government. This diversity of interests gives balance and strength to the overall society. All voices can potentially be heard; 2) The power of groups to represent their interests is roughly equal. No one group can dominate any particular issue all of the time; 3) The government acts as an impartial referee on behalf of the general good, helping to achieve

fair and just compromises to competing claims; 4) Political life (at the citizen and the institutional level) is independent from economic life. Rich and poor are equal in the face of government and law; and 5) The exercise of power is visible. In *specific* relation to media, the assumptions include: a) Media help to give voice to all views and provide a forum for public debate; b) Media provide information necessary for citizens to act; c) Media are independent of the power of economics and government; and d) Media serve as an independent institution keeping watch over *potentially* self-serving governmental agencies, politically aberrant individuals and the excessive influence of special interest groups (Curran, 2000, pp. 120-155).

As revealed by the numerous research findings presented throughout this text, these traditions are untenable positions from which to base media policies because they do not reflect the actual functions of, nor the interconnections among, the state, the media and the market as they currently operate. Foremost, the mechanisms that supposedly protect and promote diversity — market competition and anti-trust laws — don't. Newspapers are dependent upon a market structure with its own logics, which have an internal and systemic tendency to filter and constrict views and opinions that do not support the business interests of the given entity. The market itself acts as a gatekeeper by its need to 'get the attention' of the reader in the service of advertising, by its need to produce news that is cheap and by the need to reduce risk, resulting in the repeated reproduction of what is familiar, such as those stories aligned with the master narrative (Smythe, 1981). As a consequence, newspapers are primarily interested in their readers as consumers rather than as citizens. Those multiple opinions and perspectives that, in general, do not appear within the pages of the daily paper, then, are not necessarily due to

self or direct censorship, but are often absent as an unintended byproduct of someone simply exercising good business judgment — structural censorship. In general, and as evidenced within this study, voices without economic power, or whose message cannot be turned into a ‘product,’ are excluded. The news media, therefore, do not give voice to all views and do not provide a forum for public debate in the service of democratic principles.

Furthermore, the newspaper industry is not an independent institution, but rather plays an integral role in maintaining the legitimacy of the state and vice versa. Economic power is interwoven through both media and governmental power. Through the processes of concentration, consolidation and conglomeration, and the resultant economic and political clout, the newspaper industry is a fully integrated participant in the corporate community, and largely run by publicly unaccountable CEOs and boards of directors (Phillips, 1998). Not only does the newspaper industry have obvious stakes in political decisions, it also has enormously deep pockets to use and abuse for the lobbying process in the service of its own interests. But, because the market model of communication, underlying both the classic liberal and reformist liberal traditions, insists upon the theoretical independence of the press as the ‘Fourth Estate,’ the model cannot account for how extramedia relations of visible and *invisible* power affect political communications. Because the model directs attention to ‘the way things are supposed to be,’ it overlooks how corporations tend to subdue critical surveillance of corporate power, and how unaccountable private interests are aligned with supposedly accountable public servants. The role of watchdog is therefore played in a very selective manner. These ‘blind spots’ contribute to errors in diagnosis in relation to perceived problem areas of the modern

press and, in turn, craft a false public consciousness about their possible corrections. For the modern press to be even moderately independent, it must be free from market constraints and government coercion.

As explained in Chapter One, the rationale for organizing the press around free market principles can be traced to suppositions underlying classic liberalism, as they relate to the First Amendment of the United States' Constitution . In writing the First Amendment, the founder's intention was to assure that anyone who wanted to share or impart information would be able to do so without government interference. It was part of the much larger project of inventing and creating a society which protected the interests of individual citizens — property rights as well as the 'natural' and inalienable rights of equality, life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness — over the concentrated power of kings and/or tyrants. The *raison d'être* for the First Amendment can be characterized as follows: 1) a theological argument against state-censorship in the name of the God-given faculty of reason enjoyed by individuals; 2) the idea that press freedom should follow from the rights of individuals to speak out in opposition to any state, church and, by extension, on any political topic; 3) the promotion of the utilitarian idea that free public discussion and free press would counter the tendency of those holding power to become tyrants and would promote a continuous monitoring of government between elections; and 4) a belief that free discussion would lead to the truth. What is false now may later be found to have merit. What is taken as true now may become less true, and more a matter of unquestioned dogma (Adapted from Keane, 1991, pp. 10-20).

As clearly evident, the Amendment was intended to help maintain the ideals of a democratic society by placing political communication at the very heart of political decision making.

All individuals were to be protected from government interference in communicating personally through speech, petition, assembly or press. No distinction was given to 'press' in the language, as the authors of the amendment wrote it, 1) because obviously they did not intend for there to be a distinction and because in the reality of that time there was no distinction. 2) Press was then technologically a personal means of communication. One did it in person as one did speech, petition or assembly in person. The First Amendment authors meant a person's use of a press to be equally protected. All together these protections would assure that everyone be heard and the public thereby have the information it needed for democratic self government. (Allen, 1991, p. 5)

At the time of the Amendment's conception and articulation, the playing field for the number of people one could reach given the low cost of owning a press was roughly level (exceptions to ownership and bias of access detailed in Chapter One). During the 1830s, however, technological advancements increased the speed of the press. This meant that more people could be reached but, at the same time, it reduced the number of people who could own one due to its higher cost. It could be argued that within 40 years of the amendment's conception, with the 1833 launching of the Penny Press in the US, its intentions became distorted. From this point on, because of the high cost of printing, access to the 'press' and, therefore to the public, began to narrow — initially restricted to wealthy individuals, later to wealthy families and companies, and now mainly to corporations and conglomerates. In other words, the right to press freedom increasingly

became determined by wealth, unlike the other four rights granted by the First Amendment (Allen, 1991, pp. 6-10).

