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Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to treat college newspapers in the United States and their status and functions on campus. The research interest covers the role of college newspapers as well as their connection to their host-institutions. Furthermore, additional points of interest included self-perception, independence, and the role as a controlling instance and watchdog for the campus community. To conclude, the problems of college newspapers concerning their relationship to the university and the possibility of critical reporting in college publications as well as their role as local newspapers and as institutions for journalism education should be further clarified.

The empirical study was conducted upon the theoretical background of Niklas Luhmann's theory of social systems along with the functions of mass media and the concept of the journalistic watchdog according to Lance W. Bennett and William Serrin. A further theoretical implication treats different concepts of internal communication.

Furthermore, the historic and legal backgrounds of college newspapers in the United States were reviewed for this thesis. This includes a short overview about freedom of information laws and legal precedents concerning college publications as well as the history of these media and an introduction to journalism education in the United States.

The methodological approach was composed of a quantitative content analysis of a sample of ten college daily newspapers in conjunction with qualitative interviews with ten editors in chief. The sample included daily newspapers at public and private institutions in five different states in the north-east of the United States.

The study showed that even though not all newspapers in the sample can be considered financially and editorially independent, they all strive for the highest degree of independence possible. None of the editors in chief felt pressured or controlled by their host-institutions. Despite the fact that not all newspapers claimed to have a good

relationship to their universities, especially when it came to newsgathering about critical topics, all interviewees felt critical journalism was possible and necessary within their publications. Generally it can be said that student newspapers fulfill the same functions as professional publications. Nevertheless, two major differences to professional newspapers were encountered: the different content with a strong focus on sports reporting (due to the disparate target group) and an important educational purpose fulfilled by college publications. Student journalists generally spend much more time on training fledgling reporters than professional journalists. The interviewees considered the education of young reporters as one of the main functions of collegiate newspapers. In addition to this, these publications also have a special status as means for internal communication for the university. This was the reason why the question whether college newspapers are the watchdogs or the lapdogs of their host-institutions became especially interesting.

The content analysis revealed that only a small percentage (3.6 %) of the articles could be considered obsequious, whereas approximately one fifth of the articles in the sample was coded as critical. All editors in chief felt responsible for the student community which was the reason why critical reporting was considered a major task of college newspapers. No other media outlet overviews the decisions of colleges and universities in the way that student newspapers are able to do so. Therefore, the interviewees felt obliged to fulfill the watchdog role properly and to look after the best interests of the student body. At the same time, they felt that forming a community and praising the university when they deserved it was a duty of every college newspaper. For this reason, critical reporting is not always an easy thing to do for student writers, since their loyalty may be pulled in different directions when it comes to depreciative topics. Other stumbling blocks for critical journalism encountered by the interviewees were the inexperience of the reporters along with the difficulties in newsgathering due to a lack of cooperation of the administration. At some universities employees are not supposed to talk to student reporters at all, but to refer them to the public relations department for all further information. This makes it difficult for student journalists to get information that is not PR. Generally speaking though, most newspapers strive for the best possible fulfillment of the watchdog role, even though this might be easier at some colleges than at others.

The conclusion is that college newspapers are more watchdogs than lapdogs of their respective universities. Even though they may in some situations be afraid to bark, the newspapers analyzed within this thesis were much more critical than expected.

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1 Introduction

There are numerous ways to become a journalist. Many of them lead through work for a college newspaper. Working as a journalist in college is a great possibility to scan possible future career-paths and earn semi-professional working experience. At many colleges and universities in the United States, the student newspaper is the biggest extracurricular activity (by number of students participating) and often also the one that has been established before all other such activities. Collegiate newspapers are an element of pride for many students as it is college sports. They serve as icebreakers for conversations and unite all students by publishing topics that affect their lives. Therefore, college publications are a very important means of keeping the campus community informed.

Also student newspapers are a huge market for advertisers. The clearly defined readership facilitates the communication of marketing-relevant information. Advertisers have learned quickly how important college media are for marketing purposes. Nevertheless, journalism research has been several steps behind since the 1970s and 1980s. There is a paucity of current literature treating college (daily) newspapers from a systematic and research-based point of view.

Even though campus publications show many characteristics of traditional newspapers, they target a completely different and precisely defined group of potential readers: students. They have the unique advantage that their target group is assembled at one place and can be reached easily by the media. The reporters know their readers very well, since they are themselves part of the student body. They share the same interests and know what is important in the world in which they live. College newspapers are the stepping stone to professional newspapers – for potential journalists as well as for the readers. Students can get familiar with the media institutions and newspapers in general. Even though only a small percentage of college students aspire to a job in journalism, all of them will encounter and use newspapers their entire lives: as readers.

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The fact that these newspapers are published by and written for students of a certain university or college makes this publication also very similar to internal media for organizations, such as staff magazines. They often are the only media outlet that publishes important changes for the campus community. Emerging from this position between a regular daily newspaper and an element of internal communication, several questions arise regarding this kind of publication: questions concerning the editorial freedom, the connection between the newspaper and the university, the role of these publications on campus, and the reaction of the student journalists upon the exertion of control and influence. The oppression of college media should be a rare case. But unfortunately a large number of court rulings show that it is not.

Therefore, this thesis is to clarify the status of collegiate daily newspapers, how critical they are and can be, and which functions they fulfill in their respective communities.

2 Research interest

This research study aims to find out how much editorial freedom young college journalists in the United States have and if this editorial freedom allows them to act as a watchdog for their community. To approach this topic, it is necessary to enlighten the connections to, the cooperations with, and eventual dependencies of the newspapers to the university. Furthermore, this thesis should treat the possibilities of criticism among young student journalists. Do college newspaper have the opportunity to publish critical reporting or are they primarily serving as a voice of the administration to publish obsequious journalism and PR? In this context it is also important to clarify the position of the university administration and if there are tendencies to exert pressure or influence on collegiate newspapers.

Another question targeted by this thesis is whether or not young student journalists see themselves as watchdogs for their community. Therefore, editorial freedom and independence of the newspaper have to be questioned further. Other points of interest are problems resulting from the double-role of the newspaper staff as students and editors, reporters, photographers at the college publication, along with the role of the student newspaper as a method of journalism education and its role in the regional media landscape.

To systematize the research interest, the following research questions were raised:

2.1 Research questions

- What is the role of student daily newspapers on campus?
- How close is the collaboration between the college newspaper and the university?

2 *Research interest*

- How do editors in chief of college newspapers understand their editorial freedom?
- How do editors in chief of college newspapers understand their possibility to fulfill the controlling function regarding the university?
- What is the self-perception of editors in chief of college newspapers concerning the watchdog-role of journalists for the university and the campus?
- What kind of influence does the university exert on college newspapers?
- How do editors in chief of college newspapers react upon the exertion of influence by the university?
- What are the problems for editors in chief of college newspapers emerging from their double role as students and journalists?
- What is the status of college newspapers concerning journalism education?
- What is the status of college newspapers in the regional media landscape?

The large number of research questions was chosen deliberately because of the very specific subject of this thesis. To not get lost in details and impede new findings, it is, as Flick (2000, p. 259) stated, very important not to ask too narrowly formulated research questions. On the other hand, questions that are too wide lead to research that has no guidelines, so the goal might get lost or be missed. Therefore, the number of ten research questions seems appropriate for the purpose of this thesis, since every single one of them targets a specific point of the research interest.

With reference to Meinefeld (2000, pp. 266-269), this thesis abandons the possibility to formulate hypotheses for the research questions listed above, because of the dearth of previous knowledge about the subject of research. There is no established theory or current research that would provide for hypotheses. The theories that form the basis of this work are rather single “bricks” of theories that compose the theoretical background. The subject of this thesis is too less explored by current journalism research to provide for hypotheses. Therefore, an inductive proceeding is considered more adequate.

2.2 Definition of terms

Before advancing further in this thesis, it is essential to define several terms that will be used frequently. All terms are used against the background of the American culture and its system of (public and private) post-secondary education. If not explicitly stated otherwise, all laws and policies refer to U.S. law.

2.2.1 College newspaper

College newspapers can be all different kinds of periodicals, dailies as well as weekly, monthly, or bi-monthly publications. Neither the term “college newspaper”, nor the name “student-run newspaper” expresses conditions concerning the editorial or financial independence of the publication. If a newspaper is independent or not has to be separately reviewed case by case. For this thesis, the term “college newspapers” will be used mostly for the “official” daily student-run newspapers at colleges and universities in the United States that serve as the main publication on campus. “Collegiate newspaper,” “campus newspaper,” and “student-run newspaper” will be used as synonyms.

2.2.2 University/College

These two terms will often be used synonymously within this thesis. In the educational system of the United States, colleges are institutions of higher education that mostly provide a four-year-education finishing with a “Bachelor’s” degree. Universities on the other hand also provide graduate education with a “Master’s” degree and a doctorate. They sometimes are divided in different colleges providing a Bachelor’s degree.

For the research purpose of this thesis, it does not make a considerable difference if the student newspaper is published at a college or at a university, since its staff is almost exclusively composed of undergraduate college students. Therefore the terms “university” and “college” will be used synonymously throughout this thesis. These expressions might also be used as synonyms for the administration of a university or college or the campus itself. Of course this does not reflect the accurate meanings of these expressions, but since it is of no specific interest for the research purpose, the terms are used interchangeably to avoid lengthy explanations.

2.2.3 Critical vs. obsequious journalism

These terms will be the core of this thesis, since the research interest is whether college newspapers are able to publish critical reporting or whether they are just able to do obsequious journalism as it is wished and asked for by the university.

Being “critical” is defined in the dictionary as “to find fault or to judge with severity” (Dictionary Reference, 2009), “saying that someone or something is bad or wrong” (Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, 2009a), “giving opinions or judgements” (Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, 2009b), “to express your disapproval of someone or something, or to talk about their faults,” “to express judgments about the good and bad qualities of something,” (Longman English Dictionary Online, 2009) or “inclined to find fault or to judge with severity, often too readily” (Dictionary Reference, 2009). It can be determined that being critical above all means to judge and to examine, in a second step to find fault and express disapproval of someone or something.

In this regard, the definition of watchdog journalism can also be consulted, because a journalistic watchdog has to be above all alert and critical: “The press acts as a watchdog when it independently scrutinizes the workings of powerful institutions and provides an incentive for them to work for the public good.” (Cook, 2005, p. 118) The powerful institutions in this case are obviously the colleges and universities. If collegiate newspapers are really able to independently scrutinize the workings of their universities shall be examined in the course of this thesis.

Within the empirical part it has to be determined whether an article can be considered as critical or as obsequious journalism. Subsequently it is also important to find out in which thematic areas student publications are able to be critical and to act as watchdogs and in which they are not. It makes a fundamental difference if criticism is expressed of students and student activities, of the administration, or of events and persons not directly related to the college or university.

To define critical journalism exceeding the definitions cited afore, the following prime examples were chosen from college publications. The first one is a headline from the front page of the *Washington Square News* (the student newspaper at New York University) and reads as follows: “Targeting low-income families is not the right move for the university” (Washington Square News, 2009b). The headline outlines clearly that the writer does not agree with the approach of the university concerning financial

aid and the adjustment of the tuition fee policy. It is a reaction to the university's addressing low-income families and advising them to rethink if New York University is the right decision (from a financial point of view) for them. The author (the *WSN* editorial board) clearly opposes to this step and considers it as a limitation of diversity. This statement is continued throughout the whole article. The example is especially crucial as college newspapers are said to represent the view of the student body which is or at least should be of particular importance for the university board.

The second example, though more subtle in criticizing, reads as follows:

For concerned students, the proper strategy in such a debate is not to trust the “appropriate authorities” to properly weigh interests against values through their own beneficent intelligence. If students don't subscribe to a decision, the proper response is to shout our values from the rooftops. Indeed, facing a college administration that came of academic age in the sixties and seventies, little else but “radicalism” would suffice to convince such college functionaries that an opinion is indeed deeply held. It may ultimately be that some limited quantity of layoffs is a necessary evil in this economic storm, but at the richest university in the world, the “radical” and irresponsible thing would be to not make a stink about it. (Kronblith, 2009)

This article is considered as critical, because it clearly states an opinion that is contrary to the approach of the university, even though quotation marks were used by the author to distance himself from the statement of a university spokesperson. The editorialist criticizes the university by explaining to the readers that he thinks their approach is erroneous.

But not all articles are similar to the two examples of critical journalism quoted afore. As American college students are almost “trained” to be proud of their Alma Mater and to engage with the different extracurricular activities, associations, and clubs (even as an alumni), this admiring and proud attitude towards the university might be reflected in the articles students publish in their campus newspapers. The following example demonstrates obsequious journalism: “New York City has everything to offer – historic sports stadiums, Broadway shows, and everything an 18-year-old kid could ever want. Columbia is the only Ivy League school that offers such an incredible landscape” (Puro, 2009, p. 9).

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A second example for obsequious journalism is the following, where the writer even finds positive sides for high tuition-fees:

Given the darkening gloom of international recession, has Penn done enough to justify its staggering base cost of roughly \$ 50,000 a year? Luckily for Penn students, particularly those who rely on the lifeline of financial aid, the answer continues to be yes. [...] As a columnist, I try to approach University policy with a careful eye toward criticism and improvement. That said, it's difficult to find fault in Penn's current actions. Our University has approached the issue of need-based accessibility in close sync with its much more heavily endowed peers. [...] It's impressive that Penn has managed to avoid any larger cost increases despite relying on tuition for a much larger portion of its operating budget. Our university has tackled the worsening economic storm with a keen emphasis on efficiency; belts have tightened, but the net impact on vital undergraduate services has thankfully remained minimal. (Brooking, 2009, p. 6)

The third example was taken out of a sports article and reads as follows:

[...] the Quakers have responded in a big way. They are playing with passion and intensity. They are playing with direction. Leaders have emerged. And after last night, I am more convinced than ever before that Miller is the right man to lead this team, and that this team, with all of its youth and inexperience, is ready to make a legitimate run in the Ivy League this season. (Todres, 2009, p. 14)

Even though the basketball team in question lost two major games before the appointment of the new trainer, the reporter writes over-enthusiastically and optimistically about the team's performance.

Obsequious journalism is a special form of uncritical reporting that means a not-reflected kind of news coverage with overemphasis on the positive aspects of a subject, a person, or an institution. The cited examples for this form of journalism show a very positive image of the university in question and a striking emphasis on positive aspects. The articles may be read almost like a press release from the PR-department of the university itself, not like an article from an "independent" student newspaper. In these cases, the newspaper almost served as voice of the administration or even the public relations department of the university. Hinchey (2001, p. 40) found out in a research study that articles critical of the administration are frequently banned from

school newspapers, because they are seen as the official organ of public relations and official decisions.

Considering critical and obsequious journalism, both should only happen within the opinion and editorial pages of the newspaper, as the American journalistic tradition and ethics code stipulate. News articles must be impartial, always presenting both sides of a controversy without providing a guideline for the readers to form their opinion. This tradition of strict objectivity is even more present in American journalism than it is in Western European countries (Duscha, 1973, p. 12).

2.2.4 Independence

As the status of independence has a very prominent position within this thesis, this term also needs further specification. Most of the student-run publications describe themselves as editorially and financially independent from their host-institutions. Nonetheless, this independence must be viewed in a more differentiated way. It has to be asked, whether or not there is financial assistance and subsidization from the university, but also if the building where the newsroom is located or the printing presses are provided by the host-institution, if the university bulk-subscribes to the newspaper, or if the administration has any other means to exert pressure upon the publication and its staff. Therefore, “independent” does not always necessarily mean “independent.”

Duscha and Fischer (1973, pp. 13-16) distinguished three different states of independence among student-run newspapers:

1. **Dependence.** The paper is operated under the authority of the university or college administration. In this case, the administration has to communicate clearly that the newspaper is more a house organ or instrument to communicate administrative decisions than an independent newspaper.
2. **Amorphous state.** The paper is governed by an editorial board composed of both, students and faculty members, who make all important decisions. Some papers rely on a faculty adviser who has influence in editorial and financial decisions of the publication. The publication is funded at least partly by student activity fees or other university money. This alternative is particularly difficult as the newspaper appears to be a free press without really being independent. In many

cases it is not clear who has the final say on editorial decisions: faculty members or the students producing the paper? The administration has no effective control over the everyday-work at the paper, but still can influence important personnel or financial decisions.

3. **Independence.** The paper operates without funding through the university or college, without faculty advice, and without directions from the administration.

For the third alternative, the definition of “independence” by Ingelhart (1993, pp. 16-17) contributed in a very particular way. In his point of view, to be truly independent, a student-run publication has to fulfill all of the following characteristics:

- The newspaper must be incorporated (but not as educational corporation).
- The newspaper cannot receive funds from students, nor from the university or college.
- The newspaper cannot use facilities on campus, not even when paying for it.
- The newspaper cannot enter into agreements with the university or have a faculty adviser.
- The university cannot participate in selecting or dismissing staff, nor can it take any action or punishment.
- The newspaper cannot be involved with any teaching program of the university.
- No member of the university can be in the board of directors of the newspaper.
- Membership of the staff cannot be limited to students of the specific university or students at all.
- The newspaper cannot be primarily produced for students, but should also include other groups of people or a wider area.
- The newspaper cannot wear the title of the university or college in its name.
- The student government must not be involved in or connected with the production of the newspaper.

- The content treated by the newspaper cannot be primarily university-related.
- There must not be any effort by the university or college to influence the content of the publication.
- The university cannot be involved in any legal actions concerning the newspaper.
- The newspaper cannot receive its mail through the university-owned and directed mailing system.
- The university cannot grant credits for work on the newspaper staff if it does not grant the same amount of credits for work at professional newspapers.

With these regulations and restrictions for independence in mind, can any college newspaper ever be independent? Ingelhart (1993, p. 17) said “it is possible, but hardly any publication even tries.” The author himself stated that this list may seem too demanding, but all these characteristics are necessary to ensure that a publication can really claim itself independent and without any influence or relationship of dependence with the university or college. “If ‘independence’ does not mean what the list specifies, then independence becomes a myth” (Ingelhart, 1993, p. 27).

But Ingelhart also emphasized “incorporation alone does not mean or assure editorial independence for editors. Nor does independence require incorporation” (1993, p. 38). The term independence can be misleading, since there will of course always be ties between a collegiate newspaper and its host-institution, because the staff is uniquely or mainly composed of students and the paper circulates above all on campus among students and faculty members. Furthermore, the university administration and their decisions remain a fundamental news source for the newspaper. The important characteristic is not whether there are ties between the university or college and the newspaper, but whether they are granted complete editorial freedom of content, the possibility to criticize administrative decisions, and to act as a watchdog for the campus community.

Duscha and Fischer cited the *Harvard Crimson* and the *Yale Daily News* as two of the most admired and truly independent newspapers, but also stated that independence is much harder to achieve for a previously subsidized paper than for a historically independent publication. If the newspaper has relied on funding from the university or college, it is very difficult to continue its operations without this money, because

they are – understandably – reluctant to start charging a price for the publication and ad-revenue isn't easy to be gained in such a short period of time. Therefore, it is comprehensible that many of the century-old newspapers are still independent, whereas various papers that were founded in the past 50 to 80 years remain at least partly under the control of and are at least partly funded by a university or college (Duscha & Fischer, 1973, p. 17).

Experts also recognized that complete independence (meant as described by Ingelhart, 1993, pp. 16-17) is not possible for many student-run publications. For this reason, they should seek the highest degree of independence attainable in their specific situation. Many of the existing collegiate newspapers may be dependent on university subsidization and not be able to survive without funding or rent-free office space and other benefits (Duscha & Fischer, 1973, p. 35-36). However, this does not necessarily mean that the university can exert pressure on the publication whenever it wants to, nor that the newspaper staff cannot react upon the exertion of influence by the administration. Nevertheless, some institutions voluntarily have abandoned student publications, because they want to avoid blame for any content that is published (Ingelhart, 1993, p. 106).

