

“Post-Industrial” Journalism as a Creative Industry

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Abstract : The context of post-industrial journalism is one in which the material circumstances of mechanical publication have been displaced by digital technologies, increasing the distance between the orthodoxy of the newsroom and the culture of journalistic writing. Content is, with growing frequency, created for delivery via the internet, publication on web-based ‘platforms’ and consumption on screen media. In this environment, the question is not ‘who is a journalist?’ but ‘what is journalism?’ today. The changes bring into sharp relief new distinctions between journalistic work and journalistic labor, providing a key insight into the current transition between the industrial journalism of the 20th century, and the post-industrial journalism of the present. In the 20th century, the work of journalists and journalistic labor went hand-in-hand as most journalists were employees of news organizations, whilst in the 21st century evidence of a decoupling of ‘acts of journalism’ (work) and journalistic employment (labor) is beginning to appear. This ‘decoupling’ of the work and labor that underpins journalism practice is far reaching in its implications, not least for institutional structures. Under these conditions we are witnessing the emergence of expanded ‘entrepreneurial’ journalism, based on smaller, more independent and agile - if less stable - enterprise constructs that are a feature of creative industries. Entrepreneurial journalism is realized in a range of organizational forms from social enterprise, through to profit driven start-ups and hybrids of the two. In all instances, however, the primary motif of the organization is an ideological definition of journalism. An example is the Scoop Foundation for Public Interest Journalism in New Zealand, which owns and operates Scoop Publishing Limited, a not for profit company and social enterprise that publishes an independent news site that claims to have over 500,000 monthly users. Our paper demonstrates that this journalistic work meets the ideological definition of journalism; conducted within the creative industries using an innovative organizational structure that offers a new, viable post-industrial future for journalism.

Keywords : creative industries, digital communication, journalism, post industrial

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