That this was allowed to happen can, again, be directly related to classic liberalism. 'The press' eventually became 'private property' rather than a personal means of communication as intended. The tenets of liberalism demanded that the presses be protected as such because the central canon of the First Amendment was to protect the circulation of ideas from government interference and seizure. But, in hindsight, it appears as if the governors of the day traded the devil they knew for the devil they didn't know. They traded the tyranny of the monarch/state for the tyranny of an unregulated market. These tensions between market rights and political rights, and between capitalism and democracy — in relation to the press — have yet to be resolved and lead to the third factor that might help explain the discrepancy between the assumptions and stories about the press, and the results of this study and others like it.

The third factor that might account for the gaps between 'assumptions' and 'evidence' is the ideological ascension of what is now commonly referred to as neo-liberalism and its attendant market-liberal policies. In short, neo-liberalism seeks to minimize the role of non-market values by either ignoring and denying them or absorbing them for appropriation and sale. This *zeitgeist* has been elevated to near theological proportions over the past decade, sometimes called 'the new civic religion' and/or 'economic fundamentalism' (Phillips, 2002; Frank, 2000; McChesney, 1997, p. 44). Within this ideological climate, markets rather than the state have been repeatedly heralded as *the* vehicle for human governance and elevated to playing the role of protecting individual freedoms. Consequently, individual political freedoms have been

re-packaged and sold as the right to buy, sell and invest for profit — the reduction of democracy to capitalism, and their conflation. Politically speaking, the notion of a neo-liberal democracy is oxymoronic in that the term describes

... a government that has all the requisite trappings of democracy — legislatures, public campaigns, the right to vote, etc. — but is really a highly unrepresentative government by elites and for elites, and where political and economic power is resolutely maintained in the hands of the wealthy few.

(McChesney, 1999, p. 79)

Like the earlier Gilded Age, the scales of balance between wealth and commonwealth have been, once again, tipped in favor of wealth forming a new type of monarchy out of corporate aristocracies, where media conglomerates are central figures in the royal court. Public life and concepts of social justice have become subordinated to personal consumption, as offered by the private corporation whose king is ‘The Market.’ The problem is that the king is falsely portrayed as benevolent, fair and as giving favor based upon merit. On the contrary, the king behaves in ways that resemble Machiavelli, using draconian means that favor concentration of wealth, not distribution, and is often mercilessly exploitive of labour (Phillips, 2002, pp. xi-xxii). Even some of the world’s most prominent financiers are beginning to warn that leaving social decisions to ‘the market’ poses a danger to society itself, and that a free market economy must be a socially-oriented market economy or the present system is liable to break down (Soros, 1997, pp. 45-58).

As illustrative of some of these dangers, there has been an extraordinary upward distribution of income in recent decades.

The top 1 percent garnered almost 15 percent of the nation’s income for itself in 1998 — up from just over 8 percent in 1980. This is more

income than was received by more than 100 million people in the bottom 40 percent of the population taken together.

(Alperovitz, 2003, p. 15)

The free market is simply not ‘free’ but rather molded by government via campaign contributions and the lobbying process in the form of de-(re)regulation and huge corporate subsidies (which would be called “welfare” if allocated to the poor) benefiting existing wealth. As discussed in Chapter One, it is an incorrect metaphor to equate the ‘free’ market with the ‘free market place of ideas.’ The ideas that emerge from such a system are only as free as the system itself. The often heard tautological argument used to justify such false equivalencies and the organization of social life, in general, in ways more compatible with neo-liberalism, is simply that policies that advance markets are inherently good and efficient because they advance markets (Phillips, 2002, pp. 405-422).

It is against this ideological backdrop — this *zeitgeist*, this belief in the beneficence of the financialization and/or the marketization of America — that journalists often gave binary responses (either the state or market/capital controls the press) to the survey and interview questions within this study. As with any *zeitgeist*, it affects the collective imagination in conceiving alternative ways to approach social, political and individual problems. Alternatives become especially difficult to imagine in the US, where there is a lack of visible and viable non-market media as in so many other democratic nations. In specific relation to the newspaper industry, the patterns of cognitions reflected among those interviewed and surveyed in Chapter Three began with the assumption that a market-based press is inherently free, efficient and, overall, the best way to disseminate political information. But, too much concentration of ownership is dangerous because it eventually breeds monopoly, which is injurious because monopolies

are the only major outlet for the dissemination of news. They create homogenized national content if the monopoly is also a chain newspaper (like Gannett). They decrease diversity of views. They increase advertising rates. And, their existence increases the chance of compromising the integrity of the information published due to the greater potential for conflicts of interest between the press and the big businesses operating within the area. Within this *weltanschauung*, or world view, market competition becomes the only logical alternative by which to correct for the ills associated with monopoly and restore confidence in the functions of the press.