The most important means against censorship and oppression of student newspaper staff is to educate not only reporters and editors, but above all administrators and advisers. When they realize that a free and even critical campus press is a positive and enriching element for a campus community, student journalists can experience the highest possible level of independence even though they might not always be truly independent from their college or university (Lattimore, 2001). Also, not every advice or criticism is already a threat for the independence of a collegiate newspaper. Ingelhart (1993, p. 100) clearly stated that advice and criticism by an adviser or other persons are no restraints to the publication, but an integral part of the learning process of a student journalist. Still, an adviser also implicates the possibility of editorial influence and limitation of independence, even though studies showed that two-thirds of the student publications in the United States operate in an environment of editorial freedom without threats and restraints. One therefore cannot clearly say which characteristics have to be fulfilled to be a truly independent newspaper as it is the individual situation and the individual relationships with the host-institution that constitute independence, not (only) the absence of an adviser or of university-sponsoring.

2.3 Current state of research

The current state of research concerning college and university newspapers is thematically widespread (though not very numerous) and treats this phenomenon from various differing angles, from independence to the role of advisers to the general role and function of student-run newspapers on campus. Nevertheless, the research studies often date back many years. A plethora of research publications emerged in the 1960s and 1970s. Recent research treating campus media, however, is quite scarce. Thus, several and also older studies should be presented in this chapter to provide a background for further elaborations on collegiate newspapers.

After the *Hazelwood*-decision (see chapter 3.6.2, “Court cases and rulings”), many studies were conducted about the press freedom at high school newspapers (see James, 1970; Campbell, 1974; Trager, 1974; Trager & Dickerson, 1977; Hines & Saville, 1984; Click & Kopenhaver, 1988; Lain, 1992; Olaye & Malandrino, 1992; Dickson 1993; Dickson 1994; Jones, 1996; Lomicky 1999; Paxon & Dickson, 2000; Kopenhaver & Click, 2000 & 2001).

Nevertheless, also some research about college newspapers has been carried out. One of the most exhaustive studies ever conducted is the one of Julius Duscha and Thomas Fischer (1973). They examined the development, expectations, and status of the collegiate press and also reviewed the law concerning student newspapers, listing legal precedents and discussing their consequences for the collegiate press. The authors found out that the student press can be operated in three distinctive ways: university controlled, amorphous (which means, they consider themselves as independent, but are influenced by an adviser or financed partly by their host-institutions), or genuinely independent. Most student journalists would favor an independent newspaper, but this is impossible for a large part of the collegiate press, especially on small campuses in rural areas where there are not enough companies willing to advertise to financially sustain the publication. Duscha closed his research by discussing recent controversies of the student press and examining several newspapers and their statuses of independence. In the second part of the study, Fischer analyzed the different ways to operate a student newspaper and their legal consequences. He put special emphasis on the use of the host institution’s name by the campus publication and the responsibility this bears for student journalists. For this thesis, the part about the distinctions concerning freedom of expression and student rights at public and private colleges and universities was of crucial importance and will be discussed later in this thesis (Duscha & Fischer, 1973).

2 Research interest

In the eighties, Paul Atkins (1982) conducted a research study analyzing American college dailies. He found out that there almost don't exist any studies treating the most important form of campus newspapers, therefore he analyzed the (back then) 102 student dailies in the United States. From the main unit of 102 publications, Atkins got 80 completed questionnaires. These were composed to find out quite general information as there was no previous study examining college dailies from which Atkins could have drawn information. Atkins discovered that the most authoritative person of these publications is in the majority of the cases a non-student. When students are at the head of a paper, it is mostly an entirely student-run one. The second phase of Atkins' research included visits to 16 newspapers to study the editor in chief's opinions about the role of the paper, its impact on campus and the problems they face. This is very similar to the research study that will be conducted in the course of this thesis. Atkins' results were: Most college dailies have professional staff members. For example the business manager is a professional in many cases. Also, most papers pay their staff. A student editor makes an average of USD 2,589 for nine months work. They are financed mostly through local advertising and student fees. Compared to professional newspapers, the most important section in a college daily is sports with considerably more space dedicated to it than in professional publications. Atkins also stated that college papers are big business. Some even have a budget of up to USD 2,000,000, whereas smaller papers often operate on an annual budget of USD 100,000 and below. Many responses stressed that their paper aims more at a break-even point than at a profit. Most student publications are nonprofit organizations. The financing through university- or student-fees is ambivalent for most editors as it is necessary to continue operation for the majority of the papers, but it also can be used to pressure or threaten freedom of expression. The most common relationship to journalism units at the school is a faculty adviser. But this connection functions more like an "on-call relationship" (Atkins, 1982, p. 32) than a permanent presence in the newsroom. Atkins also asked questions about the role of journalism education for the paper, where 14 out of 16 editors in chief questioned answered that their work on the paper taught them more than any journalism class they ever took. The biggest problems editors have to face are, according to Atkins' study, fledgling staff members and the lack of motivation among them. This is due to the constant process of training: Once a person is fully trained to do valuable work for the newspaper, he or she graduates and leaves the organization (Atkins, 1982).

A few years after Atkins, Bob Hendrickson (1987) analyzed private institutions and their publications. In 70 % of the newspapers analyzed the student editors have the

final word on the content published. In 13 % it is the faculty advertiser, in 3 % the college president who controls the newspaper before it is printed. Hendrickson asked whether reviewing a publication before printing means censorship by prior restraint or not. If it is only for the purpose to help improve the quality of a newspaper, to advise, and to educate, then it should not be considered as censorship. The difficulty is where to draw the line and how to exactly distinguish between “advise and educate” and “censor.” Hendrickson also asked who is the publisher of the papers analyzed and found out (like the Associated Collegiate Press did some years before him) that there is a diffusion about the word “publisher.” Many newspapers do not seem to have a clearly defined publisher; therefore many questionnaires did not provide useful answers to the researchers. Hendrickson discovered that only 10 % of the newspapers in his study were really censored by the administration and was surprised that the statistics were less dramatic than he had expected them to be.

A study of the College Media Advisers (CMA) in 1989 surveyed 275 newspapers all over the U.S. and asked 17 questions concerning independence and the relationship between the newspapers and their host-institutions. These findings are of course self-definitions and should therefore be seen critically. 58.6 % of the people questioned responded to have an independent newspaper on campus. Most of them (about 73 %) can be found at public institutions. Nearly one third of the people questioned answered that they report to the president of the college or university. Almost 12 % report to the student government above others, another 8.8 % to the chairman of the journalism department, and 6.4 % to the faculty adviser. Only ten publications (5.8 %) responded that they do not have to report to anyone and were responsible to themselves alone. In almost a third of the cases analyzed, the chairman of the journalism or communications department hires the adviser, the general manager, or the publisher of the newspaper. This also applies to self-defined independent newspapers. Concerning finances, about 60 % of the schools questioned use the university’s accounting office for financial purposes and do not have their own accountants. A third of the schools answered that the university or college would be responsible if there were debts caused by the newspaper that it could not pay alone. Between 86 and 90 % of the newspapers do not pay for utilities or office space used on campus. The revenue is mostly generated from advertising, other sources of income come from student activity fees (for 27.6 % the most important source of income) or university allocations (14.5 %). Only 10 % of all the newspapers analyzed generate their total income from advertising (Kopenhaver & Spielberg, 1989, pp. 5-7).

2 Research interest

In the original study, Kopenhaver and Spielberger made separate evaluations of the questionnaires depending on whether the school answered that their newspaper was independent or not. Within this thesis, this was not considered necessary as there were no significant differences between newspapers that defined themselves as independent and newspapers that did not.

Another research study conducted by Ingelhart (1993) also looked at the self-definitions of several newspapers all over the United States. According to his characteristics of independence (see chapter 2.2.4 “Independence”) he stated that a large majority of the newspapers analyzed cannot be considered independent, since most of them depend on school-funding or have at least a faculty adviser or members of faculty on the editorial board. All in all, his findings are largely congruent with those of Kopenhaver and Spielberger (1989).

Also newsgathering and the access to public (school) records have already been the topic of research studies. Campus police administrators were interviewed as well as advisers and newspaper editors about their relationship to each other. Even though campus crime constitutes a growing problem and relationships between newspaper staff and campus police are considered good or very good (answered 94 %) on U.S. colleges, coverage of campus crime remains minimal. Reasons for this could be that student journalists, according to campus police officials, seldom or never consult police records. Also many universities tend to downplay campus crime, not report it to the campus police, or advise student newspapers not to publish crime stories in fear of negative PR. Of course, this also constitutes some kind of censorship and oppression of student journalists (Shipman, 1994).

John V. Bodle (1996) compared community daily newspapers to college publications concerning their readability and the quality of news writing. Contrary to his expectation, college publications turned out only slightly less readable and he did not find significant differences in the quality of their writing. This study is especially interesting when it comes to determine whether or not college newspapers can fulfill the functions of local newspapers.

Watts and Wernsman (1996) interviewed college administrators about them being sources for student newspaper stories. On average 40 % of the content in campus media is derived from administrators, their decisions, and other events on campus. All administrators (also PR officers) expressed dissatisfaction with student journalists recontacting sources to verify information. Generally, they were more satisfied with

recent interviews if they are questioned at least once a week. In addition to this, the frequency with which administrators are being asked to serve as sources for stories affects the general satisfaction with newspaper stories. Overall, PR-executives tend to be less satisfied with the professionalism of student journalists (maintaining objectivity, preparation for interviews, asking pertinent questions). They also rated the performance of campus reporters lower than administrators did. Watts and Wernsman suggested the journalistic training and knowledge of many PR-professionals as reasons for the low satisfaction with the professionalism and work of campus journalists.

Besides these partially outdated studies from the early 1970s to the late 1990s, there is at least some relevant and current research about college newspapers and their role on campus. The two biggest surveys are the Student Monitor and the College Newspaper Audience Study.

The Student Monitor (2008, pp. 41-47), conducted annually, provides valuable data about the lifestyle of college and university students. While 20 % of the students at colleges with a campus TV-station reported having watched their campus television in the past month, 70 % of the students answered having read at least one of the last five issues of their student newspaper. The level of readership among college students has been consistently high during the previous editions of the Student Monitor.

These facts are especially important as college newspapers are still the most read medium on campus. 92 % of the students attending a school with a daily campus newspaper have read their paper in the past 30 days. Overall, students have read about three of the past five issues, as the Alloy Media + Marketing's College Newspaper Audience Study 2008 (p. 1) found out. Also the pass-on readership among collegiate papers was surprisingly high. Every paper is read about 3.2 times on average.

The Student Monitor (2008, p. 44-48) also discovered that male students are more likely to read the campus paper on a regular basis than female students. (The same results appeared in the Alloy Media + Marketing study.) The reason for this might be the extensive sport section in many of the newspapers, which may be more appealing to male students than to female. Also the time factor was important in the Student Monitor survey. A student spends an average of 19 minutes to read an issue of the college newspaper. Significant differences between male and female students concerning the time spent reading could not be found. Overall, a college student in the United States is a lot more likely to have read an issue of his campus publication last week than an issue of a national daily newspaper.

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3.1 The student press and its history

Student-run publications date back almost as long as traditional, professional newspapers in the United States do. One cannot speak about the history of collegiate journalism without speaking about the history of journalism in general.

The occupation in which people get paid to write true stories about current events and publish them on a regular basis is about 250 years old and in many places only 150 years old. The normative commitment of this occupational group to writing political news in order to inform the citizens of a democracy is of course no older than contemporary democracies, a history of roughly two centuries. The idea that this same group of people, journalists, should try to write news in a nonpartisan and professional manner emerged in the past one hundred years. All of these features of contemporary journalism take a different shape in different national traditions (Schudson & Tift, 2005, p. 18).

While traditional newspapers emerged in the late 1600s, it took students only about 80 years to bring out their own publications. The earliest school newspaper documented was *The Students Gazette* at the William Penn Charter School in Pennsylvania. It was first published in 1777, not even a century after the first professional newspaper (*Publick Occurrences Both Foreign and Domestick*, published for the first and only time on September 25, 1690 in Boston, MA by Benjamin Harris) appeared. *The Students Gazette* was brought out during the British occupation and can therefore be considered as the first underground newspaper by and for students (Bohle, 1992, p. 3).

The earliest traditional newspapers and their journalists were not seen as “writers” by the students of that time. Even one of the most reputable reporters of the colonial

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period was described as “a meer [sic!] mechanic in the art of setting and blacking types” by an anonymous Harvard College student (cited in Weaver & Wilhoit, 1991, p. 3). They were apprentices and not considered as artists. The first collegiate newspapers therefore strongly focused on the art of writing, on literary composition, and the publication of poems and stories written by gifted college students (Mott, 1953, p. 206). The oldest college newspaper that was published daily is the still existing *Yale Daily News* (Duscha & Fischer, 1973, p. 9).

Generally speaking, student-run newspapers emerged before journalism classes were offered or journalism departments were founded. Like many other classes, the ones teaching journalism came into existence by starting as an extracurricular activity. Many schools had and still have newspapers without offering a journalism program (Mitchell, 1940, p. 313).

Collegiate publications as well as traditional newspapers had a very partisan view on reporting and writing until the end of the 19th century. The development of a national American news agency, the Associated Press, in the late 19th century, led to serious changes in American journalism. Newspapers tended to more serve a mass audience and to lower circulation prices; they depended more on advertising revenue (Duscha & Fischer, 1973, p. 7).

Back then the ideal of objective reporting was born and it is still one of the core principles of American journalism; even though there are some critics to this form of journalistic writing. The necessity of objective writing emerged with the dependency on a mass audience to secure the advertising revenue. No newspaper wanted to be partisan and lose the people opposing their point of view as readers as this would consequently mean losing ad-revenue. Student newspapers followed this lead and also became less partisan and tried to appeal to the whole campus community as their audience (Duscha & Fischer, 1973, pp. 7-8).

From the early beginning until the 20th century, college newspapers spread all over the country and multiplied in number and also in number of pages and readers. By the end of the 19th century, most colleges and universities in the United States had at least one weekly newspaper. Many of them even had a daily (Duscha & Fischer, 1973, p. 9). After the turbulent time during World War II (where many college newspapers died or went underground to avoid censure), the late 1940s and 1950s were the period where newspapers began to convalesce slowly. Especially the 1950s were characterized by a prodigious growth in enrollment numbers among all universities of the United

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States. This gave student-run newspapers a push forward, for which they did not seem quite ready yet. The papers began growing which cost a considerable amount of time and money (Ingelhart, 1993, p. xiii). The 1950s were also the period when student newspapers generally tried not to raise too much attention by criticizing their host-institution or society in general. It was a very quiet era for campus publications, because many still recovered from censorship and oppression during wartime (Duscha & Fischer, 1973, p. 22).

In the late 1960s, however, the spirit of protest began to develop again. The “national disillusionment” could also be seen among colleges and their publications. It was the time of a flourishing underground press. Many papers engaged in protests against the Vietnam War and published flaming editorials calling for peace and also for freedom of speech. During these protests, administrators saw themselves urged to react upon the publication of critical content concerning the government (especially at state-owned institutions). Advisers counseled them to ignore or oppress any controversy, if necessary (Glessing, 1971, p. 126). Merritt Christensen, Assistant Journalism professor at Minot State College suggested: “An easy solution of the dilemma of editorial opposition to school administration is simply not to permit the publication of controversial issues or student opinions” (cited in Glessing, 1971, pp. 126-127). Nevertheless, the forceful suppression of critical content did not work, neither at Berkeley, nor at Columbia or Kent State University. Student newspapers became an important means of spreading the message of protest.

Nonetheless, the efforts of the administration to control the content of student newspapers continued throughout the 1960s and early 1970s. “Some were suspended from publication, articles were censored, editions were confiscated, editors were fired, and some newspapers moved off campus so as to be free of institutional ties and sponsorship” (McGrath, 1973, p. 1). Most of the publications existing at that time were at least partly subsidized by the university. These financial ties meant that the university was legally the publisher of the paper. Control was also exerted through the adviser system, which was widely used among U.S. student-run publications (Duscha & Fischer, 1973, p. 21). The status of many collegiate newspapers remained unclear. Was it a student publication or an instrument of communication of the administration? In many cases, administrators still had the power to oppress criticism and protest in “their” newspapers. Especially the 1970s were the years of growth, struggling for independence, and criticism on the campus (Ingelhart, 1993, p. xiii).

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The next decade, however, showed a total U-turn. It is not clear whether this was due to the economical situation or to a general change in people's minds, but the era of critical reporting and the protests of the late 1960s and early 1970s was overcome completely. Students engaged less in political activities and campus publications were much less critical or protest-oriented. The biggest problems of this time period were the soaring inflation and the economic struggles of the United States, which also could have made students focus more on their academic career rather than on political involvement at this time (Ingelhart, 1993, p. xiii).

The 1990s were the decade of change among traditional and collegiate newspapers as well. The rise of digital techniques entailed the closure of darkrooms and cutting-rooms. The widespread use of the internet made the newspaper production faster and easier, but also fast moving and changing quickly. Considering the plethora of information provided by the internet, newsgathering became easier and more difficult at the same time. Information was easier to access, but it became more demanding to decide whether a piece of information was worth publishing because of the vast amounts of data that became easily accessible. As many traditional newspapers did, the majority of college newspapers owned a news-website by the end of the 20th century. The online readership grew, but advertising revenue on the web was far from being cost-effective. The turn of the millennium brought further changes for college newspapers. More and more publications began to move online and abandon their print editions because of high printing costs (Hall & Aimone, 2009, p. 18). These times are turbulent for college newspapers and their future is still somewhat uncertain. With the development and growing influence of new media, many college papers as well as professional newspapers are battling financial problems and have to reorient themselves in this changing market.

3.2 Student newspapers today

Today, the student newspaper is one of the most popular extracurricular activities on campus. Student editors are considered as the leaders on campus: the “big wheels” who stir the information. Also alumni networks have a particular impact and remain of considerable importance to many student journalists, even long time after their graduation (Arnold & Kriegbaum, 1966, p. 1). Currently, there are 1774 college newspapers (dailies, weeklies, and monthly publications) with a total circulation of 7,016,833 copies in the United States (MJS Communications, 2009).

The end of the millennium also brought the “golden age for the campus press,” as it is called by Ingelhart (1993, p. xiii). New technologies found their way into the college paper newsroom and facilitated the production of student publications. Ingelhart also noticed a greater dedication and more skilled campus journalists. His guidelines for student publications are the following:

- A student press that is relevant to its campus makes service its ideal purpose.
- A self-regulated student press is a free student press.
- A responsible student press should reasonably be expected to maintain a level of professional performance and ethics pertinent to its purpose and restricted by its resources.
- Financial independence is a cornerstone of true freedom and responsibility of the student press.
- The role of the student press adviser is to help students to transfer their theories to practice.
- The free student press is free to all who have something worth saying (Ingelhart, 1993, pp. 3-4).

Concerning independence, Ingelhart (1993, p. xiii) took a closer look at a number of student publications. Of twelve newspapers that claimed independence, only two could be considered as *really* independent in Ingelhart’s definition of the term (see chapter 2.2.4 “Independence”).

Some student papers at major private universities are so big, that they need the same amount of organization as a professional newspaper. They may have a considerably large endowment and a printing budget of up to a million dollars which has to be matched by advertising incomes. Others might be smaller, but they still are organized the same way as professional newspapers are (Overbeck & Pasqua, 1983, p. 1).

The quality of these student-run publications has improved considerably since the emergence of the first campus newspapers. Today, they can clearly compete with any professional paper when it comes to technical equipment, professionalism and dedication of staff, and content. They are organized in departments as are professional papers,

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they have a business staff that looks after finances, a secretary who answers phone calls while the staffers are in class during the morning hours, a web staff that prepares the content for the online edition, and a very busy daily schedule, as in common for most professional journalists. Except for some clumsy mistakes and the fewer pages, most of the college dailies would not reveal that they are entirely produced by students who mostly are between 18 and 21 years old. A typical student daily is published Monday through Friday during the academic year with no production during holidays and exam periods. The staff is composed in most cases uniquely of undergraduate students with different majors. If the host institution offers a journalism program or even has a journalism school, it is very likely that a vast majority of the staff may be journalism students. Furthermore, most of the writers and photographers of student-run newspapers are not paid at all or paid very little. Nevertheless the inflow of contributing writers remains high, as working for the campus paper is a unique possibility to gain journalistic experience and to “matter” within the college community. In addition to the newsroom staff, the big daily newspapers also have a business staff (who balance bills, organize advertising and other business-related decisions for the company) and in many cases some part-time employees, who are paid and mostly non-students. Many newspapers also have an accountant who professionally looks after the bills as many of the students lack the knowledge necessary for this task.¹

To most colleges and universities, the main campus paper is a very important means of communication, since it is the only extracurricular activity that reaches the whole community on a regular basis (Mitchell, 1940, p. 351). The tradition of strictly objective reporting can still be seen in all college dailies studied. News articles always present both sides of a controversy without giving an opinion. The process of forming an opinion is left to the reader. Editorial pages are the only place within the paper where it is allowed to have a personal point of view: “It is generally agreed that opinion has a place in the news media, but that place is not in the news pages” (Nesvisky, 2008, p. 119). Still, editorials, comments, and opinion columns remain among the most read parts of a newspaper and are given special attention to. This fact is also true for campus press (Nesvisky, 2008, p. 119).

