

Chapter 1:

How Professional News is Created

- The Job of the Journalist
- Types of News Sites
- Types of News Stories
- Professional News Procedures
- The Complexity of Doing Journalism Well

Gestation of a News Story

- Idea for story
- Pitch idea to editors and staff
- Story assigned
- Preliminary research
- Scheduling and conducting interviews
- Fact checking and follow-up
- Writing first draft
- Edits and rewriting
- Publication/airing
- Social media posts (possibly before this)

Types of News Web Sites

- Newspaper
- Broadcast news outlet
- Web-only news outlet
- Blog
- Aggregator

Types of News Web Sites

- **Newspaper**
 - Professional
 - Oldest form of news outlet
 - Stories on website usually contain text and photos from paper; some Web-only content
 - “Shovelware”
- **Broadcast news outlet**
 - Professional; Radio or TV
 - Story packages – mix of video from TV and written stories
 - Sometimes live feeds of broadcasts

Types of News Web Sites

- **Web-only news outlet**
 - Professional (mostly)
 - HuffPost, BuzzFeed, Mashable, Gizmodo, etc.
 - No way to exist offline
 - Content can vary; usually a mix of text, audio, video
 - Often subject-specific
- **Blog/Discussion site**
 - Usually not professional; often not news
 - Reddit, Hive, Quora, etc. (4chan?)
 - Can contain all kinds of content
 - Often personal, subject-specific

Types of News Web Sites

- **News aggregator**
 - Both websites and apps
 - Corporate (mostly)
 - Google News, Apple News, Flipboard, NewsNow, SmartNews, etc.
 - Use AI and algorithms to gather news stories from existing sites
 - Most create no content, hire no reporters or editors
 - Some now using AI to create and write new stories from pieces of existing ones

Types of news stories

- Breaking news
- Hard news
- Features
- Opinion pieces
- Enterprise stories

Types of News Stories

- **Breaking News**

- Happening right now or very recently
- Who, what, when, where
- Important enough to pause other coverage
- Not time to research in usual depth
- Details often filled in later

- **Hard news**

- Events of real importance to audience
- Often politics, crime, disasters, economy
- Urgent or consequential information
- May or may not be breaking

Types of News Stories

- **Features**

- Less urgent or consequential than hard news
- Frequently “happy” stories
- Often profiles, entertainment, pop culture
- Engaging and popular with audiences

- **Opinion pieces**

- Author gives own point of view on subject
- Traditionally set aside from news
- Supports an argument with chosen facts
- Digital age → controversies when opinion makes its way into news coverage

Types of News Stories

- **Enterprise stories**

- Generated by reporters themselves
- Often investigative in nature
- Usually take significant time to develop
- Not just who, what, when, where → why, how
- Often done in teams
- Can be one long story or series of articles
- Often serves audience/community
- Most common type of story to win awards
- [Examples on class website](#)

Professional News Procedures

- Generating story ideas
- Gathering information
- Fact checking
- Context and completeness
- Price of making mistakes

Complexity of doing journalism well

- Journalists' level of effort often unrecognized
- Audiences don't distinguish between reported news and gossip or uninformed online chatter
- Journalism serves many communities
- Every mistake is amplified
- Easier to criticize than do the job
- Chapter 1 – journalists comment on this