This binary, either-or cognition, however fails in three respects. First, market competition between newspapers has been shown to have either little effect upon the quality of the press or to result in increased trivialization and hypercommercialism (Picard, 1985). Second, the high cost of entry into business and the necessary economies of scale for survival places any individual, company or corporation into the 'investor class,' which takes directives from market trends and not the public's interests. And lastly, the binary logic fails because of the *paradox of competition*, which is antithetical to the longterm goals of keeping prices low, increasing the quality of products and making sure no competitor gets large enough to control prices or the market.

Market competition tends to set in motion 'forces' that, over time, reduce the number of competitors in an industry. In fact, the history of most industries in so-called free-market economies is the history of the growth of oligopolies, where a few large companies eventually come to dominate. The first examples occurred during the late 1800s in oil, steel and railroad industries. All of them eventually became dominated by a handful of 'robber barons' — Rockefeller, Carnegie, Gould and Vanderbilt. Antitrust laws eventually were used to break up many of these companies, but oligopolistic tendencies

continue in these and most other industries. The communication industry is no exception.

(Demers, 2000, pp. 1-20)

And, therein lies the conundrum. Successful competition encourages the elimination of competition. Furthermore, when operative, market competition — within the newspaper industry anyway — often fails to deliver the benefits expected from it (ie. increased quality). Moreover, and more importantly, the necessary priority given to efficiency in the name of competition displaces other values — non-market values — that cannot be reduced to monetary terms. In other words, *we can't get there from here.* We cannot achieve a public sphere model of communication through the commercial organization of the press because of the logics and dynamics of the market itself. The commercialization of public affairs, and the organization of the dissemination of political and social communication as commodity, are antithetical to the public sphere model's vision of political communication as existing to support democracy. The logics of the two versions of how the press should be organized and operated are conflictual and lead to different end 'products.' So, even though many of the arguments asserted by the SOS were based upon the public sphere model of the press, they chose to utilize the market model to achieve their goals.

The conflictual logics between the two models are multi-leveled. Whereas in the market model of the press, a newspaper is a private company whose primary purpose is to generate profits for owners and stock-holders, the public sphere model sees a newspaper as a public resource whose purpose is to promote active citizenship via information and education. Success, then, is measured by profit for the former, but how well the public is served by the latter. The market model views audiences as consumers who are to view

ads and buy products, and the public sphere model views them as citizens who are to learn about their world in order to become active in political life. What is in the public interest is defined as whatever is 'popular' by the market model. On the other hand, the public sphere model sees diverse and substantive content, even if not 'popular', as being in the public interest. Diversity can potentially threaten profits by straying too far from profitable, standardized formulas within the market model. But, diversity is viewed as necessary within the public sphere model in order to represent a diverse public. As previously explained in Chapter One, regulation and intervention is mostly seen as interfering with benevolent market processes and viewed as paternalistic by the market model, but viewed as a useful tool in protecting the public interest in the public sphere model (Baker, 2002, pp. 3-6; Croteau & Hoynes, 2001, p. 37). Again, we can't hope to get *'there'* (a press which supports the political processes of a democracy) from *'here'* (a press which exists to make profits). An alternative form of funding and organizing journalism is needed to arrive at *'there.'*

This is not to say that a market-based press, or even commercial competition between presses, fails on all accounts. To the contrary, competition has been shown to benefit those businesses that do advertise, as rates tend to decrease under such conditions (Winter & Candussi, 1988). Market-based newspapers also perform the vital function of circulating information relating to commerce, and are therefore necessary and important to the commercial sectors of society. As a consequence, these types of newspapers certainly can and should play a complementary role in information dissemination. 'The People' are both consumers and citizens. But, it is dysfunctional for them to play the starring role in a play about democracy. The exclusive focus upon the business aspects, as

benefits derived from a market driven press, ignores its link to the First Amendment and its public obligation to provide democracy's oxygen. Unlike other commodities — where the logics of the market have been known, at least initially, to produce innovation and be catalytic in creative ventures — the daily newspaper, in its unique and dual capacity as business and political communicator, suffers under such conditions.

The press is not protected by the US Constitution to expand its market and increase its profit. There are responsibilities attached to its protection — one that cannot be met if solely market driven. If the goal is to preserve, maintain and enhance democracy, private enterprise cannot pretend to be a public utility. Political information is too important to be left to the whims and the logics of the market. In the words of Finnish media scholar and professor Kaarle Nordenstreng, president of the International Organization of Journalists:

Democracy cannot function properly unless there is original, critical thinking among its citizens. The realization of democracy is not possible if only dominant patterns of behavior and the pressure of public opinion offer content to people's views of the world. In such conditions one cannot speak of the will of the people, but of the people merely echoing the message put across by a small privileged group with control of both power and the channels of influence.