¹This is an observation made during the research visit spent in Boston, MA and New York City, NY in August and September 2009. The observations were not conducted systematically and only refer to subjective perceptions of the author when visiting several newsrooms and speaking to college media staffers. They can therefore not be seen as representative for all American college newspapers. Although some of these observations were confirmed in earlier research studies, such as for example Bodle, 1996. He compared college dailies to local daily newspapers and found out that they have some very similar characteristics when it comes to readability, presentation of information, use of sources and thoroughness. Almost no significant differences appeared between professional local papers and collegiate newspapers.

The dependence and independence of student newspapers differs from case to case and has to be reviewed for every single paper separately. Generally speaking, the campus press managed to become more and more independent and be granted freedom of speech rights to a larger extent than some decades ago. The development is definitely going in the right direction. Nevertheless, even though college newspapers fulfill a crucial function for the campus community, many of them still remain censored and oppressed when publishing articles critical of the college or university in question (Hinchey, 2001, pp. 40-41).

3.3 The role and functions of campus newspapers

The role of student publications is perceived in different ways from various groups on campus. The administrators and faculty members for example may see the newspaper as the voice of the university that has to publish university-related decisions and topics accurately and fairly without harming the university's reputation by covering critical issues. The student-reporters on the other hand may see themselves as watchdogs that have a close look on whatever the university administration does and shout when they do something with which they disagree. Student readers may perceive their campus newspaper as medium of information on what's going on in their community, looking after the best interests of the students and not primarily after those of the administration. Journalism educators may perceive the campus press as a training ground for future journalists. All these different points of view have to be brought together by the publications.

Unlike a traditional newspaper, campus publications serve a very well defined audience with very similar interests. General-interest-papers do not expect their readers to read every single article they publish. A reader should choose which articles are of interest to him. For campus newspapers this is different. The student staff writes for a target group and a community that is very closely knit and united by similar interests, centering on the university in general, events on campus, sports, and other such student-related topics. The audience of a campus paper is much less diverse than that of a professional newspaper (Duscha & Fischer, 1973, p. 12).

Still, good student publications should not (or only slightly) differ from professional newspapers. Large college and university dailies also cover general news and off-campus events. So despite their focus on student news, they do not vary greatly from general

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interest (local) newspapers. However, the relationship between the publication and its readers is a very special one. The paper is produced by students for students, but also for faculty members and other affiliates of the university (Bohle, 1992, p. 4).

Generally speaking, the following functions are encountered in literature treating college newspapers (Duscha & Fischer, 1973, p. 11; Kanigel, 1996, p. 5; Maguire & Spong, 1951, pp. 1-4; Wilcox, 1966, pp. 4-6; Mencher, 1970, pp. 20-21, Blewett, 1986, p. 25, etc.):

- to inform students about what is going on in their community
- to publish administrative decisions
- to serve as a watchdog for the community
- to entertain
- to fulfill an orientation function
- to serve as a community forum and a voice for students
- to serve as a training ground for young journalists

Though, of course, these functions might differ with the point of view that is taken, since the afore-mentioned characteristics are primarily formulated from a student point of view.

In general it can be said that student newspapers carry out the same services and functions like professional newspapers. They should publish newsworthy information about the activities of the institution, though this should be done in a “more lively style” as the readers are generally younger and not yet used to the common newspaper style of writing (Reddick, 1942, p. 7).

Staff writers of college newspapers may be enrolled in a university class that gives credit for their work for the newspaper. In this case, they are not paid by money, but by academic credits. Some major fields of study even require students to join the local newspaper to get credits; but this can vary from one university to another. For truly independent newspapers, getting an academic credit for working on the staff of the

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campus daily is of course not possible. But still, joining the newspaper is an incentive in itself. In fact, Overbeck and Pasqua (1983, p. 2) explained: “There is no faster way to get to know a campus – and to become well known yourself – than through the pages of the campus newspaper.” They stated that for many students the reason for joining the editorial staff might be to get involved and become known by the campus community, especially at big universities.

Unlike the term “student newspaper” might suggest, these publications often serve a much larger community than those of the campus alone. They may be the only daily papers in their town and may be read by a larger group of people: neighbors and residents, local businesses, and of course faculty members and other employees of the college or university. Therefore they often expand the range of topics they treat on news from all over the U.S. or even the world and allow their readers to keep up with what is going on outside the campus (Clay, 1965, p. 5). Almost one fifth of college publications in the United States publish daily, the large majority of the newspapers however, publishes weekly (38.4 %) (Ingelhart, 1993, p. 52). Bodle (1996) found out in his study that there is no significant difference in readability, interest, and thoroughness between college dailies and professional local newspapers.

If a newspaper produced by students spreads widely beyond the campus borders and fulfills almost the same role and functions as local dailies, the question of responsibility arises: Who is legally responsible and liable for what is printed in the paper? Or in other words: Who is the publisher? Only by answering this question can it be determined whether or not a paper is really independent. It might be a difficult situation for the administration of an institution if they have no influence on what is published, but are nevertheless liable if there are interferences with the law. So if academic authorities want to establish guidelines concerning the production and the content of the paper, these guidelines need to be written down and communicated to everybody involved. All students need to be aware of the rules and of the disciplinary actions that will be taken if there is any breach or violation thereof. However in general, academic authorities cannot be held liable for conflicts with the law emerging through such student-run publications. The editors, i.e. the students, are held responsible in such a case. The law does not only apply to those who have the money to take a case to court (Bohle, 1992, p. 41).

Also criticism by student publications has been a topic in theoretical literature since the 1960s. Clay (1965, p. 211) stated:

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The editor and his staff may well clarify their position as to what justifies criticism as well as to what constitutes news, in regard to the action of student-governing bodies. When a decision has been made, the newspaper may make its final comment. After that, it may well consider the issue as dead, at least for the present – though it may be revived at an appropriate time. Carping criticism is of no more value in student relationships than it is in relation to the administration.

It can be seen that the protesting spirit of the 1970s had not surfaced when Clay wrote her advisory book about college newspapers. These forms of publications are seen above all as informants (what they still are today) and peacekeepers on campus. Their critical opposition-like role is not accepted or has not been developed yet. “The 1960s were the dark ages for American campus journalism” (Ingelhart, 1993, p. xi). Furthermore, Clay advised young scholastic press editors:

On some campuses, the student newspaper must steer clear of one thing; on others, it must steer clear of many things. For the papers in some state-supported colleges, the state legislature is sacrosanct; for those in some church-supported colleges, not only whatever is contrary to church doctrine is taboo, but what ever might be offensive to any church member or to any of the ‘big gift men.’ This list could be expanded to include criticism of almost anything on or off campus – city traffic regulations, city streets, college laundry, cafeteria, dormitory regulations, and on and on (Clay, 1965, pp. 255-256).

Also athletics and sports are a great taboo for some college papers – or at least have been. The college’s sports teams are the pride of the students. If they do well, everybody cheers. If they don’t, nobody is supposed to talk about it. Thankfully, nowadays there are laws preventing college newspapers staying the lapdogs of the university administration as they had been for many years. Even though not every law is followed strictly, nor is it applicable to all colleges, public and private, they still make a difference concerning freedom of speech for collegiate journalists (see chapter 3.6.1 “The First Amendment and the student press”).

3.4 Journalism education

Today, journalism education is established in over 400 universities and colleges in the United States, either in separated “j-schools”, or in journalism departments. Since the 1700s, where journalism was considered an apprenticeship, the academic journalism education has gone a long way (Weaver, 2003, p. 49). The first journalism schools in the United States emerged in the late 1800s. But it was not until the 20th century, when what now is commonly known as a “journalism major” was created. For this reason, an academic education for young journalists is something quite recent, although college newspapers existed long beforehand. The attitude among reporters remains that journalists are educated in the newsroom and not in the classroom (Mirando, 2002, pp. 76-77). The common opinion is: “If a school’s curriculum does not extend beyond the classroom walls, students will likely be illprepared for the workforce” (Linch, 2008, p. 22).

Very early on, many journalists were above all printers. This fact also reflects in the early settings of journalism education. After 1870, the journalism programs established in several colleges and universities began teaching printing classes by former journalists (Weaver, 2003, pp. 49-50). The first separate school of journalism was established in 1908 at the University of Missouri, still one of the most renowned “j-schools” in the U.S. (Weaver & Gray, 1980). The earlier schools focused more on printing and technical skills than on reporting. The first PhD minor was created in 1927 by Willard Bleyer at the University of Wisconsin. He located journalism in the social sciences and not, like many before him did, in the humanities and liberal arts. This had a considerable impact on the education of and research of journalism in the U.S. Journalism research shifted towards observing the world and how people learn about the world (Weaver, 2003, p. 50).

Yet still j-classes emphasized more on technical writing and language skills than on the techniques of reporting and newsgathering. This reflects the tension between the teachers more oriented towards social sciences and the traditional philologists concentrating on the use of language. It took until the late 1970s, until journalism departments and schools in the United States could settle down in the social sciences (Highton, 1967). The 1980s and 1990s were the decades characterized by the efforts to include both, techniques and theory, into journalism curricula (Mirando, 2002, p. 85). Nevertheless, some of the colleges offering journalism programs have decided that this high-level academic discipline should only be taught at a graduate level. Some re-

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strict undergraduate journalism classes to the junior and senior students. However, the majority offers a four-year undergraduate curriculum in journalism or communications (Ingelhart, 1993, p. 107).

Ingelhart (1993, p. 105) described the rise of journalism programs as an “academic success story.” As many colleges recognized that journalism attracted many students, they were eager to create their own programs or at least offer a minor or some courses to enlarge enrollment numbers. Much of this was also inspired by the wish of many colleges to improve the quality of their student-run newspapers. Today, almost all journalism curricula emphasize professional training throughout every stage of journalism education and combine it with several aspects of social sciences and theory (Sloan, 1990, p. 4).

The focus on practical training throughout the education of young journalists is particularly important as journalism schools provide the future workforce for U.S. media corporations. The typical journalist nowadays has at least a Bachelor’s degree, in many cases with a major in journalism, media studies, or communications. Even though, some professional “old school” journalists, who came into the job by apprentice training rather than through a college degree still think that higher education is not necessary or even useless to become a journalist. Nevertheless, the proportion of college-educated journalists keeps rising steadily. Majors such as journalism and communications have become among others the areas with the largest student enrollment at U.S. colleges and universities (Sloan, 1990, p. 4).

Concerning the link between practical journalism and academic learning, Jeffrey Scheuer (2007, p. 80) took up a position that many journalism faculties share: One cannot be without the other. To become a skilled journalist, academic training can’t be the only way, but it has to be connected to some form of practical journalism. Scheuer considers classes teaching journalistic skills as unnecessary at the undergraduate level, because they would supersede more important courses for example in liberal arts. Ingelhart (1993, p. 106) even thought that journalism students should spend only 25 % of their classes within their major field of study. The practical skills themselves should be learned in the newsroom, for example in the ones of campus newspapers. “There is no classroom that can better serve the aims of education than the student newsroom” (Mencher, 1966, p. 21).

To link theoretical education in the classroom to professional newsroom experience, many colleges and universities founded a school newspaper where students could learn

in both ways: in the newsroom as well as in the classroom. In their early beginnings all these newspapers were dependent upon the university (even though the eldest newspapers in the country were independent and did exist long before journalism schools or departments were created; later-founded newspapers tended to be official organs of their host-departments). The university itself was the publisher and financier of these publications and also had the final authority on the content that was printed. Over the years, more and more of these college newspapers became incorporated and were independently produced and funded.

Interestingly, in 1987, when the study of Hendrickson (1987) was conducted, in 65 to 70 % of the private colleges and universities questioned, the school newspaper was not part of the academic training of journalism students (and neither of students of other majors). Most newspaper advisers were not familiar with journalism education or journalism at all. In 60 % of the cases, the adviser was not a journalism teacher.

Another method to link education in practical and theoretical journalism is through the selection of journalism educators. Whereas at most universities, applicants for a teaching position ought to have a PhD degree, the requirement that teachers of journalism also had practical experience as reporters and editors has become more and more widespread (Sloan, 1990, pp. 15-17). Today, many universities require at least a couple of years of practical work as a journalist before one can enter the PhD program. But in practice, the situation is different:

When it comes to education for mass media professionals, almost anything goes. People with varied levels of training – from high school dropouts to doctors – are working for newspapers, magazines, television channels and radio stations. While many believe a broad liberal arts education is the best foundation for reporting, even that isn't necessary for someone with talent, drive and experience. On the flip side, an advanced degree in a specialized area may give someone more expertise on a beat, but it probably won't get them a bigger paycheck (Barton, 2002, p. 14).

Journalism education in the United States differs considerably from journalism education in Western European countries. In the U.S., there is a tight connection between American commercial media (especially newspapers) and journalism-schools and departments. This naturally influences the training student journalists get at college. This commercial influence continues through the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC), where the media industry is rep-

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resented by nineteen groups, whereas journalism education is represented by only six groups (Gaunt, 1992, p. 30).

Another differentiating factor between journalism education in the U.S. and in Western Europe is the strong liberal arts tradition in the United States. The ACEJMC states that at least 90 semester hours have to be taken outside the major area of journalism, with at least 65 semester hours of basic liberal arts and sciences having to be taken by journalism students. Most colleges and universities offering undergraduate majors in journalism or mass communication have expanded their range of course offers to a more general approach, including communication skills and theory for future journalists as well as for those desiring to work in a related field of public communication (Weaver, 2003, p. 53). In Western Europe, the journalism classes tend to become more and more focused on a specific area of the field, providing education for specialists more than for generalists. Also, the liberal arts tradition does not exist in most Western European universities, where specialization is considered an important step towards an academic degree.

Weaver (2003, p. 59) also dared an outlook at the future of U.S. journalism education and predicted a proceeding universalization and a growing emphasis on general public communication skills and approaches, not focused on specific media as a reaction to the advancing convergence of media, and making the still existing boundaries obsolete. This reflects in current numbers of students majoring in journalism or its related fields. The enrollment numbers soared at the dawn of the 21st century and the traditional “j-schools” began to transfer into “c-schools” (“communication schools”). The rising number of students can be explained by the growing interest in related fields, such as advertising, public relations, or mass communication. Although journalism majors still account for the largest proportion of students majoring in media-related fields, they only make up about 25 % of the total number of journalism school students (Mirando, 2002, p. 85).

Considering the future of journalism education, Jean Folkerts (2007, p. 73) criticizes the reluctancy to change in many journalism schools and departments. The curricula have only been adapted slightly since the 1960s, whereas techniques and media landscapes on the other hand experienced a considerable upheaval over the past decades. The internet provides a plethora of possibilities and journalism curricula don’t seem to be able to keep up with the rapidly changing (media-) world. To educate young journalists to be well-prepared for the world of the fast moving digital revolution, journalism curricula need to be updated and revised. Graduates must be prepared for working in

the digital age, where a specialization in a particular medium (such as television, print, or radio) does not make sense anymore, since the internet is ubiquitous, especially in the media industry, and young journalists that enter into the “real world” today need to be able to think digitally and work digitally (Folkerts, 2007, p. 74).

3.4.1 Faculty advisers

Many collegiate newspapers on U.S. campuses do not completely operate on their own, but have a faculty adviser to look over the news production and the paper itself. In many cases, this adviser is a member of the journalism faculty. But there are exceptions to every rule. The adviser is the link between the newspaper staff and the administration and faculty of the host-institution. He counsels when problems occur, he trains the newspaper staff, and in some cases the adviser even approves copies or recruits staff. An adviser serves as the only continuum in the fast living daily routine of a college newspaper. Editors change frequently, the editor in chief is usually replaced once a year. The adviser caters for continuity and stability of the publication (Estrin, 1966a, pp. 46-49). “Advisers exist in a kind of limbo. They are both teachers and collaborators; advocates of the students and colleagues of the teachers; watchdogs of the elected school board and employed by the same” (SPLC, 2002). “Similar to the football coach who is fired for losing, the adviser is often replaced because he either will not or cannot settle the censorship battle between students and the administration. The adviser is the man in the middle” (Feldman, 1968, p. 48).

According to Estrin (1966a, pp. 46-49), the college newspaper adviser should fulfill the following ten functions:

- define the objectives of the newspaper
- define the philosophy of the newspaper
- recruit staff
- encourage staff to join professional journalism organizations
- define the ethics of the newspaper
- supply resources

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- present rewards for meritorious service
- suggest articles, especially those relating to the faculty and the administration
- serve as a sounding board for the editor
- promote research in journalism

In the everyday work of a college publication, an adviser has only two major functions or possibilities of how he directs his work: He can either work in the best interest of the students and the newspaper, or he can work in the best interest of the administration of the host-institution. In other words: A faculty adviser can help a student-run publication to guarantee freedom of expression, or he can serve as the arm of the administration who censors content when somebody opposes to the topic that's being about to be published.

Freedom of expression and debate by means of a free and vigorous student media are essential to the effectiveness of an educational community in a democratic society. This implies the obligation of the student media to provide a forum for the expression of opinion - not only those opinions differing from established university or administrative policy, but those at odds with the media staff beliefs or opinions as well. Student media must be free from all forms of external interference designed to regulate its content (College Media Advisers, 2009a).

As clear as this extract from the College Media Adviser's Professional Code may seem, in the everyday work of an adviser decisions are not always that simple. The adviser stands in the middle between the administration and the students. He has to serve both, but cannot risk to disappoint either. There is no jurisdiction directly concerning student media advisers, which makes confrontations with the law even more complicated and hard to predict, since American law mostly relies on case rulings than on formal laws (SPLC, 2002).

In the past years, problems concerning the work of advisers occurred at several colleges and universities throughout the United States. One big case started a nationwide debate: The dismissal of Avis Meyer, adviser of *The University News* at Saint Louis University. Trying to make the *University News* independent, Meyer's stipend for advising the paper was ended and a new charter for the newspaper was enacted by

the Saint Louis University administration, giving them more power over the paper's staff (Malone, 2008, p. 8).

Ousting an ambitious adviser in favor of someone who may be easier to manipulate is certainly one way administrators can control the content of a newspaper. Under the cover of private personnel issues, reassigning an adviser allows administrators to keep bad news out of student publications without the public relations nightmare of censoring the paper outright (Lehmert, 2002, p. 22).

But in these cases, it is hard to prove that the personnel decisions are related to censorship and not just simple employment changes (Lehmert, 2002, p. 22). "The people that administrators are pissed about are the students. But they can't touch them. The way to exert pressure on the paper peripherally is to go after their adviser, because they think [the adviser is] their puppet," said Chris Carroll, Chair of the College Media Advisers' (CMA) Advocate Program (cited in Lehmert, 2002, p. 23), which mediates in disputes between schools and newspapers or their advisers. Especially at public colleges, where the freedom of the press and First Amendment rights are more protected than at private institutions, the removal or exchanging of the adviser and the change of advising policies is a clever way to gain control over the publication and its content (Lehmert, 2002, p. 23).

The reasons for this seem quite simple: Every administrator wants to promote a positive image of himself, his staff, and the institution he serves at. The pressure to maintain a good reputation to ensure enrollment numbers and quality of students and teaching is high. Therefore, every college administrator prefers a "good news newspaper" to one that investigates critical issues (Lehmert, 2002, p. 23). The CMA even named the year 2004 "The Year of Advising Dangerously," after so many college media advisers got laid off after disputes with the administration.

Advisers to college and high school student newspapers are a pretty discouraged lot these days. They know that if their newspaper or its student journalists get crosswise with practically anyone on campus, they're likely to be transferred off the publication or fired outright (Editor & Publisher, 2005, p. 25).

Research studies conducted by Dickson (1994) and Lain (1992) indicate that the education of the adviser influences their work significantly. Advisers with a journalism

degree or a college education in a related field are more likely to defend freedom of information rights and less likely to kill a critical story. Lain (1992) also showed in his study that newspapers with advisers educated in journalism run more stories critical about sports teams or subjects related to sexuality or teenage pregnancy etc. Even though both research projects have high school newspapers as main subjects, the findings are also interesting in the context of college journalism.

Thus, the assignment of a faculty adviser to a collegiate newspaper can either be good or bad. It can mean that the paper has an expert to help with problems and to fight for their rights when it comes to disputes with the administration. But it can also mean that the adviser is hired as the extended arm of the administrators, assuring that the content stays within the lines of the public relations department and preventing bad news from being published.

3.5 Excursus: The student press in Austria and Germany

In German speaking countries, the term “student press” has a different meaning than in the United States. Daily newspapers issued by students of a university don’t exist. Normally, the university itself publishes different kinds of publications such as weekly newspapers, newsletters, or magazines that target either students or employees of the institution. They serve uniquely as elements of the university’s public relations and are therefore different from the college newspapers this thesis is examining.

Another form of student newspapers are the papers published by certain student organizations and groups, normally in a weekly or monthly manner. These papers emerged in a large quantity in the 1950s, after the Second World War (Döring & Schürer-Wagner, 1970, p. 8). They openly criticized studying conditions and education policy as well as other facts, such as free speech in general, women’s rights and so on. This happened in such a drastic way, Wolfgang Schwerbrock (1968, p. 5) even speaks of an “Eskalation der Meinungsfreiheit der Jugendlichen.”² This, seen against the background of the year of publication of Schwerbrocks book 1968, shows very well how critical rebellious student publications were seen in their first period of prosperity. According to a study of Detlef Lange (1969), the student newspapers in Germany

²“escalation of the freedom of expression among the youth” (Translation by the author)

doubled in quantity in the years from 1960 to 1969. Lange also found out that the purpose of those student-run publications is mostly to encourage student readers to engage in politics or to question recent political decisions. Furthermore, almost a third of the editors of student newspapers answered that to fight authority is one of the most important goals of their publication.

Their existence began, according to Schwerbrock (1968, pp. 18-19), as underground papers for a very small group of readers. They published provocative stories to be quoted in regional or even national newspapers. Teachers and rectors were worried about the image of their institutions and about what could be published concerning the severe studying conditions in the 1960s. Student publications were the first indicator of a large revolution among German and also Austrian students.

In his book, Schwerbrock (1968, pp. 152-153) also looks over the pond to American student newspapers and rejects their non-critical attitude. He does not consider the U.S. student newspapers as media of rebellion, like they were at the same time in Germany (and, so can be assumed also in Austria). Their political engagement covered only the fight against communism, but not the broad spectrum of political issues (discrimination, neo-imperialism, education, freedom of speech, etc.) like German papers. The main topics in these American papers were sports, popular students, and trends in general, according to Schwerbrock's critique.

This is obviously a German point of view and is based on Schwerbrock's visit of an exhibition concerning American student newspapers in the America House in Hamburg. So his judgement is not based on profound research.

After the student protests in the 1960s and 1970s in Austria and Germany, very little was written and researched about student publications, which indicates the decreasing importance of these newspapers and magazines for communication and journalism scholars.

3.6 College newspapers and the law

There are three main cases where college publications can be affected by legal issues:

- First Amendment rights, freedom of speech and censorship,

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- libel and privacy, and
- obscenity (Bohle, 1992, p. 37).

In this thesis, the emphasis will be put on the first possibility.

Still, college publications and the law is a difficult chapter and always has been. Two possible reasons why that is so are, firstly, that the American jurisprudence has not many laws clearly stating the rights and freedoms of college newspapers or their relationships to advisers and the administration. The U.S. legal system is one of precedents. Therefore interpretations are mostly based on several landmark decisions, not on single laws. Secondly, the application of freedom of expression laws cannot be the same at all colleges, since the United States have a very diverse system of post-secondary education. Unlike in Austria, where the vast majority of universities is state-owned, the USA rely on an extended network of private education facilities. Constitutional rights such as the First Amendment therefore have no validity in private institutions, as it only affects state-related and owned colleges and universities. Students at private colleges automatically relinquish their constitutional rights to free expression, since enrollment is voluntarily. They therefore need to negotiate their own freedoms with the administration, who can voluntarily allow freedom of expression on campus and for publications over which they govern (English, Hach & Rolnicki, 1990, p. 301). Since private universities are free within the law and to define their own missions, some want to restrict the academic freedom of their students for diverse reasons, such as for example religion (Fire, 2009, p. 50).

Public university officials may argument in these cases with the “unique need for civility, order, and dignity in the academic environment” (Fire, 2009, p. 43) to justify more severe applications of the freedom of speech laws or their invalidity in specific campus-related cases. Nevertheless universities and colleges are places where the free exchange of ideas and academic freedom are not only welcome but necessary to guarantee the proper functioning of higher education. Especially public universities have a long tradition of discussion, debate, and also controversies. They should be a “market-place of ideas,” not oppressing opposing opinions. This has to be factored into rulings concerning universities and colleges and the freedom of speech of their students and student journalists (Fire, 2009, p. 48).

A very busy time for courts to rule over cases concerning the college student press was in the 1960s and 1970s. Ingelhart (1985, p. 29) called it an “avalanche of actions”

that marched through the courts. However, almost no rulings exist involving private colleges. According to Ingelhart (1985, p. 65) it is very disappointing that no court ever ruled that the First Amendment rights also exist at private institutions. On the other hand, there is no jurisprudence stating that such a right does not exist at private colleges and universities.

It is true that the courts hesitate meddling in the internal affairs of private agencies. Actually, however, there have been so few cases in the courts to date concerning student publication matters that it would only be a guess as to what the courts would determine if a number of cases were brought (Ingelhart, 1985, p. 65).

Nevertheless, when considering the relationships between student publications and the law, one has to keep in mind that there are considerable differences between public and private institutions of higher education in the United States. Both are not equal before the law. According to the Fire Guide to Free Speech (2009, p. 50) even some of the most prestigious elite universities and colleges are centers of censorship and oppression. The First Amendment and the Constitution in general protect from government interference, but they do not protect them from interference by private institutions. These schools can set their own regulations and policies which do not necessarily have to obey the law.

Ingelhart (1995, pp. 65-66) outlined several ways to argument First Amendment rights at private institutions (which may be applicable to public schools as well):

One holds that the private campus is in effect a company town and, like other company towns, cannot restrain the exercise of the constitutional rights of persons required to reside there. Another points out, that provisions of the college catalog constitute a contract; if it promises opportunity and facility for learning liberal and democratic principles for American citizenship, then it must provide free press opportunities. An intriguing theory is that members of a voluntary society cannot be required to follow associational rules in violation of constitutional guarantees. Another concept is that when an owner dedicates, allows, invites, or proclaims an area of private property to be available to the public for the public's use, then he cannot arbitrarily restrain the public's use when constitutionally protected activities occur or are planned. So far these theories have not been tested in courts as to their applicability to student press freedom. As a matter of fact, so few cases involving the student press in private colleges have come to the

attention of the courts that no trend or attitude of that field is specifically established or even identifiable.

The Fire Guide (2009, p. 62) advises private college students to go public when they are experiencing problems of oppression of free speech and freedom of the press, because the publishing of censorship issues is the most powerful weapon a student journalist has.

Of course all these considerations only apply to student newspapers that are not completely independent from their host institutions. When a paper is really independent in the sense of Ingelhart (see chapter 2.2.4 “Independence”), it generally has nothing to fear from a college or university when it comes to First Amendment rights. In these cases, the host-institution has no means to pressure the publication.

3.6.1 The First Amendment and the student press

A few decades ago, “a chapter like this one couldn’t have been written. To put it simply, the student press had no First Amendment rights then” (Overbeck & Pasqua, 1983, p. 215). In general, the legal rights of students were rather limited; they were controlled by many authorities *in loco parentis*. In the 1960s, the students first started a revolution and claimed the same rights as everybody else. Other issues of protest were discrimination, the Vietnam War, and injustices concerning education. “Real democracy was nowhere to be found on some college campuses” those days (Overbeck & Pasqua, 1983, p. 215). It took until the beginning of the next decade to earn a few basic rights like the First Amendment right, but with certain restrictions (Overbeck & Pasqua, 1983, p. 215). The First Amendment to the US Constitution reads as follows:

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 the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances (FindLaw, n. d.).

Today, the First Amendment does not only apply to the Federal Government and its institutions, but also to the States and to all levels of the government (Haynes et al, 2003, p. 34). It is not only speech and the press that is protected, but also conduct

(such as the wearing of armbands for example, see the *Tinker* case, chapter 3.6.2 “Court cases and rulings”). It does not matter if the expression of opinion is constructive or not, as long as it does not intrude the rights of others or harasses somebody (Fire, 2009, pp. 25-26).

Sanford and Kirtley (2005, p. 263) describe the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution as the “heart of American democracy.” Enacted in 1791 (four years after the Constitution was written), it was not the first law designed to protect the freedom of speech and of the press. “A unique characteristic of First Amendment law is its strong aversion to prior restraint on expression, derived from an antipathy dating back to the nation’s colonial days, to government suppression of controversial ideas” (Sanford & Kirtley, 2005, p. 270). Nevertheless, prior restraint can still be found at colleges and universities, both public and private. A few landmark case rulings serve as reference points when it comes to the question of First Amendment rights for student publications (see chapter 3.6.2 “Court cases and rulings”).

For college students, this First Amendment is not always provided. “Some college officials still don’t think of a student newspaper as a forum for student opinion but as a vehicle for ‘good news’ to keep everybody happy” (Overbeck & Pasqua, 1983, p. 215). In addition to this, students at private institutions and their publications do not necessarily have constitutional rights such as freedom of the press or freedom of speech. These rights only target the state and state-action. Therefore private institutions are exempted (Bohle, 1992, p. 38). Nevertheless, freedom of speech remains an individual right and applies to the individual person, even though private universities are allowed to enact bylaws that may partially overlap federal laws. For some reasons there have not been many court-cases concerning the freedom of the student press at private institutions yet (Ingelhart, 1993, p. 98).

Also for traditional newspapers, this freedom of the press has rarely been judged as absolute by the courts. Historically, there have always been controversies when it comes to First Amendment rights and the press – the traditional one and the student press (Nesvisky, 2008, p. 241).

The 1960s were the days of the campus underground press. Journalism educators scurried away from the obscene, strident, foul, biased, and nasty publications that created a stench on campuses everywhere. Newspapers, magazines, and even yearbooks were caught up in this tumultuous time.

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College administrators and board members were aghast and frightened by it. So they ran too. They tried discipline. They tried cutting off funds. They tried everything they could think of to escape the effects of that press and any involvement in it. Nothing worked. Litigation marched through courts of the land and proclaimed over and over again that the First Amendment applied to all, even foul-typewritten campus journalists (Ingelhart, 1993, pp. xi-xii).

No judge has ever decided in favor of a school that wanted to control the content because it was the official publisher of the newspaper. The decisions were ruled based on the “open forum theory,” whereupon a college newspaper is a public forum for students and therefore First Amendment rights apply. Nevertheless, it is difficult to argue on the basis of the newspaper being a public forum if there is a faculty adviser, if it is used for education purposes (for example when students are getting academic credit for working with the paper), or if it uses the name of the institution or its resources for its production. Under the public forum theory, also the students themselves are liable for the content they print as the school itself can’t be found liable without having control over the publication. The related precedent is the *Hazelwood* case (see chapter 3.6.2 “Court cases and rulings”). Yet it is important to remember that this ruling applies to public high school publications and that college students in general are granted more freedom as they are older, more responsible, and the intellectual atmosphere at a college or university is also different from the one at high schools (Bohle, 1992, pp. 42-43).

Generally speaking, the landmark cases of the 1960s until the 1980s (see chapter 3.6.2 “Court cases and rulings”) had one effect: The schools realized that they could not censure scholastic publications, nor cut funds because they were not satisfied with the content (Ingelhart, 1993, p. xii). Many public college administrators kept their hands off the student press, acknowledging the long standing tradition of an independent free student newspaper under First Amendment protection (Paxton, 2000, p. 14).

But the number of unreported cases where schools still pressure student publications remains unknown. Considering the American system of education, it seems quite understandable that students may hesitate to lean up against administrators or advisers if they pay a tremendous amount of money to be able to study at such an institution. Some may even prevent events like this from happening by not touching controversial issues. Also the topic of self-censorship among student journalists will be reviewed later in this thesis (see chapter 3.6.3 “Censorship and self-censorship”).

Bohle put the relationship between the student press and the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in following words:

The basic principle behind student press freedom is not to see what the paper can get away with but to see that ideas, even those unpopular with the majority or opposed to by persons in administrative seats of power, have a chance to be expressed (Bohle, 1992, p. 41).

3.6.2 Court cases and rulings

The major landmark court decisions concerning student media happened in the 1960s and 1970s. Even though courts occupied themselves more with cases of high schools, some of the rulings about secondary schools even were applied on the level of college education. College students are mostly 18 years and older and considered as adults, whereas high school students are still children (under 18 years old) and it is therefore difficult to apply the same standards and guarantee the same rights to both groups of people.

The starting point of the struggle of freedom for college publications is the 1969 Supreme Court decision *Tinker v. Des Moines Community School District*. In general, the legal principles of press law for scholastic newspapers are based on court decisions, as there is no specific law for this kind of publication. Like many other cases, the *Tinker* case does not treat college students or college newspapers, but nevertheless it is an important basic decision for further college press trials. This case treats the suspending of several students for wearing black armbands in protest against the Vietnam War. All other symbols, religious or not, even reminiscences of nazi symbols were allowed on school grounds, but the headmaster suspended the use of black armbands after having heard about the protest, even though it was a quiet one and did not affect other students. The students took the case to court and the Supreme Court decided that this action was symbolic speech and therefore protected by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. This was the first court case that officially awarded the First Amendment right to students (Overbeck & Pasqua, 1983, p. 216-217).

The second important court decision was the 1973 case *Papish v. University of Missouri Curators*. Barbara Papish was an art major, but she secretly was heading

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towards a career in journalism. She published a paper called *Free Press Underground* with her own texts and illustrations. She already annoyed the university board by publishing an issue on the open house day, but after publishing an issue with a cartoon showing a policeman raping the Statue of Liberty and an “obscene” (citing the university curators) word as headline, she was expelled from college. So she took the university to court, where her case even reached the Supreme Court which decided in her favor. The University of Missouri had to reinstate her, since the publication of was Barbara Papish’s personal expression of opinion and therefore protected by the First Amendment (Overbeck & Pasqua, 1983, p. 217).

Earlier cases that were not brought to U.S. Supreme court were for example *Dickey v. Alabama State Board of Education* of 1967. Gary Dickey wanted to print an article that criticized the Alabama governor and was advised not to do so, as “the president felt the campus paper was owned and published by the state” (Overbeck & Pasqua, 1983, p. 219). The faculty adviser even offered another, less critical story. Dickey refused to do so and printed an issue with “censored” written in big letters over page one. So he was expelled from Troy State University, but the Federal District Court ruled in his favor and decided that his First Amendment rights had been violated (Overbeck & Pasqua, 1983, pp. 218-219).

The First Amendment right may specifically be a problem on state-run institutions, where the school financially supports the newspapers. The *Joyner v. Whiting* case in 1973 illustrates this fact. The North Carolina Central University had been an all-black school and Johnnie Joyner was the editor of the campus paper. He had some extreme points of view on desegregation and did not want white students on the newspaper staff, nor did he accept advertisements from white-owned businesses. The university president, Albert Whiting, was afraid that this publication could cost the school its federal funding, so he cut the funds of the newspapers until Joyner moderated his views. Joyner took the case to court, which had to decide if the constitutional right of freedom of speech and of the press is more important than desegregation and integration. The court ruled in favor of Joyner, as his articles did not cause any major disruption. So the university started funding the paper again. The justification of the Federal Court was that the administration didn’t have to allow a school newspaper in the first place. Yet after having created it, they should not cut funding just because they did not like the opinion it stands for (Overbeck & Pasqua, 1983, p. 220).

This case shows that the university may pay for the newspaper, but that this does not mean that it has the right to censor it or to influence the content in a specific way.

Overbeck and Pasqua (1983, p. 222) compare this situation to Frankenstein's monster: "You don't have to create it, but once you do, it's pretty hard to control." Some schools therefore chose another way: They installed a faculty member as publisher, so that the final authority for the publication rested within the hands of the school administration (Overbeck & Pasqua, 1983, p. 222).

Fischer made a clear statement concerning the First Amendment and censorship among student publications in his book *"The Campus Press: Freedom and Responsibility"* (Duscha & Fischer, 1973, p. 61-63):

A public institution will not be protected in the censorship of its student publications, although it insists that they are house organs or teaching vehicles, if the evidence reveals that these publications have not been restricted to these functions or managed according to the models discussed. [...] It is fairly well established that a college or university is not legally the "publisher" of the student publications which it sponsors, and may not censor or unduly influence the contents of those publications, directly or indirectly.

After the turbulent time in the 1970s, it became quiet about school publications. No major court decisions were ruled in the centuries later. This does not mean that there are no longer any problems for student journalists and their newspapers. Nevertheless, in 1988, the case *Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier* caused a great stir within high schools and even colleges of the United States. The Supreme Court ruled that a public school has the right to censor school publications, if they are a non-forum, school-sponsored activity. There must be a reasonable cause for the censoring, for example a disruption within the school. In the *Hazelwood* case, stories about teenage pregnancies and the effects of family divorce on children were censored (English, Hach, & Rolnicki, 1990, p. 302). Since this landmark decision, high school students have been forced to leave their First Amendment rights at the schoolhouse gate.

Other historic court rulings concerning the college student press are for example *Dickey v. Alabama State Board of Education* in 1967, *Antonelli v. Hammond* in 1969, *Trujillo v. Love* in 1971, *Joyner v. Whitning* in 1973, *Kania v. Fordham* in 1983, and *Stanley v. Margrath* in 1983.³ All these cases treat incidents with the student

³Further information about these legal cases can be retrieved from www.splc.org or www.collegemedia.org.

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press and either faculty members, the student government and other student groups, or administrators (College Media Advisers, 2009b, pp. 4-5).

In recent years, court cases about student journalists have become rare. *Kinkaid v. Gibson* was one of a few incidents and was decided in the 6th Circuit in 2001. Administrators at Kentucky State University confiscated the yearbook because they were displeased with the color of the cover amongst other things. Also, the newspaper adviser was removed from his job after refusing to censor content. This was just the beginning of a long juridical battle. The decision though was unexpected: After the lower court had ruled in favor of the school's confiscation, the 6th Circuit issued its decision for student press freedom and reversed the lower court's decision. The trial ended with a victory of the free student press (College Media Advisers, 2009b, p. 7).

The most recent case until publication of this thesis was *Hosty v. Carter*. Margaret Hosty and two other student journalists sued Governor's State University after the dean of the university urged the printer to withhold the issues of the student newspaper until an official had approved the content. The newspaper in question, the *Innovator*, was known for being critical of the administration. The result of the case came very surprisingly as there is an official university policy saying that the newspaper staff "will determine content and format of their respective publications without censorship or advance approval" (Governor's State University Policy, cited in College Media Advisers, 2009b, p. 7). The court ruled in favor of the university dean with the reason that the *Hazelwood* standard limiting the freedom of expression for high school students could also be applied at the collegiate level. In 2006, the U.S. Supreme Court refused to allow an appeal.