(Nordenstreng, 1974, pp. 7-60)

According to the binary mode of thinking, as reflected within the liberal and reformist liberal traditions, and as evidenced by many of the interviews and quotes within this study — either the state or market/capital controls the press and given that markets are preferable, the goal is to ensure a competitive environment — there are only two options to correct for the lack of diversity associated with monopoly newspapers. The

first is simply to attempt to return to ‘the good old days’ of the family-owned press. This is implausible due to the sheer size and scale of the industry, and borders on romantic nostalgia. The second option is to proceed exactly as the SOS did and use existing anti-trust laws to prevent and/or break up monopolies. Aside from the fact that the utility of those laws are in serious question given the recent FCC rulings (which may or may not be over-turned), this latter solution could only be short lived because of the paradox of competition. To go the route of the SOS demands repeated litigation, or at least the threat of it, yet still does not address nor correct for the underlying structural mechanisms that serve to undermine the quality of market driven journalism. Both options focus upon *who* controls what we read, see and hear, rather than *what*. A greater understanding of the *what* — the structural filters through which political communication flows — tends to render moot questions of *who*.

This conundrum returns us to the problems associated with ‘story,’ and how our stories about the ways in which the press best operates short circuits its potential to fulfill its intended role of fostering democratic principles. The content and/or lack thereof currently offered by the mainstream dailies, and the trend toward increased corporatization, marketization and commercialization of all information, reflect our stories about the press. They are connected by the heralding of ‘The Market’ and have crippled our ability to conceive alternative ways in which the dissemination of political information might be organized. Our stories are important — *they matter* — because they guide behavior. Just as in the process of psychotherapy, the first step towards ‘health’ is to begin the cognitive linkage between false precepts and undesirable outcomes. In the particular case of the press, the initial step begins with the public airing of studies like

this one, which helps stir debate through empirically linking ineffectual thought patterns about the press to dysfunctional behaviors by the press. Only through a more complete understanding of these links does it become possible to gain the capacity for self-correction.

But, does America as a political entity and Americans as a willful polity possess the capacity for self-correction? Or, as a form of government and a people, are we doomed to remain in our ‘beloved thought prisons?’ History, however short, has shown that Americans have always been a self-correcting people. For example:

The eight hour day, the minimum wage, the conservation of natural resources and the protection of our air, water and land, women’s rights, civil rights, free trade unions , social security ... public education, publicly regulated or owned transportation, sanitation and utility systems — all of these were launched as citizens’ movements and won the endorsement of the political class only after long struggles and in the face of bitter opposition and sneering attacks ... All were provided not by the automatic workings of free enterprise but by implementing the idea in the Declaration of Independence that the people had a right to a government that best promoted their “safety and happiness.”

(Moyer, 2003)

Ironically and sadly, many of the social advancements and protections described above are presently under siege. Corporate America is spending billions of dollars lobbying for the de-(re) regulation of everything, from the healthcare system to education to national parks and forests to social security. What was so arduously built in the name of public trust is being dismantled for private profit — an obsequious deference to huge economic and political power structures. Some of these issues are being heatedly debated and can be heard in multiple corridors from inside the Beltway and City Halls to local coffee shops. The arguments against privatization revolve around the degradation, ideally

and practically, of services intended to promote the general welfare and good of *all* citizens. Compulsory education, for example, is deemed a prerequisite for democratic self government and has therefore been financed by government taxes on the grounds that the responsibilities of education should be collectively shared, and its importance so great that its purpose would be compromised if organized around market-based principles.

The access to diverse political information is also a prerequisite for democratic self government — the adult extension of public education. Yet, debates around the press and its organization are, for the most part, market-based. It is as if there exists an unwritten rule that what has not yet been privatized — but might become so — is open for discussion, but those institutions already privatized are fixed and sacrosanct in that position. It would seem that it is time to include, within the repertoire of social and political discussion, the possibility of ‘de-privatizing’ some aspects of the newspaper industry along the same lines as public education and in the spirit of the original intent of public broadcasting, but in print.

Through various modifications toward diverse *forms* of ownership, some of which were listed in Chapter One, there exists the possibility of a more authentic ‘plurality’ of opinion — those that arise from a privately-owned press (for the purpose of selling goods and services) and those that arise from a publicly-owned or quasi- publicly-owned press constituting a blend of support from government, non-profit institutions, foundations and/or journalist-operated cooperatives (for the purpose of circulating ideas). As it stands now, “what is most frequently presented as pluralism is, in most instances, merely another facet of the basic cultural industry, organized commercially and anchored ideologically to private ownership and a way of life most conducive to its maintenance”

(Schiller, 1976, p. 108). Therefore, it seems more likely that diverse opinions and perspectives would flourish under a system that was comprised of a plurality of separate entities organized in a plurality of ways — a structurally mixed system with different economic bases and different goals. “ This mixed system could effectively respond both to the press’s multiple and sometimes conflicting assignments in a democratic society and to the danger that reliance on a single base of support leaves the press too vulnerable to being undermined by either the government, market, or private power” (Baker, 2002, p. 283).

Furthermore, it would seem that there needs to be a shift in emphasis from ‘competition’ to ‘cooperation.’³² After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, it has often been said that one of the problems surrounding those events was that the FBI, CIA and local law enforcement agencies were in competition with one another and, as a consequence, did not share the necessary information that could have aided in prevention. Could not the same be said for the press and the intelligence necessary for a functioning democracy?