In general, the First Amendment applies to public institutions. But what about private schools, as most of the ones analyzed in this thesis? According to the Constitution, private citizens and private institutions (such as universities and colleges) do not have to obey the First Amendment, nor the Fourteenth Amendment (which guarantees freedom of speech for state institutions). As shocking as it may seem, but since private schools are not engaged in state action, they do not need to grant constitutional rights to their students. After all, most private schools guarantee the First Amendment right to their students and publications in the interest of good PR. Several cases showed that censoring student newspapers and free speech lead to a very bad reputation of the school (Overbeck & Pasqua, 1983, pp. 223-225).

What can be done if college publications are being censored? Bohle (1992, p. 41) suggested that the remedy against censorship is not always restraint of the censor, but perhaps education of the censor (which could be an administrator or a faculty adviser). An adviser should not consider it his task to control the content of the newspaper, but see the publication as a forum for students and a place for discussions and freedom of speech. Future court decisions are based on the status of the adviser. If the newspaper was established as a forum for student opinion and if the adviser does only advise and not teach, no censorship of any kind will be allowed (Bohle, 1992, pp. 41-42).

The Student Press Law Center (SPLC) published a Legal Brief⁴ on historic and recent court rulings and their meanings for public and private universities. Hence, the following points were summed up:

- The *Tinker* Standard
 - Student expression must not be censored, unless the administrators and school officials can prove that the publication would result in a material and substantial disruption of normal school activities.
 - Student expression must not be censored, unless the administrators and school officials can prove comprehensible that the publication invades the rights of others
- The *Hazelwood* decision
 - The *Hazelwood* decision does not apply to most college and university newspapers. Nevertheless, it was the starting point for many discussions about censorship and freedom of expression on campuses. In the case *Hosty v. Carter*, the Supreme Court ruled against the student journalists because of the extended *Hazelwood* standard. According to this decision, a public institution has the right to censor student publications, if they are a non-forum, school-sponsored activity.

⁴All rulings and legal precedents on which this brief is based can be reviewed on www.splc.org/legalresearch.asp.

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- Rights of student editors
 - Students have all editorial rights on their publication. School officials and administrators must not exert the power of an official publisher only because they may provide financial sponsorship to the newspaper.
 - The administration must not withdraw funds from a publication, fire editors, confiscate the newspaper, or demand prior review.
 - Nevertheless, officials *can* control non-content based aspects of a student newspaper (for example financial records or hiring policies) (SPLC, 2009a).

Still, all these points cannot be viewed as universal and applicable for all cases. Due to the U.S. legal systems, it is rather unpredictable how a case involving First Amendment rights and institutions of tertiary education might turn out.

3.6.3 Censorship and self-censorship

Censorship and self-censorship are issues that occur mostly with publications that are not fully independent from their host institutions. Real censorship can only be accomplished if it is not the student staff that is in charge of reviewing issues before print and publication (Ingelhart, 1993, p. 95). If the administration is responsible for the content (or even if it just feels responsible or fears it might be held responsible), problems of censorship may occur. Administrators have concerns that controversial topics might be covered. Censorship therefore is disguised as the fear for libelous content (Feldman, 1968, pp. 48-49). “Libel is the publication or broadcast of a false statement of fact that harms an individual’s reputation” (SPLC, 2009b, p. 23). Libel has been a (sometimes sincere, sometimes fallacious) reason for many campus newspapers not to publish numerous things (Ingelhart, 1993, p. 101).

There are many cases (see chapter 3.6.2 “Court cases and rulings”) that indicate that censorship of student publications at state colleges and universities is illegal. Nevertheless, it may be practiced at some institutions (Ingelhart, 1993, p. 95). It is also not said that even though constitutional rights only apply to state-owned institutions, it is allowed to censor publications distributed at private schools without restraint. Freedom of the press is an individual right, guaranteed to individuals such as the editor of

a college newspaper. Still, the situation at private schools is much more difficult, which may also be the reason why hardly any court rulings concerning private institutions can be found (Ingelhart, 1993, p. 98).

The danger of censoring the student press not only lies in the the fact that the issues might be brought to court, but also concerns on-campus relations (Ingelhart, 1993, p. 98). Above all, private institutions rely on adequate enrollment numbers since they are not financially sponsored by the state and depend on tuition money. Causing a censorship scandal can harm a private college or university more than some disliked and unpleasant content might have been able to. Oettinger (1995, p. 9) also found the means of censorship changing over time. Whereas exerting pressure on editors was the common method in the past, newspaper stealing and burning is becoming more and more popular, unfortunately. This can also be seen in very recent cases of newspaper thefts all over the United States.

The SPLC (2009c) calls newspaper thefts “a terribly effective form of censorship.” Each year, thousands of issues are stolen or even burnt to prevent publication of information or opinions with which people disagree. Even though student papers are distributed for free, the corporations lose thousands of dollars when their paper is stolen or destroyed. This also entails problems with advertisers, since they pay for their ads to be read by a certain number of readers. If the newspaper issue never reaches its audience, the ads cannot be read at all (SPLC, 2009c).

The reasons for theft are various. In recent cases, Greek society members at different universities were accused of newspaper thefts if the paper published stories critical of their fraternity or sorority. Other student organizations as well as athletic teams committed this crime for similar reasons. Administrators are especially unsatisfied with papers that are being put out on “Parent’s Weekend” as they don’t want critical issues to be discussed with outsiders (Hiestand, 2005).

Still, it is a difficult case before the law, because taking away property that is free is not considered as stealing. Nevertheless, a theft of 10,000 issues of a newspaper deprives the campus community of valuable information. The price of a good – here the newspaper – has nothing to do with its value. Therefore, some schools have enacted campus conduct codes including sanctions for newspaper thefts. Unfortunately, some colleges failed to do so. In these cases, newspaper thefts remain a complicated issue (Hiestand, 2005).

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But nevertheless, only very few student editors consider legal actions when being pressured to censor or being the victim of a newspaper theft. A high staff turnover contributes to this, as well as the fear of sanctions affecting one's own academic career (Goodman, cited in Oettinger, 1995, p. 11). Recent cases of newspaper thefts occurred at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 2009, at the University of Texas El Paso in 2008, at the University of Tampa in 2008, at Berry College in 2008, at Johns Hopkins University in 2006, at Arkansas State University in 2005, and at Midwestern State University in 2004. And this is only a paucity of the cases that occurred in recent years (SPLC, 2009c).

Different forms of censorship can be seen at colleges all over the United States. Student journalists brought a number of cases to court and won the majority of them. Nevertheless, censorship or prior restraint is not the standard procedure when it comes to the student press. Yet obviously every single case of suppression of opinion is one case too much (Ingelhart, 1993, p. 99).

The topics that are censored most can be divided into three categories according to Nelson (1974, p. 41):

- **Controversial political issues.** Racism, war, students' rights.
- **Criticism of administrations or school policies.** Unfavorable images of the school, critique of sports teams, or general school policies.
- **Life styles and social problems.** Birth control, sex, abortion, divorce, homosexuality, drug and alcohol abuse.

Although Nelson found these categories applying to high school newspapers, they also seem to be true for college publications. A similar list of the most-censored topics was composed by Ingelhart (1993, pp. 96-97).

“But the topic we see more often censored than others is anything perceived as critical of school policies or officials. It doesn't matter how big or little the criticism is. It's interesting because that is exactly what the First Amendment was put in the Constitution to protect against: the government's ability to censor those who are criticizing it. Unfortunately, that's not how school officials see it,” said Mark Goodman, executive director of the Student Press Law Center (SPLC) in an interview (cited in The Forum, 1995, p. 7).

To avoid punishment after publication, many student journalists even exert self-censorship and tend to not cover sensitive and critical issues. This fact is even more crucial as it reveals that some student editors do not even seek controversies with authorities such as the administrative board of their host institutions, but rather go the path of least resistance. That results in a newspaper with exclusively good news and without critical content. Nicholas Johnson, former FCC commissioner, explained the process of self-censorship with this example:

A young reporter writes an exposé, but the editor says, “I don’t think we’re going to run that.” The second time the reporter goes to her editor, the editor says, “I don’t think that’s a good idea.” She doesn’t research and write the story. The third time the reporter has an idea. But she doesn’t go to her editor. The fourth time she doesn’t get the idea (Johnson, cited in Lieberman, 2000, p. 44).

Editors interviewed by Trudy Lieberman (2000, p. 45) for the *Columbia Journalism Review (CJR)* explained that after having had problems caused by critical articles (even if they just give tips to save money when buying a car, which made car-selling advertisers angry and stopped their money flowing), they avoid such issues. Of course, young journalists want to touch people’s lives and make a difference. But after having experienced the trouble they can get in by covering controversial topics, they rather prefer making a difference by treating less “dangerous” issues and go with the mainstream (Lieberman, 2000, p. 48).

Lieberman compared her findings with a study by the PEW Research Center for the People and the Press (PEW, 2000) about self-censorship of journalists. This research study found out that about one quarter of local and national journalists (the survey did not include student reporters and editors) purposely avoided stories that would have been newsworthy. This echoes the findings of Lieberman published in the *CJR*. The reasons for self-censorship among the poll of 206 American reporters were mostly fear from commercial and competitive pressures. Also market pressures play a role in this process and occur when newsworthy stories are not pursued because they are too complex and too complicated for a mass audience. More than one third of the journalists questioned admitted that stories are not pursued when they might harm the news organization’s financial interests (for example by criticizing an important advertising customer). These kinds of stories have an even larger impact when they are pursued, but the tone is significantly softened to avoid punishment as 32 % of local

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reporters and 15 % of reporters for national media admitted to already have done. One of the reasons most mentioned for censoring themselves is peer pressure (for example the fear of embarrassment or potential career damage) admitted by almost half of the journalists questioned. Considering these answers to the PEW study in 2000, it is surprising to see that to many journalists climbing the career ladder seems to be more important than to inform the public about important and newsworthy stories. Nevertheless, it is not clear if these findings can be applied to collegiate reporters and editors as well.

Self-censorship might be the “most pervasive form of censorship” (Nelson, 1974, p. 37). Students learn quickly which topics they can treat without having to discuss with advisers or administrators, and which topics they might consider unacceptable. In his study, Nelson questioned several student editors, who told him that most censorship at student-run papers was self-inflicted. They went to the authorities, asking if they would like to see the story in the newspaper and if the answer was no, the story wouldn’t be printed, without any further questions asked (Nelson, 1974, p. 38).

One possibility to prevent censorship is to include the term “public forum” in the mission statement of the newspaper. This would facilitate a ruling under the *Hazelwood* standard, where no publication can be censored if it is constructed as a public forum for opinions serving the campus community (Trager & Plopper, 1978, pp. 8-9). Still, this does not ensure that there won’t be self-censorship at a newspaper.

A student newspaper is not considered a public forum if it is part of the curriculum. For example if students get an academic credit for working on the newspaper staff, the publication is not seen as public forum, as means of expression open for public opinions, according to court rulings (see chapter 3.6.2 “Court cases and rulings”) (Paxton, 2000, p. 8).

Despite all these little encouraging facts, studies by the College Media Advisers (CMA) and other facilities found out that about two-thirds of the college newspapers at state-owned institutions and about half of the papers at private colleges exist in complete freedom, being “able to publish what it pleases without prior restraint, prior review, censorship, or punishment” (Ingelhart, 1993, p. 100). Of course these numbers fluctuate from year to year and depend on what incidents happen and how the current administrators handle these. But the level of commitment to free speech remains constant (Ingelhart, 1993, p. 100).

To ensure the highest level of independence, it is most important to not only educate student journalists and advisers about their rights and responsibilities, but also to inform school administrators about the value of a free and independent press. If administrators are aware of the positive influence of a free and even critical student press on the campus community, other (financial, editorial) ties to the university become less important. Even for financially independent newspapers, a university that does not value critical reporting can be a threat (for example by withholding information). Whereas for a financially dependent publication, the editorial freedom can be more extended if the host-institution values every kind of informative reporting by the campus publication (Lattimore, 2001). Patricia Osborn accurately prompted newspaper advisers in her guide: “Achieving high standards and self-determination is best accomplished through cooperation and communication, instead of through challenge and censorship” (Osborn, 1998, p. 56).

3.6.4 Newsgathering and the law

Newsgathering is a task that requires thoroughness and stamina. Newsgathering can be especially difficult for student journalists, if they are not allowed to attend university board meetings or don't have access to certain kinds of university-related documents. Every U.S. state has an open meeting law and a public records law that facilitates research for young journalists. However on the other hand, some of these laws are only applicable at state-owned institutions. Students in private schools have to gain their independence through negotiations with administrations and advisers. In general, student journalists have the same professional rights to access information as professional journalists do. They must be given access to public files and meetings (Bohle, 1992, pp. 38, 48). Every single state of the United States and the federal government have freedom of information laws. Whereas individual state laws can vary and have restrictions concerning just exactly what information is publicly accessible, these laws grant all citizen access to a plethora of information (English, Hach & Rolnicki, 1990, pp. 306-307).

A case at Harvard University in 2002 showed that despite legal regulations it is not always that easy for student journalists to access public records. In 2002, Harvard University Campus Police charged two students of stealing \$ 100,000 from a student organization. The reporters of the *Harvard Crimson*, the prestigious daily student newspaper at Harvard University, were denied access to the records, claiming that

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Harvard University police was a private entity and does not need to be subject to the Massachusetts state open records law. The student journalists brought the case to court – and lost. And this is only one case where college journalists were not guaranteed the same rights as professional journalists and where students at private institutions faced disadvantages (Groover, 2005, p. 23).

Groover (2005, p. 23) also mentioned incidents such as rapes and sexual assaults as being hidden at many universities, because they fear a PR disaster if crime records were ever published. Nevertheless, some private institutions “make a remarkable amount of information available, at the least to avoid the charge of excessive secrecy, and because increasingly, private institutions receive some public money and are therefore likely to be more forthcoming about their affairs than they were in the past” (Nesvisky, 2008, p. 103).

Especially campus crime reporting has lead to discussions and court rulings. The related federal law is called the *Clery Act*, named after Jeanne Clery, a Lehigh University student who was raped and murdered in her dorm room in 1986. The parents of the victim found out that several crimes happened on U.S. campuses, which students were not aware of because of information blockage by the university administration. Their commitment to improve security and communication on U.S. campuses resulted in the Crime Awareness and Campus Security Act of 1990, now the *Clery Act*. It requires all colleges and universities to open crime information to public, if they receive federal assistance. Even more, they are required to inform all students immediately of any dangerous threats and emergencies (SPLC, 2009b, p. 3).

Nevertheless, not all post-secondary institutions receive federal funds, and even if they do, they do not always observe the law and students do not always take the issue to court. A lawsuit should at any time be the very last resort, advises the SPLC (2009b, p. 25).

3.7 College newspapers and finance

Students are a very lucrative source of income for local businesses. They are a specific group of buyers and therefore can be targeted by advertising quite easily. For this reason, many college newspapers are financed mostly by advertising. But also classifieds are a very popular financing method among college newspapers as they bring in more

money per square-centimeter than any other advertisement. Especially for private sales of students it seems an appropriate means to look for buyers via classifieds.

According to Paxton (2000, p. 3) most student-run publications receive funding from various sources, including advertising revenue, classifieds, subscription fees on and off campus, student activity fees, or general university funds. This mixture of income sources makes it very difficult to prevent the exertion of influence from these various sources of revenue. Also, for publications at small colleges in rural areas, it is almost impossible to only rely on advertising. Still, a (financially) dependent newspaper at a small college is better than no newspaper at all. The situation of most college papers is also special, because most of them operate in a market without competitors and therefore have a monopoly position for information within their community.

The earliest college papers were independent, operated with a very small staff and got their revenue uniquely through advertising. When U.S. higher education facilities became more and more numerous and started to become publicity-supported institutions, also the financing of their student-run publications changed. They relied more and more on university-donated money, such as the student activity fee, that also sponsors sport events and other extracurricular activities within the school. With the university money, there also came boards to oversee the publications and the use of the funding. Traditionally, publication boards were composed by both, faculty members and students. Their tasks vary widely from school to school. Sometimes they only oversee the production without exerting too much influence, but sometimes they even get to select the editors and preview content prior to publication (Duscha & Fischer, 1973, p. 10).

Most college newspapers however are funded or financially sponsored by the institution at which they are published. This puts the editorial staff in a critical position, because independence cannot be guaranteed. But: “funding by the colleges [can] not be the basis for content controls” (Ingelhart, 1993, p. ix). Unfortunately there are no recent figures available, but in 1993, even though a large group of scholastic publications became incorporated to flee school control, 95 % of the student-run publications remained within the school and accepted college funding. This funding happens mostly through student activity fees paid by every student enrolled or through an allocation of college funds. Ingelhart considers the student fees as an equivalent of the subscription revenues of professional newspapers. A considerably large amount of revenue also comes from the printing of classifieds and job-advertisements (1993, p. 9). It also

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helps that at most publications the news staff such as reporters and photographers (and sometimes even editors) are not paid or only paid very little.

Nevertheless, the great majority of the newspapers published at U.S. colleges and universities remains within the authority of the institution who also provides funding. The reasons for this can be variable, but in general it can be said that becoming incorporated entails a financial burden that is hard to bear for many publications. Especially in small campus locations there is not enough advertising revenue available to finance the newspaper. The sale of subscriptions is no alternative for most of these publications, since this would cut the amount of advertising again, since the total circulation of almost 100 % (for free distributed newspapers) surely could not be met with a paid publication (Ingelhart, 1993, p. 18).

So why do more and more student-run newspapers make the difficult step of incorporation? Especially where public institutions are concerned, several court cases have shown that the university or college cannot be considered as the editor of the publication and is therefore not responsible for any libel cases or other legal problems. Ingelhart (1993, p. 19) considers the wish for a “truly independent critical voice” as the reason for incorporation of publications at public institutions.

Actually, there is no legal, philosophical, or practical reason not to allocate student fee monies to the campus press. Failure to do so leads to financial problems for both the university and the publication. Use of student fee money for a well-written, well-edited, reasonable, and intelligent campus newspaper is a positive way to provide for freedom of expression and effective communications in an ongoing and stable manner. This is educational achievement (Ingelhart, 1993, p. 47).

Incorporation, however, also means a loss for the college itself. It loses an important learning method for journalism students and also for others. In addition to this, a major reason for separation of the publication from the school would not be eliminated as the public would still identify the school with the paper, even if it no longer has any ties to the college or university. To eliminate embarrassing identification with the institution can therefore not be a reason for separation, since this would not be stopped (Ingelhart, 1993, p. 63).

The majority of the incorporated newspapers in the U.S. are registered as non-profit corporations. This means the relationship to the host-university entitles them to this special position. It does not mean that they are independent from the college or university (Ingelhart, 1993, p. 64). Most student journalists would prefer incorporation and financial independence. As a matter of fact, many administrators would prefer this, too. But on small campuses, this is simply not feasible. Mencher (1970, p. 28) composed alternative plans to financial independence, which should grant the publication as much editorial independence as possible, even though it receives financial assistance from its host-institution:

- **Allocation of a single sum** to the publications board.
- **Bulk-subscription** of the newspaper. The university pays a certain amount in return for a campus newspaper. It is legally the subscriber of the publication, which it then distributes on campus for free.
- **Advertising contract.** The university pays a certain amount in return for advertising space. Even though a large proportion of the news is campus- and university-related, there are topics that might be important, but that will not or cannot be published as straight news.

But nevertheless, if the paper is funded by the university or through advertising and other methods, it remains valid that “the type of support and supervision supplied by the university is unimportant, so long as it is not applied in a discriminatory fashion or used as a censorship device” (Duscha & Fischer, 1973, pp. 70-71).

4 Theoretical foundations of the research study

4.1 System theory

System theory is part of many scientific disciplines. Biologists speak of systems as well as physicians do. In this thesis, this term is meant as the theory of (social) systems according to Niklas Luhmann. The word “system” means a structured, organized whole which is composed of several parts, but is more than just the sum of all these parts. A system has a specific quality that can’t be explained by just summing up the parts involved. All these systems are permanently in exchange with their environment(s). This also implicates that every system has closed boundaries that constitute the border between the system itself and the environment(s). This environment(s) consist themselves of several systems, which are again environments to each other (Weber, 2003, pp. 202-206). A system operates in operative closure and structural coupling (Luhmann, 2002, p. 267).