The counter argument and/or mental resistance to entertaining the notion of organizing the dissemination of opinions, perspectives and views along similar lines, as just described and/or akin to public education, is the premise, a correct one, that the press must be independent of government interference in order to perform its intended role of countering the tendency of those holding power to become tyrants, and to provide

³²Several seminal works from the field of psychology, especially in the areas of ego and moral development, have identified ‘competition’ as a male ethos. ‘Cooperation’ and ‘ethics of care,’ on the other hand, have been identified as female ethos (Gilligan, 1982). This may help explain the primacy given to ‘competition’ as a way to achieve various aspects of ‘quality’ in that the writers of early economic theory were male.

a continuous monitoring of elected officials between elections. The problem with this counter argument, however, and as detailed in Chapter Two, is that the government and the media industries are already in a corrupt relationship with one another — facilitated by the same market logics that were once thought to prevent such an unconstitutional alliance. The FCC, for example, has come to be characterized as what is referred to as a ‘captive agency.’ Captive agencies are, “those government agencies that have been captured by the industry that they are supposed to regulate. Those who work at captive agencies come to believe their function is to serve it, not to regulate it” (Ivins, 2003, p. 22). So, rather than deny that government is involved in the operations of the press — through its specific agencies that strongly support private ownership and private profit, as a dominant and often unquestioned source, and through various subsidies such as tax incentives and advantages — it might be best to acknowledge that the tension between having a ‘free’ press (in support of negative freedom) and having direct state involvement in the press to promote democracy (in support of positive freedom) is but another facet of the democratic tension between liberty and equality that has never been adequately dealt with nor resolved, and that now might be the time to begin.

One further challenge in expanding the debate about how to best correct for the ills of the modern press, again, pertains to the American master narrative. Specifically, to that story line which asserts that the US is the epitome of good, moral and the democratic exemplar in finished form and ready for export. Democracies, by their very nature and definition, are never finished ‘products.’ Rather, the US is like any other society — a human endeavor based upon ‘ideal’ and saddled with imperfections in need of modification. “Some of America’s institutions, values and ideals that are taken for the

'exercise of virtue' were, have been and are responsible for the continuation of exclusion and marginalization" (Sardar & Davies, 2002, p. 142). Further research and innovative policy advocacy relating to political communication need to acknowledge the press' role in the exclusion and marginalization of those groups identified by this study and others like it (Henry & Tator, 2002). Further research also needs to counter the tendency to begin with the assumption that the American press is the 'freest in the world.'

By shedding the ethnocentric arrogance that often accompanies discussions — academic and otherwise — about the US press, it becomes possible to look toward how other societies have organized and are currently attempting to re-organize their media industries in the name of maximizing the circulation of diverse ideas. Although a review of media economic and social interventions made by democratic nations in an attempt to correct for the damages caused by market forces is beyond the scope of this dissertation (and is therefore one of its limitations), it is nonetheless, beneficial to briefly list some of the attempts at correction and intervention that other countries have made in the name of expanding the imagination of the reader. I would also advocate a thorough and exhaustive canvassing of these interventions as one suggestion for future research and as an adjunct to projects like this one. After establishing that one system does not work, it is time to begin looking at systems that do and/or might.

Sweden, for example, is in the process of "the abolition of all advertisements on radio and television and a program of subsidies for print media designed to guarantee enriched democracy by the broad availability of publications expressing distinct and sometimes unpopular views" (McChesney & Nichols, 2002, p. 104). Other European nations, such as Greece and Norway, are also modifying the organization of their print

and broadcast media in similar ways as Sweden in order to buttress against the global onslaught of increased hyper-commercialization of all content — including news — and have already banned advertising to children on television. Likewise, various groups and political parties within Australia and New Zealand are actively re-thinking and re-designing communication systems that eschew the privatization of public broadcasting services. Even in East Timor, possibly the world's newest democracy, the fledgling government placed the issue of democratizing media high on the agenda in developing national policy. They began by disallowing both private and state monopoly (McChesney & Nichols, 2002, p. 83).

There are three major principles around which most of these interventions are based. They are: 1) Multiple newspapers are needed throughout a nation to meet the need for diversity of viewpoints; 2) Government should assist and encourage such plurality by pursuing supportive intervention policies; and 3) There should be government support for independent ownership of newspapers. Ways that these principles can and have been realized include:

Groups with diverse ideological and political viewpoints should be encouraged to express their views, and avenues for such expression should be opened. Access to the pages of the newspaper could be required of existing newspapers in exchange for advantages and subsidies, or be made available by the government or some quasi-governmental agency through the purchase of newspaper space. Political and social groups should be encouraged and helped in starting not-for-profit newspapers to carry information and opinion. Significant advantages and subsidies should be made available for such media, perhaps by removing some subsidies and advantages from the largest newspaper chains and communication conglomerates.

(Picard, 1985, p. 149)

The United States has much to learn from studying and researching ‘other’ ways of conducting civic affairs via communication institutions and systems. Again, research in this general direction and its wide distribution is suggested as one avenue toward inciting debate, stimulating creative ideas of reform, and galvanizing the political will necessary to begin the much-needed overhaul of the ways and means by which we receive the information that constitutes the ‘informed’ aspect of the ‘informed consent’ and upon which a thriving and self-correcting democracy is based.