Luhmann (1984, pp. 16-18) also mentioned four categories of systems: machines, biological, psychic, and social systems. This distinction is elementary for his theory, because it declares that not everything can be a system. In addition to this, Luhmann describes systems as autopoietic, which means they construct their components from themselves.

Bertalanffy (1951), from whom Luhmann derived a large piece of his work, differentiated between open and closed systems. Closed systems do not interact with their environment and are able to achieve the state of ultimate balance. After once having reached this state, they do not and cannot change any more. Open systems on the other hand are in continuous interaction and reciprocity with their environment(s). So those systems can only reach the state of homeostasis, but not of ultimate balance.

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This state is variable and temporary, the exchange with other systems and the environment(s) leads to a dynamic process within the system itself (Kneer & Nassehi, 1994, pp. 21-22).

The question that is targeted by the system theory is not *what* is constructed and observed but *how* it is constructed and observed (Berghaus, 2004, p. 29). This observation also relates to the influences of its environment and all the elements that cross the boundaries and are processed within the system (Kohring, 2004, p. 186).

The target of system theory is “to relate the parts of society to the whole and to relate one part to another. Almost as common is the specification of how it does this relating – namely, by seeing one part as performing a function for or meeting a need or requirement of the whole society or some part of it” (Merton, 1957, p. 19). Escher (2001, p. 64) defined the theory of social systems of Niklas Luhmann more as a theory of the relationships between a system and its environment(s) than as a theory about functional-structural aspects of systems.

4.1.1 Social systems

Every social contact can be described as a social system (Kneer & Nassehi, 1994, p. 33). Social systems, such as for example mass media or journalism, are not made from people. People are not systems; they don't fit in the theoretical scheme of Luhmann, because their type of system is different. A human being is considered as a psychic system. Social systems on the contrary are composed of communication and communication only. People are not part of it; they rather are part of different types of systems. Quoting Luhmann, system theory is not a suitable concept for researching actions of human beings or their relationship to each other. Hence, an actor can't be an element of a social system (Weber, 2003, p. 208). According to Escher (2001, p. 63), human beings can only be considered as relevant for the system with their commitment and acting for the system. Escher referred to Knorr (1984) when he said that only roles and system-relevant actions and correlating actions can be elements of social systems. The core characteristic of social systems is that it is not primarily important what a specific individuum does, how he acts and decides, but how the social system is related to other (sub-)systems and how it fulfills its specific functions in the society (Löffelholz, Quandt, & Thomas, 2004, p. 181).

Parts of a society do not relate to each other because of individual interests or because they are forced to, but rather by free will and a consensus within their normative reference framework. This fact ensures the order within a society and the maintenance of social systems. But these are not the only elements that maintain a system. Several structures and functions have to be fulfilled to keep up a social entity (Kneer & Nassehi, 1994, pp. 35-36).

Every time when social actions are related to each other, a system emerges. All actions that relate to one another in a logical way are part of the system. All actions that do not relate this way belong to the environment of the system, as well as all other entities and events do. The differentiation between what belongs to a system and what belongs to the environment is, besides the maintenance of a system, its biggest problem. Social systems are not given entities, but constitute themselves every time communication happens by drawing a distinction between system and environment and setting clear boundaries. Something can only be *either* system *or* environment, but never both at the same time and in the same context (Kneer & Nassehi, 1994, p. 38). Social systems therefore can be described as “self-referential, self-organizational, autonomous, autopoietic (= self-(re-)productive), dynamic and plastic forms of specific meanings” (Görke & Scholl, 2006, p. 646). They are operatively closed and can enhance their performance by interpenetrating other systems or being themselves interpenetrated. So the closeness of social systems does not at all mean that a system cannot be related to other (sub-)systems (Weischenberg, 1995, p. 101).

Every system constitutes its identity through the setting of boundaries which results in its own meaning and dynamic identity. This happens through a selection of possibilities, of possible meanings, and of communications. Each system also reduces the complexity (defined as the plethora of possibilities) of its environment to maintain its specific function (Görke & Scholl, 2006, p. 646). For this, they need a binary code to determine whether an element can be included in the system or whether it belongs to its environment. Only this differentiation makes self-perception of systems even possible (Donges, Leonarz & Meier, 2001, p. 115). Still, every perception and self-perception leaves an unmarked space. This unmarked space can only be filled by a perception of a higher order. But this is difficult to achieve, because “man kann nicht sehen, dass man nicht sieht, was man nicht sieht”⁵ (Luhmann, 1997, p. 1131).

⁵“One cannot see that one cannot see what one does not see.” Translation by the author.

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In addition to this, each social system operates in a specific hierarchy (although this term is considered doubtful according to Görke & Scholl, 2006, p. 647). Hendrickson and Tankard (1997, pp. 41-42) discussed the notion of hierarchy in system theory as follows:

The individual's experiences are characterized by his or her interaction with four levels of environmental influence: the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, and the macrosystem. The microsystem is any of the small systems an individual regularly inhabits. This might include the family, the neighborhood, the school, the work place, the church, or other organizations. The mesosystem is represented by the interaction between and among microsystems. This could include whether a family interacts with the surrounding neighborhood or is isolated from it, whether families interact with a school, or even if the school is an integral part of the neighborhood. The exosystem is any of the system that influences us but which we do not directly inhabit. These systems often exist at the community level, such as in the court system and law enforcement, city councils, and school boards. The macrosystem includes "the broad ideological and institutional patterns" of a particular culture, according to Garbarino (1982, p. 13), and exists at the national and international level. This could include such characteristics as national social policy or the level of development of a society.

All these systems and subsystems "rely on the existence of the other subsystems to carry out particular functions" (Mingers, 1999, p. 37). Including this theoretical background, the student newspaper might serve as microsystem. The mesosystem is represented by the interactions with other systems. The macrosystem finally could be the university or college itself, the host-institution of the before mentioned student publication. The problem occurring when trying to apply this theoretical point of view is that the college or university could also serve and be seen as microsystem itself (like the school is an example for a microsystem in Hendrickson's work) (Hendrickson, 1997, p. 41). A social system is always composed of several subsystems, that influence each other and rely on each other (Kunczik & Zipfel, 2005, p. 68). The university also relies on the campus newspaper as subsystem and vice versa. If the publication would not exist, the host-institution would have to find other means of publication for information relevant to the community.

In his works, Luhmann also discussed mass media as social systems. The unique function of media is "to enable and direct society's self-perception" (Luhmann, 1996, p. 174). This fact can also be considered true for college media. They enable and direct

the self-perception of the community in which they exist, their system-specific code is – as it is for all other (mass) media – information and non-information (even though this code is considered doubtful in the German speaking scientific community, see Görke & Scholl, 2006, p. 650) and they therefore need to set their boundaries against the environment.

This border between a system and its environment is especially interesting for the case of college newspapers, where the editors themselves or their communicative actions are part of two systems: the newspaper and the university. They can, with reference to Luhmann (1996), never be part of both at the same time and be exposed as students and reporters in the same moment, but when they are part of the university-system, they also are part of the environment of the newspaper-system and vice versa. This makes the position of college journalists within the campus community quite difficult and complicated.

The newsroom itself as social system is common in communication science and journalism research (see Rühl, 1969). For the subject of this thesis it is interesting that the college newspaper itself is seen as a system, of course. But the university can be seen in two different ways, depending on the point of view. For the college newspaper newsroom, the university might be the environment of this system. For the university itself, the newsroom may also be a sub-system of the larger system “university.” These two differing points of view will lead to fruitful discussions about the relationship between these two systems.

Social systems also reduce the complexity within them. They do so by eliminating possible options. Not all actions and situations can exist within a social system. Only very few of them can be expected. Kneer and Nassehi (1994, p. 41) use the example of a dentist visit. Though the patient and the dentist can talk about a great variety of topics during the visit, in reality the number of options, actions, and situations within this system is very limited. One cannot expect to be served a three-course-meal during a dental visit. This is the way social systems reduce complexity by limiting the number of options. This serves the orientation of the members of a system. On the other hand, the environment is always much more complex than a system.

System theorists also speak about the control of systems using the thought model of cybernetics. This model describes the relationship between the controller and the controlled. Cybernetics also state that the controlled always also controls the controller. It is a mutual relationship (Kneer & Nassehi, 1994, pp. 23-24), which can also be

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applied to the example of college journalism, where both entities, the college and the newspaper, depend on each other and are tied by a mutual relationship of giving and taking. Both provide valuable service to the other and therefore also are in a position of control.

In addition to this, there is a differentiation within social systems, which divides them into three possibilities. Luhmann distinguished between interactions, organizations and societies. **Interactions** come about by actions of people. They experience and notice each other. The example of Kneer and Nassehi is a seminar at the university, where all the actions of all the people involved in and present at this seminar build the system, whereas everything that happens outside the seminar room belongs to the environment of this system. With the end of the class, the system dissolves (1994, p. 42).

A membership in an **organization** on the other hand is pinned on certain conditions. It is a formal act to enter or exit this kind of system. A university may be seen as an organization system, since there is a formal procedure necessary to be included in the organization (Kneer & Nassehi, 1994, p. 42-43).

The **society** is the third differentiation of social systems and involves all interaction systems and organization systems, without being considered as an interaction or organization system itself. It is the biggest entity in Luhmann's differentiation and unites the two smaller entities to a whole (Kneer & Nassehi, 1994, p. 43).

When analyzing news organizations with the help of Luhmann's theory of social systems, it is helpful to start the analysis with the assumption of communicative (news making) decisions as a basis. Concerning the distinction of Luhmann, the university itself can be considered as an organization, whereas the college newspaper might be a system of interactions that dissolves when all editors and other staff leave the newsroom. Both systems relate to each other and are in a constant form of exchange.

4.1.2 Self-monitoring of social systems

Journalism as a system monitors and observes the society. Or as is the case in this thesis: College journalism monitors and observes the campus community. According to the theory of social systems this always leaves a blind spot in the perception of what

seems to be reality. The observer never sees everything that he is supposed to observe, because he is part of the reality he tries to monitor. The perception of the “whole” can only be achieved from a higher level, from outside the system. But this perception also leaves an unmarked space that can only be filled from another level, which leads to an endless regress (Berghaus, 2004, pp. 30, 76, 273-274). Therefore, self-monitoring is always paradox.

This fact is also important for Kneer and Nassehi (1994, p. 100-108) when they speak about monitoring of systems, which follows eight primary characteristics: First, “monitoring” or “observing” is a very abstract term. Not only human beings can observe, but also systems and other entities are able to do so. Second, monitoring does not establish a contact between the system and the environment. Third, every act of observation is related to a differentiation like for example right and wrong, big and small, true and false, or – for the case of the media – information and not information. Fourth, no system can observe itself without being confronted with a blind spot. The only possibility is the fifth attribute, namely to observe the observation, which cannot take place by the system itself but by a higher entity in a more privileged position. But this observation of the observation leaves another blind spot and so on and so forth. The sixth characteristic is that the observation of the observation leads to a change in the understanding of the world and of reality. This paradox of observation is the seventh element in the list of characteristics concerning the monitoring by (social) systems. A paradox contains two values without being able to clearly eliminate one of them. So decision making is not possible. As an example, Kneer and Nassehi (1994, p. 105) mentioned the paradox of the Cretan Epimenides who once made the statement: “All Cretans are liars.” As he himself is a Cretan, this statement cannot be true nor false. What is true is false and vice versa. This is also the case for the self-monitoring of social systems. If they try to observe the whole, they have to include themselves and therefore produce a paradox of two values that cannot be solved. The eight and last element of this description is the self-referentiality of the single elements. This means that everything that is said by this theory about monitoring is also true for the theory itself.

To connect this topic with the subject of this thesis, college newspapers are always confronted with the problem of the blind spot in self-perception and self-monitoring, because the system of the newspaper can also be viewed as a sub-system of the university, which should be monitored itself. A complete monitoring is not possible, neither for the newspaper itself, nor for the university, as there always has to be a higher entity

to eliminate blind spots within the systems, but which also have blind spots themselves in their self-perception.

4.1.3 The combination of system- and player-oriented approach

The mainstream of journalism research is conducted on the theoretical basis of Luhmann's theory of social systems. Nonetheless, more and more researchers are looking at this theoretical approach with a critical eye. The main point of critique is the neglecting of the journalist, the actor in the system (Neuberger, 2004, p. 275). Also the theoretical approach of this thesis in combination with the focus and methods seem to be contradictory, as special emphasis will be placed on the journalistic actor as well. With reference to several renowned researchers, this contradiction only exists at a first glance. Christoph Neuberger (2004, pp. 274-275) for example advocated a combination of these two different approaches which serve the gain of knowledge. According to him, the theory of Luhmann cuts journalism research in two pieces and makes a complete view on the field impossible, because it closes its eyes to the journalist. Even if embedded in a system, the journalist is still the player who takes the actions.

Also Irene Neverla (1998, pp. 53-62) spoke of the "rediscovery of the individual," yet stated in the same place that this individual, the journalist, should not be seen standing alone, but in a systemic context and connection. Though the individual journalist and his actions are important, it all happens within the boundaries of a social system, which must not be neglected by journalism research. In addition to this, Gerhards and Neidhardt (1993) also approved this theoretical connection of approaches "um die Mängel beider Theorieperspektiven durch die jeweils andere Perspektive zu beseitigen."⁶ By combining a system- and a player-oriented approach, a broader and more complete view of the research subject.

In the empirical part of this thesis, the actor is accorded a prominent place in research. With reference to the authors mentioned before, this method is combinable with the system theory, as Weber (2002) already did in his study "Was steuert Journalismus?", where he tried to determine subjective attitudes and feelings of single actors and established the connection to his system-oriented approach later on.

⁶"eliminate the shortcomings of both theoretical perspectives with each other's perspective." Translation by the author

As Neuberger stated: “Soziale Systeme prägen [...] zwar Akteure, doch sie determinieren sie nicht gänzlich”⁷ (2004, p. 277). Despite being part of a system, the actor will always remain important, because it is him who takes the actions which sustain the system.

4.2 Functions of mass media

Just like professional newspapers, college publications serve functions for their system and the environment(s). According to Dünser (1979, p. 31), functions are in general “erwartete Leistungen aus normativen Basiserwartungen.”⁸ There is a specific set of functions that have to be fulfilled to sustain a social system and to keep it stable.

When the publications studied are considered as media of internal communication and not as mass media, the functions differ slightly (see chapter 4.2 “Functions of mass media”). However, when student newspapers are considered as mass media, the following functions have to be fulfilled to ensure that the system remains stable:

FUNCTIONS OF MASS MEDIA

Social Functions	Political Functions	Economic Functions
Informational Function		
socializing function	creation of publicity	circulation function
social orientation function	expressive function	regenerative function
recreational function	socializing/educating function	authority function
integration function	controlling function	
social environment	political environment	economic environment
Social System		

Ill. 1, Burkart 2004, p. 382

⁷“Social systems shape actors, but they don’t determine them completely.” Translation by the author.

⁸“expected efforts derived from normative basic assumptions.” Translation by the author

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Also Robert H. Bohle (1992, p. 1) attributed almost the same functions to school newspapers: “Newspapers, like the other mass media, serve society in four ways: They inform, entertain, influence and contribute.”

Mitchell (1940, p. 314) put it in the following words, even though this paragraph has to be read with the year of publication (1940) in mind, at least some functions mentioned might still be the same nowadays:

Make the Paper Serve the School. A newspaper’s primary function is to work for the good of its community. The school paper’s community is the school and possibly the parents of all the students. Your school paper could well take as its fundamental aim, quoting William Rockhill Nelson, “the building up of the material and moral interests” of the school. This aim should not be conceived in any narrow sense; it is not necessary to suppress or distort any important news. An educational institution is one of the most important places in a community and it is brimming over with human interest. Not only students but adults in the community are interested in what happens there. The school publication should be a publication of, by, and for the students.

The service function is still important for student media and will be explained in the course of this thesis. Different from other scholars, and possibly depending on the time where his work emerged, Mitchell (1940, p. 315) saw a responsibility that lies with student journalists: to make the paper “a decisive, positive factor for the betterment of the schools.” Even though he claimed that no important event should be suppressed from being published, he saw the primary functions in the publication of a positive image and in restoring order on campus. It should “create good feeling” rather than “to forestall or overcome bad” (Mitchell, 1940, p. 316).

For this thesis, the political functions of the media will be in the center of attention. Yet there are other important functions (which may also apply to college newspapers) that will be further explained in the following part of the thesis.

4.2.1 **The controlling function**

The controlling function of mass media is part of the political functions. The most important condition for a critical press is independence of political and other powers. In this case, the independence of the university is the indispensable prerequisite for a college press that wants to fulfill its functions in society (Burkart, 2004, pp. 381-382). This independence must also include the freedom of speech, the freedom of newsgathering, the freedom of access to important information, and of course the freedom of publication (Ronneberger, 1974, p. 203). Also Voltmer (1999, p. 52) wrote about the importance of independence for the controlling function of mass media, but also mentioned that especially partisan media might call for the fulfillment of promises among the institutions and persons in question.

Nevertheless, independence is a critical term when it comes to college and university student newspapers and their controlling function (see chapter 2.2.4 “Independence”). Many of them cannot survive as they are being published at small schools in rural areas with little possibilities for advertising revenue. Still, campus newspapers serve important functions, above all the controlling function.

Control is closely related to the monitoring role of media and one of the most fundamental tasks of newspapers. Media have to be aware of what is happening in the world. They have to supervise all activities with relevance to the target group of the specific media. The most important task is to gather, process, and publish news in an unbiased and reliable way (Nordenstreng, 2006).

The fulfilling of the controlling functions by the media is an essential sign for a democratic society. The publication of criticism correlates with the expressive function, which will be explained in the following chapter. Exerting control also means to have control over the situations and actions that are criticized. This might at first glance not be the case for media. But although mass media do not have the direct possibility to impose sanctions for different actions (Burkart, 2004, pp. 395-396), in most cases even the publication or the fear of the people concerned that some information could be made public leads to a change of behavior (Dünser, 1979, p. 41). But to criticize and to control is a very expensive and time-consuming task. It needs journalists that have the means and skills to actively search for information that might not be voluntarily presented to them by the authorities.

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Also Felix Dünser (1979, pp. 34, 36, 40-41) considered the “function of political control” as he called it, as one of the central functions of media. Like Burkart and other scholars, Dünser considered the independence of the media to be the most important factor that guarantees the possibility to fulfill the controlling function. Although journalists have no special position in society (they have no privileges compared to ordinary citizens), they are often the only group of people who deal professionally with (political or other) institutions without, ideally, being dependent on them. Importantly, he added that this function of control is not only needed via political parties or organizations, but also for other organizations that participate in political decisions or are part of a public life (Voltmer, 1999, p. 50).

Langenbucher and Glotz (1993, p. 29) on the other hand did not see the journalists in the role of controlling and criticizing. They should only be moderators of criticism, specialists of monitoring the exchange of opinions in society. They are not (or should not be) in a position to criticize; this is not their “public task.” Control and criticism should only be exerted by third parties, such as (non-governmental) institutions, organizations, or the readers themselves.

Factors that can disrupt the controlling function of the media are for example the interventions of (governmental or public) institutions or social groups, media concentration, economic factors, a dearth of resources, or the (changing) political culture in general (Dünser, 1979, pp. 42-48). Critique and control is no continuous attribute of newspapers or media in general. It manifests when certain events happen or certain topics come up. Being critical and fulfilling the controlling function are expensive tasks for media. It does not only cost a lot of money, but also a considerable amount of time to investigate thoroughly. In more and more newsrooms, neither money nor time is there to fulfill these important functions of the media (Voltmer, 1999, pp. 50-51).

All these facts can also be applied to college newspapers. They need to fulfill a controlling and correcting function for the political environment of their system: the university and all its components (student parliament, administration, student body in general, lectors, etc.). As seen previously, college newspapers have a considerably large impact on the campus community. Their distribution is widespread and they are read by a considerably large part of the students, faculty members, administrators, and other staff.