Another avenue for further research that might address a possible intervening variable in this study — aside from the personal proclivities of David Black himself — and one in which numerous interviewees commented upon, is the study of the corporate culture of the modern newspaper industry and the impact of this culture upon news content and discourse. Although David Black is considered an ‘independent’ newspaper owner, as has been noted throughout this dissertation, he nevertheless publishes within what has come to be known as the ‘corporate culture’ (Bakan, 2004). The overarching features of this culture and the fact that corporations are not ‘natural’ entities but rather have been legally created to relentlessly pursue its economic self-interest — often giving them greater power over society than governments — have been discussed at various points within this text through the works of Phillips, McChesney, Bagdikian, Bakan and others. Still, more specific research on the various newspaper organizations and their particular newsroom cultures/editorial philosophies might help us better understand some of the more nuanced relationship(s) between market filters and corporate filters in relation to news content, as well as help facilitate policy and/or regulatory changes in the

service of greater diversity. This type of research would also further test some of the assumptions underlying the reformist liberal and/or social responsibility tradition as detailed in Chapter One.

It would also be beneficial to replicate this particular study — content changes from semi-competition to full-market competition — but in another American city, and/or to conduct studies where a city shifts from no competition (monopoly) to either a JOA or head-to-head competition. These studies would update the previous research as listed in Chapter Two, and further test for the possibility of intervening variables.

However, given the trends of media concentration in general and, against the backdrop of recent FCC rulings, the possibility of its replication is highly unlikely. Honolulu, Hawaii, is, in all probability the last ‘living laboratory’ of its kind.

Appendices

Appendix A: Introductory Letter

Aloha,

I am a Ph.D. candidate at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia, Canada, and am conducting research for my dissertation and a book on the circumstances and assumptions under which the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* was sold to David Black in the service of competition with *The Honolulu Advertiser*. I am looking at the impact of this competition upon news content and newsroom culture. Although I traveled to Canada for educational purposes, I have been a resident of Hawaii since 1992 and hold a MA degree in Communication from the University of Hawaii at Manoa. I have published several articles on news and its functions which I would be glad to provide upon request.

As part of my research, I am interested in hearing your views on both the news media in general and the news in Hawaii specifically. I have enclosed a brief questionnaire and a SASE. I would very much appreciate your time and opinions for its completion. As you will note, the questionnaire is designed for your responses to remain anonymous. Afterwhich, if you are willing, I would like to speak with you in more depth regarding your perspective on news in Hawaii. Most interviews take 40 minutes. I would prefer that the interview be on background — I would be able to quote the interview in my dissertation and future publications, but without publicly attributing any statements to you as an individual. All confidentiality agreements will be respected to the full extent of the law.

A sample of topics that I would like to speak with you about are as follows:

- *For Journalists and Editors: How have the day-to-day context, resources and priorities changed, if at all, since the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* became a direct competitor of *The Honolulu Advertiser*?
- *How have you experienced news production in general, and in Hawaii specifically, change over the years since you have worked in the profession?
- *For 'Save-Our-Star-Bulletin' participants: What were some of the underlying assumptions about news in general, and specifically news in Hawaii, that led to the organization of 'Save-Our-Star-Bulletin'? What were some of the key ideas and themes?

If you agree to an interview and/or have any questions, please contact me at the number or E-mail below to set a time and place to meet. Also, If you would like further confirmation concerning the project or my qualifications, please feel free to contact my supervisor, Prof. Robert Hackett at (604) 421-1237 or my Hawaii committee member, Prof. Andrew Arno at 956-8415.

Gina Bailey
6109 D Summer St.
Honolulu, HI.
96821
Phone/Fax (808) 395-4824/Email:gjbailey@sfu.ca

Mahalo in advance for your consideration and cooperation,

Gina Bailey

Appendix B: Survey

- 1) In an ideal world, what 'ought' to be the main purpose and/or function of the news media?

Please check all that apply

- A) Mirror of Society/Events _____
- B) Provide forum for public debates _____
- C) Advocate _____ For What Group(s) _____ Or Values _____
- D) Educate _____
- E) Analyze _____
- F) Watchdog _____ For Whom _____ Against What _____
- G) Other _____

- 2) Some people think that the news media, in general, tend to have systemic 'blind spots' (consistent patterns of omissions) in coverage. Do you?

If so, which of the following do you consider an undercovered area of news reporting?

Please check all that apply

- A) Investigative Reporting _____
- B) Business: Critical Coverage _____
- C) Social Policies: Implications _____
- D) Crime: Social Causes _____
- E) International Issues _____
- F) Hawaiian Affairs _____
- G) Environment _____
- H) Youth Issues _____
- I) Labour _____
- J) Human Rights, Social Justice _____
- K) Religion, Ethics _____
- L) Positive News _____
- M) Features, In-Depth _____
- N) Ethnicity/Race Issues _____
- O) Education _____
- P) Defense and Security _____
- Q) Gender/Women's Issues _____
- R) Left-Wing Perspectives _____
- S) Right-Wing Perspectives _____
- T) Science and Technology _____

- U) Politicians: Critical Coverage _____
- V) Health _____
- W) Business and Investment _____
- X) Arts and Entertainment _____
- Y) Sports _____
- Z) OTHER (please specify) _____

- 3) If you agree that there are 'blind spots' in coverage, what might be some of the reason(s) why the news media tend to ignore certain issues? If you disagree, please skip to question 4.
- 4) Please rate the following potential influences upon determining the range of ideas covered in the news by checking one of the five categories for 1-12.

No Influence Some Not Sure Much Tremendous

- 1) Citizens/Consumers
- 2) Advertisers
- 3) Journalists
- 4) Owners
- 5) Editors
- 6) Market Competition
- 7) Government/Politicians
- 8) Unions
- 9) Big Business
- 10) PR Firms
- 11) Special Interests
- 12) Other (please specify)

- 5) Most journalists speak about the need to exercise restraint in publishing information at some point during their career. Within American news, this experience is probably related to pressures from?

Please check all that apply

- A) Attorneys _____
- B) Editors _____
- C) Publishers _____
- D) Political Figures _____
- E) Corporations _____
- F) Public Relations _____
- G) Interest Groups _____
- H) Physical Harm _____
- I) Other (please specify) _____

6) What is the most positive aspect(s) of the way news in Hawaii is gathered, organized and reported?

Most negative aspect(s)?

7) In your opinion, what are the political and social issues of the day that are being adequately covered? Why?

Not adequately covered? Why?

8) Much has been written over the past five years about a 'crisis of legitimacy' in journalism — do you agree with this assessment? Why or why not?

9) In your opinion, did the previous JOA in Hawaii, provide a competitive environment? Why or why not?

10) In your opinion, what have been the most prominent changes in the content of both papers since the JOA was dismantled on March 15, 2001?

11) Are we, as citizens, better informed about social and political issues as a result of the current competitive arrangement?

12) Can a commercial paper serve the interest of both commerce and the public at the same time? Why or why not?

14) What do you think are the most important contributions, made by the media in Hawaii, towards the ideals of democracy?

15) In your opinion, what are the best ways to protect diverse views and opinions?

16) If you could make one change in current journalistic practices that would enhance the quality of news, what would it be?

17) What is your favorite book(s)and/or movie(s) on journalism and/or media?

MAHALO,

Gina Bailey

Appendix C: Interview Questions for Journalists

Name _____

Employer _____

Position _____

Gender _____

Ethnicity _____

Education _____

- 1) How have you experienced news production in general, and in Hawaii specifically, change over the years since you have worked in the profession?
- 2) Have the advances in technology changed the way you collect and organize information? If so, how?
- 3) In your opinion, how is the newspaper industry like other industries and how does it differ?
- 4) In your opinion, is there or might there exist a tension between market forces and journalistic integrity/independence or are the two complementary?
- 5) Can a commercial press (primary means of profit via advertising) also be a critical press (holding power accountable) and, if so, how?
- 6) For what reasons was the idea of a 'one newspaper town' in Honolulu perceived as a threat?
- 7) In your opinion, under what circumstances, if any, might news become 'ideological'?

8) What have been the most prominent changes in your professional environment since:

The Star-Bulletin announced its intent to close in 1999

The JOA was dismantled on March 15, 2001

9) How have the context, resources and priorities changed, if at all, since the *Honolulu-Star Bulletin* became a direct competitor of *The Honolulu Advertiser*.

10) Have you experienced an increase in 'bottom line' pressure since March 15th and, if so, has this hurt or helped the quality of coverage (or neither)?

11) What one subject would you most want to explore in more depth that you think would have a positive effect upon performing your current duties?

Appendix D: Interview Questions for SOS

Employer _____

Position _____

Gender _____

Ethnicity _____

Education _____

- 1) What were some of the concerns about news in general, and specifically news in Hawaii, that led to the successful organization of 'Save-Our-Star-Bulletin'?
- 2) What were some of the key themes/ideas, and who were the targeted constituents?
- 3) For what reasons was the idea of a 'one newspaper town' in Honolulu perceived as a threat?
- 4) What types of citizens did the movement tend to attract?
- 5) In your opinion, how is the newspaper industry like other industries, and how does it differ?
- 6) In your opinion, is there or might there be a tension between market forces and journalistic integrity/independence or are the two complementary?
- 7) Can a commercial press (primary means of profit via advertising) also be a critical press (holding power accountable) and, if so, how?
- 8) In your opinion, under what circumstances, if any, might the news become 'ideological'?
- 9) Which of the goals, that fueled the success of SOS, have been realized?
- 10) What evidence, if any, have you seen indicates that the community continues to care about the quality of news coverage in Hawaii?

Appendix E: Interviewees*

Journalists:

Richard Halloran, Editorial Director for the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*. August 1, 2001.

Stephanie Kendrick, Business Editor for the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*. July 23, 2001.

Bob Krauss, Columnist for *The Honolulu Advertiser*. August 29, 2001.

Glenn Scott, Reporter for *The Honolulu Advertiser*. August 9, 2001.

John Windrow, Assistant City Editor for *The Honolulu Advertiser*. July 30, 2001.

Walter Wright, Reporter for *The Honolulu Advertiser*. August 8, 2001.

SOS Participants:

Wayne Cahill, Administrative Officer for The Newspaper Guild. September 5, 2001.

Stephanie Kendrick, Business Editor for the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*. July 23, 2001.

Phil Mayer, Retired Journalist from *The Honolulu Star-Bulletin*. September 29, 2001.

* Positions held at the time of the interview.