4.2.2 Other important functions of mass media

Among the political functions of the mass media, the controlling function is not the only one that is important. Also the creation of **publicity** deserves further explanation. Publicity only exists because of media. Information is made public by the mass media. Within a social system, like a university, changes have to be made public to ensure the stability of the system and to maintain the democratic process. But there are also dysfunctional elements connected to this function of creating publicity: An information overload can lead to the exact contrary. The audience can't handle too much information. So the information is not processed and does not reach the readers (Burkart, 2004, pp. 391-392).

The fundamental role of media is, according to James Curran (2005, p. 120), the role of providing **information** for the public. Media are supposed to select from a massive amount of events and publish those, that are "newsworthy." Most of all, they are supposed to tell the truth. Curran also mentioned the problem of objectivity within the news. Simply presenting both sides of a story does not lead to truth in news, but often biases the picture of an event or issue among the public. In this point, Curran agreed with Wildenmann and Kaltenfleiter (1965, p. 22), who also said that complete objectivity cannot be achieved by one media, but only by the diversity of all different media. They all present individual points of view and as a whole, they provide objectivity.

A piece of information is informative, when it enlarges the knowledge of a person or reduces his subjective lack of knowledge. Information can only be considered as such when it contains something that is new and not already known (Burkart, 2004, p. 402). Concerning the information function, Robert W. McChesney (2000, p. 2) criticized that this fundamental function of media – information – is not fulfilled any more. Especially in the United States, McChesney saw a "democracy without citizens" and a media landscape and media system that acts anti-democratic and does not provide enough (or the right and true) information to assure that the citizens can make use of their right to participate in the democracy. He saw the reason for this development above all in the increasing concentration among media organizations and companies. They all act exclusively upon economic principles, because the production of merit goods is not desirable and lucrative any more.

Criteria that describe the accurate fulfilling of the information function are completeness, objectivity, and comprehensibility of the information published (Dünser, 1979, p. 35; Burkart, 2004, pp. 402-412). The criterion of objectivity has been treated like the “sacred cow” of high quality journalism. But this call for objectivity is exactly what has led to several discussions in recent years, considering this criterion as the biasing factor of the news. Although Dünser considered objectivity as “Ablehnung bewusster Manipulation”⁹ (1979, p. 35), objectivity nowadays is often understood as the “unbiased” publication of both sides of a story, which unavoidably leads to news bias if for every matter two opposing positions are presented to the reader (Curran, 2005, pp. 130-131).

Concerning the role of college newspapers on campus, the **orientation function** of these publications also seems to be highly important. This function is very close to the socialization function of media and means the supply of information, which leads to a better orientation of the readers in a more and more complex world and helps them to solve problems more efficiently (Burkart, 2004, p. 386). They provide models for people’s behavior by offering experiences of other people living in the same community (Ronneberger, 2002, p. 62). Especially for college-freshmen, this function seems to apply in a particularly strong way, because they change their place of residence, their habits, and their social environment abruptly when entering college.

Another important function is the **integration function** of mass media for the social system. In a world, which consists of many different groups with different interests, it is important that there are media that produce and ensure integration of the society. This is necessary, so that the system remains stable and does not collapse. To fulfill this function, the media have to communicate socially accepted behavioral patterns and norms to provide orientation for the readers (Ronneberger, 1985, p. 5). Maletzke (1984, p. 139) put these functions into simpler words when he stated that media have to ensure that the reader identifies with the society as a whole and sees himself as a part of it. This is especially important as there are a lot of different groups living on campus. Yet they should all feel as a part of the same system: the university. In the USA, the connection to the “Alma Mater” is very close; alumni often stay in touch with their university and its network for their whole life. This can only be possible if there is a strong sense of community among the students, which could also be a result of a strong and integrating student press.

⁹“rejection of intentional manipulation” Translation by the author.

The **expressive function** is very close in meaning to the function of creating publicity. Mass media should serve as mouthpiece for all different social groups within the system. Obviously, this is a normative point of view and very difficult to achieve in reality. But journalists are generally seen as middlemen between the social groups and the audience in general. They have to ensure that ideally all groups accepted in a democracy can make use of the media as a mouthpiece for their interests (Burkart, 2004, p. 393-394).

Furthermore, the **socializing function** must not be omitted from the important functions of the media, especially for college publications. For many students the transition into college poses to be a difficult period full of changes to which they need to adapt. It is not always easy for everybody to become integrated in a new environment or group or to socialize quickly. Therefore the socializing function of college newspapers seem highly important, because they transport general norms of behavior and topics for conversations, which make it easier for new members of a group to socialize and to integrate.

Interestingly, Bohle (1992, p. 1) also mentioned “influence” as a function of mass media. He refers to the expression of a certain opinion and the attempt to “influence a person or group to take action or support a philosophical stance that the newspaper believes is right. A vigorous newspaper can bring about many changes in a community – or on campus for that matter – by exerting pressure through its editorials and news coverage.”

Arnold and Kriegbaum (1966, p. 5) added **service** to the functions of publications and especially school publications. Surprisingly, they considered this function as separate from the information function. A publication should provide useful information about events happening in the respective community. This function is particularly interesting for college newspaper, since students do not really have an alternative news source besides the campus publication (and its web-presence) from which they can draw information. It is therefore more important for college newspapers than for general interest media to fulfill the service function since they have a monopoly position on campus.

Other functions that cannot be elaborated upon further within this thesis are for instance the **education function**. Burkart saw this function primarily related to education about political processes and events. In the case of college newspapers, education can also mean education about school government and school politics as

well as general events in the community. Also **entertaining** is an important function of mass media. Media serve as means to forget normal life and escape into a fictional world. Mass media also provide a forum and produce publicity for certain people and events that are considered newsworthy. Also the economic functions of the media should be mentioned: the **circulation function** (which considers the circulation of knowledge, but also of money and goods), the **regeneration function** (which provides regeneration in the form of education and information to motivate people to work) and the **governing function** (to legitimate the way society is organized) (Burkart, 2004, pp. 382-402).

4.3 The watchdog-role

The Watchdog: Colleges and universities may be institutions of learning, but they can also be hotbeds of corruption and scandal. Some undertake questionable research; some misuse state funds; some employ sexual predators. On many campuses, the student newspaper is the only institution able to investigate and report such matters (Kanigel, 2006, p. 7).

Watchdog-reporting has a very long tradition in American journalism. It is seen as the guarantor of democracy within the U.S. “Of all the established functions of the press in American public life, the watchdog role is among the most hallowed and, at the same time, the least securely institutionalized in the daily mission of the contemporary news organization” (Bennett & Serrin, 2005, p. 196).

Bennett and Serrin (2005, p. 169) defined the watchdog-role of journalists as “(1) independent scrutiny by the press of the activities of government, business, and other public institutions, with an aim toward (2) documenting, questioning and investigating those activities, in order to (3) provide publics and officials with timely information on issues of public concern.” They also added that this should be the daily work of every journalist. Unfortunately, the watchdog-role often stays a loose concept in research and in practice. The control of power does not take place because of varying reasons (Bennett & Serrin, 2005, pp. 169-170).

This function is the most unevenly performed [...]. Reporters, more often than not, heavily rely upon the help of powerful institutions, go through the motions of acting adversarial without affecting substance, and are distracted from the public interest by profit-minded news organizations and the changing demands for advancing journalistic careers (Cook, 2005, p. 118).

Like all media, college newspapers should be “fearless watchdogs, vigilantly examining the exercise of power and protecting the public from wrongdoing” (Curran, 2005, p. 120). In addition to this, Curran (2005, p. 129) considered the watchdog-role of journalism as falsely confined to the state. The state is seen as the only seat of power, but this view is too narrow. Curran demanded a broader perspective of the watchdog-role and the inclusion of other organizations as objects of control by the journalistic “watchdog.” The state itself is already subject to control by the opposition, but also by the constitution, non governmental organizations, and so on.

In the case of this thesis, the “seat of power” and object of control can, obviously, also be the university, the administration, the rector’s office, and other institutions within this system. Other organizations besides the state (such as universities for example) are subject to less control and public criticism and therefore need the media as an instance of control. The watchdog-role should be “updated” and expanded to such an extent to be able to adjust to the “decline of the national state” and the rise of other institutions (Curran, 2005, p. 129).

Watchdog journalism has not been able to keep up pace with the change in society and with a growing need for this kind of reporting. Whereas institutions of society (not only governmental, but also post-secondary institutions of education such as colleges and universities) are becoming more powerful, are multiplying in number, and becoming richer, the opposite is happening with watchdog journalism. News corporations devote less and less money to investigative and watchdog reporting, because it is expensive and takes more time than media managers in a fugacious and short-lived world want to spend on one single story. If reporters lack institutional backing, it is almost impossible for them to fulfill the watchdog-role (Graves, 2008, p. 34).

A problem might also be that this role of the media is so hard to define. Every newspaper states that it engages in watchdog journalism, whereas only very few editors would be able to describe thoroughly what this kind of journalism means in everyday work. Murrey Marder (1998) tried to describe it by addressing the day to day work of a reporter. He should not be satisfied with the information he is provided with

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by his sources, but should always wonder whether he should ask or have asked other questions. It is not enough to only listen to what people are saying and take notes. This would be the work of a stenographer. A watchdog journalist also has a responsibility to the reader and the society as a whole. The key elements of watchdog reporting are listening very carefully and above all asking penetrating questions at every level of newsgathering, no matter if the reporter is asking for information from a simple employee or interviewing the President of the United States.

The function of watchdog journalists is above all to “expose little-publicized or hidden activities to public scrutiny” (Bennett & Serrin, 2005, p. 169). The authors described the different possibilities of a watchdog reporter as follows:

Whether it involves merely documenting the behaviors of authorities and asking them challenging questions, or digging up evidence of corruption or deception, the idea of independent journalistic scrutiny of social, economic, and governmental institutions [such as also universities; note from the author] is commonly regarded as fundamental for keeping authorities in line with the values and norms that charter the institutions they manage. The watchdog function may also alter publics to issues that can affect their opinions and their modes of engagement in public life (Bennett & Serrin, 2005, p. 170).

These comments seem very important also for college media. The university board is a very powerful institution within a university of which the students might sometimes have the impression that they do not really have any powerful means against it. But with regards to the controlling function of the media, often the publication itself is an effective instrument to change the behavior of institutions and organizations, although media do not seem to have any official possibilities for sanctions versus for instance the university. So college newspapers do have the power to alert the public (the students) and to establish transparency concerning the actions of the university.

In general it can be said that serving as a watchdog should prevent the public from wrongdoing. This is only possible by informing them and telling the truth about all “newsworthy” events. Its definition is closely connected to investigative reporting or even “muckraking.” Curran saw the media as a “two-way channel of communication between government and governed” (Curran, 2005, p. 121). This quotation can also be adapted to the subject of this thesis: College newspapers are a two-way channel of communication between the university and its students. Information flows from both sides: from the university to the students and vice-versa. It is not realistic to see thes

media as a simple publication organ of the rector's office; it's also and maybe above all a mouthpiece of the students.

Curran also considered the picture of the watchdog journalist, an investigative reporter who "pierces the veil of secrecy" (Curran, 2005, p. 121), as a romantic illusion:

The investigative journalist is often responding to an initiative from power holders, and reproducing pre-culled information. He or she is the outlet rather than prime mover of investigative stories, responding to process within the state or political domain. (Curran, 2005, p. 121)

Above all, watchdog journalism lives through its informants, its whistleblowers, its allies, other political, social, economic organizations connected to the media (Bennett & Serrin, 2005, p. 175). According to Curran, the media has to be seen in a broader perspective, within a system with political, economic, social environments that influence the way journalists publish news. This is the case for a broad mass of media. Curran (2005, pp. 121-122) also spoke of "prestige dailies" that do not provide a vertical, but a horizontal link between groups, elites of a society. If this could also be the case for college daily newspapers, will be seen in the empirical part of this thesis. Yet when journalists are the only ones who raise concern and criticize, the role of the watchdog-role turns out to be much more difficult. "Ironically, the independent-press watchdog function may work least well when it is most needed" (Curran, 2005, pp. 121-122).

The two big periods of watchdog journalism were at the beginning of the century and – not surprisingly – during the 1960s and 1970s. This is also the period when more and more student newspapers emerged. These two decades were a "time of social protest, reform, and activism by citizens exploring new paths for political engagement" (Bennett & Serrin, 2005, p. 175-177). But in present times, watchdog-reporting is not very widespread in any media, even though there is not a lack of events and material to investigate. Much of this material is not pursued when there is no support by other institutionalized groups, such as political parties, organizations, etc. As already briefly mentioned afore: The watchdog often needs assistance to bark; he seldom acts all alone (Bennett & Serrin, 2005, p. 178-179).

For watchdog journalists, it is also the question of how to get the right amount of "muckraking" and criticizing. Too much scrutiny and intervention by the press might

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be disturbing and annoying not only for the organizations in question but also for the public. However, being a lapdog instead of a watchdog and researching too little because of the fear to find facts that are worth criticizing weakens the credibility of the media and alienates the public (Bennett & Serrin, 2005, p. 172).

Bennett and Serrin (2005, p. 182) also mentioned journalism education as an important factor of “producing” future watchdogs. Unfortunately, the education does not work well for investigative reporting. The authors criticized that journalism students are in general more interested in their careers than in muckraking and “doing battle.”

Journalism schools are producing students more interested in their careers than in the greater purpose of journalism. Indeed, it is important that students come out of school with this mission, because once they are employed in newsrooms, they will quickly realize how most newsrooms judge advancement – it is by doing stories that please the editors, that are splashy, that are clever – not by being watchdogs – that journalists generally advance. Students are being sent out without having been given any idea how to, first, survive, and then to prosper in the newsroom. Surviving in the newsroom - doing watchdog stories - takes a great deal of personal and political skill. Reporters must have a sense of guerilla warfare tactics to do well in the newsroom (Bennett & Serrin, 2005, p. 182).

To cut a long story short: It is a matter of ambition. But it is also a question of funds. Small local papers (such as college dailies) often lack the money to do real, investigative watchdog reporting, which takes a lot of time and funds (Bennett & Serrin, 2005, p. 184). For college newspapers it’s a difficult task to fill the paper with articles every day. All editors work without being paid or with very small wages. Some may consider this as a “hobby” more than an important function on campus, which leads to articles being handed in too late or not at all. Not even unpaid student journalists can allow themselves to spend weeks on researching a story while they should above all be studying rather than filling the blank spots of their newspaper.¹⁰

Especially in recent years, watchdog reporting is under attack. Due to budget cuts and the demand for higher profits, investigative journalism has no financial resources any more. “Investigative reporting has been more an ideal than a reality,” criticized Florence Graves (2008, p. 32). She considered it as a danger that people (especially

¹⁰This is a personal observation of the author made during field work at ten U.S. colleges and universities and cannot be considered representative for all student newspapers in the United States.

after “Watergate”) think that a horde of muckrakers would prevent the government and other institutions from wrongdoing or at least publish everything they found out about political scandals. In fact, Washington journalists mostly only treat the subjects they hear about in press conferences. Watchdog reporting is an exception (Graves, 2008, p. 32). “We can find plenty of other examples of superb investigative journalism – likely more and better than a decade ago – but that doesn’t mean there’s enough of it” (Graves, 2008, p. 34).

In the daily practice of newspaper journalists, watchdog reporting has no place. This trend does not seem like it will change anytime soon, considering the current financial situation of the media business in general. Graves also stated that it is not above all the government, to whom the watchdog journalists should pay attention. Big corporations and industries have even more influence than many government officials. This is the reason why many journalists do not dare to unveil business-related secrets. Of the 25 Pulitzer prizes for investigative reporting awarded since 1978, only two were given to articles involving businesses and corporations (Graves, 2008, p. 34).

On the other hand, journalism students can in some cases replace investigative reporters as it shows the example of Walter V. Robinson, Distinguished Professor at Northeastern University, Massachusetts, and his investigative journalism class: His students were able to research and write 11 Page One stories for the *Boston Globe* in only 20 months. Robinson, who himself was an investigative reporter at the *Globe*, soon saw the possibility for a partnership, as he didn’t want his students to learn under laboratory-like circumstances without contact to the reality of newspaper writing and reporting (Robinson, 2009, p. 18). “For news organizations that can no longer afford to do much enterprise and investigative reporting, journalism students eager for experience – and bylines – can help fill the void” (Robinson, 2009, p. 18). Is this the chance for young journalists to enter the “real” media business?

4.4 Internal communications

We all live in and with organizations. These can be social systems like universities for example. All systems are composed by communication. It is not only the communication with the environment of a university but also the communication within the system itself. Internal communications is an essential part of leading and managing an organization, like it is a university. As the working environment in organizations is

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becoming more and more complex, diverse, and dynamic, internal communications can and should be a way to organize the system and to ensure an efficient flow of operations (Herbst, 1999, p. 13).

According to Claudia Mast (2002, p. 12) corporate communications are divided into two parts: into public relations as part of management and into public relations as part of marketing. The first targets the social and political environment of the system, the second the economic and technical environment. For this thesis, the first is the more important as it means public relations in a classical way and includes internal communication. It looks at communication of organizations at a macro level and at the functions of the communication process for the organization (meso level).

In the first chapter of her book, Mast (2002, p. 14) referred to the definition of Harlow (1976, p. 36) of public relations, who defined it as a continuing process that ensures understanding and goodwill between the corporation or organization and a special group (that could also be the own employees or the students of a university). Another function of public relations is to communicate developments or problems within the environment of the organization.

As Wolfgang Friedrich (1979, p. 82) put it: Internal public relations are all actions that ensure the balance of interests between the employees and the company. These actions take place within the company, but are supposed to make an impact on the outside as well. Michael Kalmus (1995, p. 102) also considered internal communications and internal PR as an important mean to support the formation of opinion within the company or organization, to present different points of view, and to convey communication between different groups of the organization. This should motivate employees and guarantee their satisfaction.

Functions of internal communications as mentioned in different publications are the informational function, identification function, motivation function, integration function, and image function (Beger, Gärtner, & Mathes, 1989; Fuchs, 1996). Mesothetical approaches of PR-research consider mainly the functions of communication for a specific organization, which is essential for the analysis of internal communication also within the system of a university (Mast, 2002, p. 29). Communication can take place in the form of simple information, but also in an asymmetric or symmetric way, as depicted in the following table:

Characteristics	Information	Asymmetric Communication	Symmetric Communication
purpose of communication	to inform	to convince on base of scientific findings	reciprocal understanding
form of communication	one way: truth is most important	two way: biased effects	two way: balanced effects
model of communication	sender to audience	sender and audience	group and group

Ill. 2: Röttger, 2000, p. 45, cited in Mast, 2002, p. 33.

It depends on the relationship between the university and its environment(s), which system of communication is appropriate. Asymmetric communication has the effect that the organization remains the same and does not change through communication. External influences are not existent or are not considered in the communication process. This form of communication is not only designated to information, but also to conviction. Feedback is an important factor as it is important to know the interests and feelings of the target group. College newspapers might imply this form of communication, for example when they want to convince their readers of certain issues. The ideal form of communication is the symmetric one. In this case, the external influences from the environment are balanced with internal influences which leads to interaction with the different environments. The model of information complies most with the Lasswell formula of one way communication. All interacting persons and organizations are equal. This case is the one that is said to be the most frequent with college newspapers. The administration of the university and the editorial board of the newspapers are equal parties (Mast, 2002, pp. 33-35).

Another differentiation of the forms of internal communication is via the means of communication. Thus, internal communication consists of several fields: face-to-face communication, electronic communication (for example via e-mail), and communication via printed media (for example via letters or internal newspapers, brochures etc.). In short words: Internal communication means all communicative processes in a company or organization between its members or employees. The relevant form of internal communication for this thesis is printed media, such as a staff or inhouse magazine. These newspapers are not only distributed to the employees of a certain organization, but sometimes also to retired workers, neighbors, politicians, customers, or even newsrooms in the neighborhood (Mast, 2002, pp. 172-196).

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According to Mast (2002, p. 244) internal communication has four main purposes:

- to engage participation
- to strengthen the acceptance of decisions among the members or employees
- to ensure the implementation of business goals
- to optimize different ways of communications (for example staff magazines)

4.4.1 Corporate newspapers as media for internal communications

Do college newspapers fulfill all the afore-mentioned characteristics of media of internal communication? They target a very restricted, known (meant as not anonymous) group of potential readers and reach them almost without wastage. So they cannot be considered as means of mass communication in the classical sense. Their role is to unite the different groups of readers. Still, internal newspapers do not exclusively target employees, but also try to reach out to a wider target group such as relatives, contractors, former employees, business associates, and generally all groups of people involved with the company in certain ways (Szameitat, 2003, p. 40).