Appendix F: Coding Protocol for Volume and Origin Content Analysis

DATE OF CODING: _____

DATE OF PUBLICATION: _____

TOTAL PAGES OF EDITION: _____

SECTION CODED: _____

TOTAL PAGES IN SECTION: _____

TOTAL STORIES IN SECTION: _____

NEWSPAPER

- 01 Honolulu Star-Bulletin
- 02 The Honolulu Advertiser

LOCAL OP-ED GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS

- 01 Local
- 02 National
- 03 International

ITEM ORIGIN

- 01 Locally Written
- 02 Wire or News Service

WIRE OP-ED GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS

- 01 National
- 02 International

AUTHOR'S GENDER

- 01 Female
- 02 Male
- 03 Co-Written
- 04 Unknown

GENRE

- 01 Letter to the Editor
- 02 Enterprise Story
- 03 Controversy Story
- 04 Photographs and Graphics

OP-EDS

- 01 Locally Written
- 02 Wire or News Service

*All variables have present/absent values and values are mutually exclusive.

Appendix G: Coding Protocol For Topics

PAPER:

DATE:

DATE CODED:

SECTION ('A,' Hawaii or Photos/Graphics)

TOPICS:

- 01) Business
- 02) Education
- 03) Crime/Courts
- 04) Disaster/Accidents
- 05) Labour
- 06) Health
- 07) Environment
- 08) Civic Affairs
- 09) Women's Issues
- 10) Social Policy
- 11) State Politics
- 12) National and Federal Politics
- 13) International
- 14) Agriculture
- 15) Military
- 16) Land Use/Development Issues
- 17) Hawaiian Affairs
- 18) Race Relations
- 19) Entertainment
- 20) Sports
- 21) Science and Technology
- 22) Culture
- 23) Tourism
- 24) Lifestyle
- 25) Other

Appendix H: Operational Definitions for Topical Content Analysis

- 01) **Business:** Refers to stories about business strategies, marketing, corporate mergers, company profiles, lay-off, economic indicators, investment, trade and corporate governance.
- 02) **Education:** Stories about universities, public schools, educational funding, teachers, students and reform.
- 03) **Courts and Crime:** Main topic is criminal justice, trials, sentencing, arrests, police reports, and criminal statistics.
- 04) **Disasters/Accidents:** ie. Fires, floods, earthquakes, explosions, car accidents, and other disasters.
- 05) **Labour:** E.g. Unions, union leaders, politics and activities, strikes, occupational health and safety conditions and labour relations.
- 06) **Health:** Stories on medicare, hospitals, physicians, community health, medical discoveries, epidemics and disease.
- 07) **Environment:** Refers to environmental laws, science, recycling, degradation, protests and/or accords.
- 08) **Civic Affairs:** Refers to municipal and county/regional politics, zoning, city council and municipal elections.
- 09) **Women's Issues:** Stories about women's equality, women's rights, gender politics, pay equity, poverty, unemployment and women's organizations/health.
- 10) **Social Policy:** Refers to stories focused on social assistance and welfare, poverty issues, public pensions, unemployment insurance and reform of social programs.
- 11) **State Politics:** Refers to items focusing on state politics, state legislation, state politicians and parties, policy and elections.
- 12) **National and Federal Politics:** Includes all items dealing with national political affairs, federal politics and legislation, national unity, members of congress, the president, federal policy and regulations, parties and elections.
- 13) **International:** Refers to stories about international politics, international trade, foreign affairs, human rights and international conflict.

- 14) Agriculture: Stories that focus on farming issues, farm reports, food processing, biotechnology and organic farming.
- 15) Military: Stories about the military in Hawaii and elsewhere, deployments, housing, funding, community activities and hardware.
- 16) Land Use and Development: Refers to issues of housing projects, communities, highways and building in general in relation to Hawaii and its limited resources. Includes protests.
- 17) Hawaiian Affairs: Stories about Hawaiian rights, Hawaiian land claims, Hawaiian protests, sovereignty, organizations and leaders, and issues specific to native Hawaiians.
- 18) Race Relations: Refers to all aspects of race relations including immigration.
- 19) Entertainment: Stories about movies, the recording industry, television, personalities, and concerts. 'Soft News'
- 20) Sports: Refers to sporting events and sporting personalities. 'Soft News'
- 21) Science and Technology: Articles on scientific discoveries and endeavors, technological advances, and research and development.
- 22) Culture: Stories about cultural policy, arts funding, museums, artists and the art community.
- 23) Tourism: Stories about tourism in general and in relation to the economy.
- 24) Lifestyle: Articles that deal with fashion, food, relationships, home improvement, consumer tips, exercise, self-help, pets, gardening and personal finance. 'Soft News'
- 25) Other: All else. In the case of this study, the 'other' category was comprised of obituaries, religion and traffic/road work stories.

* All variables have present/absent values and values are mutually exclusive.

** Adapted from Diversity and Quality in the Monopoly Press: A Content Analysis of Hollinger Newspapers.

Appendix I: Ethics Approval

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF RESEARCH ETHICS



BURNABY, BRITISH COLUMBIA
CANADA V5A 1S6
Telephone: 604-291-3447
FAX: 604-268-6785

April 13, 2004

Ms. Gina Bailey
Graduate Student
School of Communication
Simon Fraser University

Dear Ms. Bailey:

Re: Talking Story

The above-titled ethics application has been granted approval by the Simon Fraser Research Ethics Board, in accordance with Policy R 20.01, "Ethics Review of Research Involving Human Subjects".

Sincerely,

Dr. Hal Weinberg, Director
Office of Research Ethics

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