The media, college newspapers might most easily be compared to, are employee magazines. Those are printed media of internal communication. They are part of the strategic communication of a company. The topics with the highest news value for employee magazines are the company itself, its activities, and goals (Cauers, 2005, p. 28). Other names for employee magazines are corporate newspapers, internal newspapers, or staff magazines.

Internal newspapers emerged in the 20th century with the beginning of the industrialization, but manifested themselves only after the Second World War in the course of the “economic miracle.” Today, almost every larger company puts out its own newspaper. Szameitat advises every organization that has a size which makes personal communication between all employees impossible to consider the creation of an internal newspaper to enforce corporate culture and team spirit (Szameitat, 2003, p. 40).

Staff magazines can be described with the following characteristics: The publication rhythm is monthly, semimonthly, bimonthly or even quarterly. The readers often also

have access to an online-issue of the magazine. The strength of a staff magazine is that it reaches a very specific target group and normally also the whole group reads the publication. This makes it a very effective as means of communication. It covers a broad thematic spectrum. Furthermore, an internal newspaper offers orientation for the readers and informs about recent developments, decisions and events. The staff magazine establishes continuing relationships to its readers; it is characterized by a very effective integrating function and creates a “we”-feeling, because it reaches the target group without wastage (Mast, 2002, pp. 194-195; Herbst, 1999, p. 83). A very important characteristic is that staff magazines are initiated by the management of a company, not by its employees. Still, they should not primarily serve the communication of hierarchic information, but be more a forum for the staff, like the college newspaper is supposed to serve as a forum for students. The author also compares staff magazines to local papers that publish information relevant to a specific and defined community (Schweizer, 2004, p. 36).

These staff newspapers also are archivable and can serve for a better understanding of the historical aspect of an organization (Herbst, 1999, p. 83). In addition to this, these publications are financed by the management of the organization and so they are not dependent on the market like all such other media are. This should and does not lead automatically to a non-critical form of reporting, because this would have the effect that the reader would consider the newspaper or magazine unreliable. Staff magazines are in a middle-position between the management and the employees. For the case of a student publication, they would be in the middle between the rector’s office and the student body of a certain university (Frauenholz, 2009, p. 112). According to Cauers (2005, p. 44), 82 % of the information published in staff magazines are directly related to the company itself. The same can be considered true for college publications as their first news source is the university, the administration, and events on campus.

As weaknesses of those kind of media, Mast named the lack of actuality and quality compared to other, traditional publications. The missing professionalism of appearance and language reduces the acceptance of these magazines or newspapers. Another danger of staff newspapers is that the management often does not feel represented by the media or – on the other hand – the magazines publish some kind of obsequious journalism (Mast, 2002, p. 195). Staff newspapers are always controlled by the management of the company, so they don’t publish anything that is contrary to the company’s policy (Herbst, 1999, p. 87). The management serves as the final instance of control for the publication, which results in the form of “His Master’s voice,” as Schweizer (2004, p. 121) described it. For Michael Kalmus (1995, p. 38) it is not the purpose of a staff

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magazine “to throw a spanner in the works.” Editors of staff magazines are generally free to publish whatever they want, as long as it does not affect the wellbeing of the organization. He can be a kind of middleman between the management of the organization and the employees and can also be a contact point for criticism. Even though staff magazines can have a considerably large impact on the communication within an organization and with the environment(s), these publications are seldom treated in juridical scripts. The legal foundation for this kind of journalism is not very clear.

Summing up the points of different experts, the main functions of corporate newspapers are:

- to inform about the company (Hubbard, 2004, p. 80 even considered it as main function to inform in a *positive* manner about the company)
- to inform about social events
- to inform about events in the environment of the company
- to provide orientation for employees
- to lead employees
- to motivate employees
- to enforce corporate identity
- to serve as integrating factor
- to create corporate identity
- to communicate the image of the company to the employees
- to provide a forum and a possibility for dialogue
- to provide a forum for critique
- to provide a possibility for employees to get involved
- to entertain

- to serve marketing and public relations purposes (Gfeller, 2007, pp. 196-201; Cauers, 2005, pp. 62-66; Schweizer, 2004, p. 122, Neuwert, 1989, p. 32-40)

Szameitat (2003, p. 50) also covered critique in internal newspapers and thought that if critique is factual, editors should not hesitate to publish it in their internal newspaper or magazine to enhance its credibility. But since the publication is under the patronage of the corporate management, editors should always seek approval from the management board, since some executives react quite sensible upon critique. Cauers (2005, p. 46) on the other hand stated: “Criticism takes place, but is not fundamental.”

According to Schweizer (2004, p. 129), manipulation in corporate newspapers is very well a topic. He considered the concealment of information and sources and fake information as techniques used in employee magazines. The most common practices are embellishment of information, wrong emphasis put on different topics, and misleading combinations of text and images.

The First Amendment is also applicable to staff magazines. However, the reporters also have to follow several regulations: They cannot publish information that causes disruption of the peace within the community or company. Also it is doubtful that a reporter for a staff magazine will call for his right of press freedom since he is an employee of this company at the same time (Kalmus, 1998, p. 63).

Szameitat (2003, p. 54) saw two possibilities to operate internal newspapers:

- **Strict control.** A member of the management team decides about the whole content and reviews all articles prior to publication. It is very likely that the editors avoid critical topics since they are aware of the status of the newspaper. By review of the paper by the management at the latest, all critical content will be removed. Szameitat criticized that this kind of publication will not be credible and therefore will not be read by the employees. He did not consider such a newspaper worth publishing at all.
- **Independence.** An employee magazine can also operate in complete independence from the management of the organization or company. The editors can write what they consider newsworthy without having to think about prior review or self-censoring critical issues.

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These two extremes are of course not the only possibilities. There exist several amorphous states of employee magazines that are only partly independent and partly controlled or reviewed by the management. The same is true for college publications when they are considered as internal media for the campus community.

With these characteristics in mind, student newspapers can also be seen as a means of internal communication for the campus community. They target a clearly defined audience, which reaches far beyond the students and are read by faculty members, staff, alumni, families, and neighbors as well. The same is true for internal newspapers and magazines, which not only go out to employees, but also other groups of readers related to the company in a certain way. Even though a majority of the daily newspapers at U.S. colleges and universities consider themselves independent, they certainly share some characteristics with internal corporate publications.

4.4.2 Internal Communications for Universities

Internal communication in universities does not differ greatly from internal communication in other organizations. It takes place in the form of face-to-face communication, electronically, and of course also written, for example via brochures and newspapers. According to Herbst (1999, p. 83), staff magazines are among the oldest and the most important means of internal communication, also for universities and colleges.

The United States have a clearly different tradition of post-secondary education than the western European countries. U.S. universities and colleges are huge service industries that try to attract either the best or at least the most (paying) students and depend on stable enrollment numbers. They compete with other institutions of higher education for the brightest minds and for a secure tuition income. Certain negative events (a publicity scandal for example) could decrease the number of applicants and therefore put the university's income at risk (Lange, 2005, p. 10). For these reasons it is important that the institutions maintain a positive image of themselves which can be transmitted above all through current students and alumni. Internal communication has a special position within the communication process of a college or university.

As was just mentioned, college newspapers share numerous characteristics with staff magazines in companies and organizations. They reach, just like a staff magazine does,

a very specific reader group almost without wastage, which is considered a strength of this publication. There is also a continuing relationship with the readers (Student Monitor, 2008). The thematic spectrum is very broad and the acceptance within the target group is high. Also the integrating function, as mentioned afore, is very important as well as the creation of a strong group-feeling among the readership. A further similarity between staff magazines and college newspapers is the distribution not only to the closest members of the organization, but also to former members (retired employees or alumni of a university) or neighbors. Also the point of Kalmus (1995) applies to student publications at colleges: To criticize the organization might be difficult for student editors. There are no clear laws and regulations for scholastic journalism.

However on the other hand, some characteristics of staff magazines don't seem to be applicable to college newspapers. The publication rhythm is more frequent. The newspapers studied in this thesis appear daily; a large number of college newspapers appear weekly. In addition to this, one cannot speak of a lack of professionalism among the producers (editors) of these newspapers. The outer appearance is very similar to traditional media; the language is adapted to the readership. A very important point that will be examined further in the empirical part of this thesis is the financing of the newspapers. Staff magazines, as mentioned afore, are financed by the company itself. In the case of college newspapers, the financing is very vague and comes from various sources. Officially, many of the scholastic publications declare themselves financially independent from the university. However, very often their newsroom is located in a university-owned building, they are allowed to print the publications on university-owned printing presses, or they are funded in other ways and sustained by their host-institutions.

In this context it is interesting that Cauers (2005) saw many different functions of staff magazines such as information, motivation, marketing and public relations, entertainment, dialogue, and orientation. The same functions also apply to college media in their relationship to their host-institutions. Schoene (1990, p. 9) also saw staff magazines as a free service provided by a company. The service-character is another commonality between internal communication and student newspapers. Interestingly Cauers (2005, p. 52) did not state that staff magazines have a controlling function over the organization or the management. Maybe this is because the controlling function can only be fulfilled if the criticizing organ is detached from the subject of criticism (Wildenmann & Kaltefleiter, 1965, p. 35).

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Concerning another differentiation of internal communication by Mast, the question remains whether college newspapers can be considered as downward or upward communication. Downward communication means the transmission of operating instructions from the direction of the organization (or in this case from the university) or information about plans, developments, future projects, and their reasons. This is also the case for college newspapers which are for one part also communication channels for the rector's office and the administration of the college. A considerably large part of the content of such newspapers concerns university policy and decisions (Mast, 2002, pp. 255-256).

Upward communication means the opposite: communication that goes from the lower parts of an organization (for example the students of a university) to the upper parts, which means the management and the rector's office. This could also be the case for college newspapers when it comes to articles about unsolved problems among the students, proposals for innovations, or improvements as well as opinions and attitudes of the students. According to Claudia Mast (2002, pp. 257-258), the upward communication channels in an organization are very limited. Also there are no typical, regulated forms of upward communication. As well as downward communication, this could also be possible for college newspapers, for example when students publish (critical) articles about studying conditions or the situation for the students on campus in their daily paper. So both, upward and downward communication according to Mast (2002) can be found among college newspapers.

When it comes to a lack of representation of the management or obsequious journalism in the staff-magazine, this fact among college newspapers is still to be seen in the empirical part of this thesis. It has to be taken into consideration that all college newspapers studied in this thesis describe themselves as "independent" from their university, so the newspaper should not serve as media for obsequious journalism about the administration of the university in question.

Christian Cauers (2005, p. 33, 39) stated that staff magazines often have a bad reputation because of their position close to the management of the organization. As they have a very strict formal character (the information flows from the management to the employees and is subject to prior control), they are considered as official means of information. This fact cannot be confirmed for college publications, since they are produced by the students themselves and are generally not close to the administration of the university or college.

These theoretical backgrounds indicate that college newspapers are obviously a means of internal communication for universities. Despite the large number of similar characteristics with staff magazines, college newspapers cannot be considered uniquely as such, because of the very special circumstances of production of the paper. It is made by the students of this university. Even if it publishes much information from the rector's office in the form of downward communication, it is not a mean of obsequious journalism as could be the case with staff magazines, neither of these papers are supposed to be publication organs of the administration and the management of the colleges.

5 Empirical analysis

For this thesis, a mix of different methods was chosen to be most efficient producing results. The main part of the methodological concept, ten qualitative interviews with editors in chief of college-dailies, was accompanied by a quantitative content analysis of an artificial week of the ten newspapers studied. This combination ensured that a broad surface of the study subject was covered and the interviews were supported by results of the analysis of five issues of each newspaper.

5.1 Data collection

The main unit that served as a basis for this study were all student-run daily newspapers in the United States. As it was not possible to analyze all publications, a sample had to be chosen. The sample selection was guided by a pragmatic point of view: the geographical location of the colleges and universities. 17 editors in chief of all college dailies in the states Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania were contacted via e-mail. As all colleges had to be visited during the research visit, the geographical location was essential for the feasibility of this study. Ten of the editors replied and were asked if they would be prepared to give an interview concerning their work as an editor in chief of a college newspaper. They all agreed and their newspapers were therefore also the material that was going to be analyzed as well within the content analysis. This sampling is obviously not representative for all college newspapers in the United States, but it was simply a very pragmatic decision.

The chosen “experts” for this thesis were exclusively editors in chief of college daily newspapers. This status as an expert was accorded from the researcher with reference to the research interest. As Meuser and Nagel (2002, pp. 73) stated, experts are mostly people who bear responsibility for problem solutions in a certain field and who have privileged access to information about groups or processes. For this thesis, all

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this applies to the following ten student journalists who were contacted via e-mail and asked for an interview about their work as an editor:

- Christopher Duray, editor in chief of the *Daily Campus* at the University of Connecticut
- Giovanni Russonello, editor in chief of the *Tufts Daily* at Tufts University
- Juliette Mullin, executive editor and president of *The Daily Pennsylvanian* at the University of Pennsylvania
- Matt Westmoreland, editor in chief of the *Daily Princetonian* at Princeton University
- Melissa Repko, editor in chief of the *Columbia Spectator* at Columbia University
- Michael King, editor in chief of the *Daily Collegian* at the University of Massachusetts Amherst
- Rachel Smith, editor in chief of the *Washington Square News* at the University of New York
- Rossilynne Skena, editor in chief of the *Daily Collegian* at Pennsylvania State University
- Thomas Kaplan, editor in chief of the *Yale Daily News* at Yale University
- Anonymous editor, managing editor of an anonymous college newspaper

The newspapers in the list also constitute the ten newspapers that were part of the empirical analysis and shall therefore be portrayed briefly in the following chapter. Further details concerning the sampling of the material will be explained in the chapter 5.3 “Methodological approach.”

5.2 Presentation of the material to be analyzed

5.2.1 Massachusetts Daily Collegian

- University type: public
- Enrollment: 26,300
- Newspaper self-description: independent
- Financing: Advertising, rent-free office space
- Office: on campus
- Corporate board: composed by students
- Faculty adviser: financial adviser paid by the university
- Pay: none, except for managers, desk editors, business staff, ad-sales-staff, graphics staff, and the editor in chief (who cut his pay because of financial reasons)
- Staff: 80-90
- Circulation: 11,000 copies
- Availability off campus: yes, about one dozen off-campus drop-offs (King, 2009)

The *Massachusetts Daily Collegian* at the University of Massachusetts (UMass), Amherst, was founded 1890 and is New England's largest college daily. Like all the other student-run newspapers, it is published on weekdays during the academic year, but not on holidays or during the exam period. In 1890, the paper was put out under the name *Aggie Life*, then in 1901 became the *College Signal*, in 1914 the *Weekly Collegian* and in 1956 the *Tri-Weekly Collegian*. The newspaper has been published daily since 1967 under the name *Massachusetts Daily Collegian* (Massachusetts Daily Collegian, 2009a).

The *Collegian* described itself as independently funded only by advertising revenue. Nevertheless, the newsroom is situated at the Campus Center of UMass, which would not be conform with the definition of independence of Ingelhart (see chapter 2.4.4 “Independence”). The editor in chief of the academic year 2008/09 was Michael King, an accounting and history major (Massachusetts Daily Collegian, 2009a). The *Daily Collegian* employs 80-90 undergraduate students at an average.

The publication called itself a “forum for our readership and the general public to exchange thoughtful commentary in hopes that it will enhance the quality and depth of our coverage” (Massachusetts Daily Collegian, 2009b). Also, it “fully supports and encourages our readership to offer its criticism on our articles and general practices. While personal attacks on staff members are grounds for comment removal, thoughtful and constructive opinions are always welcome no matter how strong” (Massachusetts Daily Collegian, 2009b).

5.2.2 The Daily Campus

- University type: public
- Enrollment: 28,500
- Newspaper self-description: independent
- Financing: student-fee money (formerly accounted for 30 % of the income, today for 40 %), free rent, advertising (formerly 70 % of income, today 60 % due to the bad economy), subscriptions
- Office: on campus
- Board of directors: composed of a faculty member (professor of journalism department), a professional (reporter at the Hartford Courant, a local daily newspaper), and legal experts (lawyers)
- Adviser: there is no official adviser but a faculty member to approach when there are problems
- Pay: writers get paid 10 Dollars per story; also other employees are paid

5.2 Presentation of the material to be analyzed

- Staff: 100
- Circulation: 9,000 copies (cut back from 10,000 last year)
- Availability off campus: yes, at the mall, stores, etc. (Duray, 2009)

The *Daily Campus* at the University of Connecticut (UConn) was founded in 1896. For over 50 years now it has been published continually and daily (from Monday to Friday during the academic year). The circulation is 9,000 copies that are distributed through 80 distribution boxes on and off campus, in the greater Hartford area. It described itself as completely independent from the Associated Student Government since the 1970s, after the University of Connecticut's Board of Trustees granted them their independence (Daily Campus, 2009a).

The editor in chief of the *Daily Campus* for the academic year 2009/10 was Christopher Duray, a journalism major. The building where the paper is produced is located on the UConn campus, but it's privately owned by the *Daily Campus* itself. The newspaper is financed partly by advertising revenue (from student organizations as well as from local businesses on and around the campus) and by student fee money. This money is paid by the students and goes to every student organization on campus. It's not directly allocated by the university, but nevertheless the University Board of Trustees decides who gets what and how much. Therefore the *Daily Campus* cannot be considered independent in the sense of Ingelhart (see chapter 4.2.2 "Independence"). It employs between 60 and 100 (mostly paid) students, depending on the time of the year. All writers, as well as the people working for the graphics and layout department are paid (Duray, 2009).

5.2.3 The Daily Collegian

- University type: public
- Enrollment: 44,000
- Newspaper self-description: independent
- Financing: advertising, bulk-subscriptions by the university

5 Empirical analysis

- Office: off campus
- Board of directors: composed of students, faculty, and outside directors
- Faculty adviser: news adviser, business adviser (faculty members)
- Pay: there are some scholarships (merit based); the rest of the staff is not paid
- Staff: 200
- Circulation: 20,000 copies
- Availability off campus: downtown, but not free (price: 30 cents).
- Miscellaneous: There is a candidate program for people who want to work with the paper. The news adviser runs this class for one semester and figures out who can work with the paper and in which position. 50 new staffers are selected every year. While they are in the class, they also work in the newsroom. Also, the *Daily Collegian* is printed during summer, daily for 6 weeks (Skena, 2009).

The mission of the *Daily Collegian*, student newspaper at the Pennsylvania State University (PennState, PSU), is “to publish a quality campus newspaper and to provide a rewarding educational experience for the student staff members” (Daily Collegian, 2009). The newspaper is published by the Collegian Inc., which is a non-profit corporation with a board of directors composed of students, faculty members, and professionals. The newsroom-staff is composed uniquely of PennState undergraduate students who went through the one semester PSU recruiting program held by the news adviser (Daily Collegian, 2009a).

The history of the *Collegian* dates back until 1887, when the newspaper was published under the name the *Free Lance*. The beginning was turbulent, with issues promoting prohibition and begging for financial contributions from students and subscribers. After World War II, the *Collegian* was published daily (Daily Collegian, 2009c).

Other than announcing awards and explaining new formats, the Collegian tries to stay off its own front pages. But occasionally, Collegian is the news. Collegian has been the target of protests, picketing, and the ceremonious burning of issues of the newspaper on the steps of Carnegie Building (the former location of the Collegian offices). Staff members have been dismissed

5.2 Presentation of the material to be analyzed

and editors and reporters have been suspended. Through it all, Collegian has learned valuable lessons. Sometimes it's easy to forget that students are behind Collegian, writing editorials which sometimes struggle to understand the world around us (Daily Collegian, 2009c).

The 2009 board of directors was composed by the editor in chief, Rossilynne Skena, the managing editor, Holly Colbo, and Gerry Lynn Hamilton, a *Collegian* alumnus, who is a non-voting member. Furthermore, nine outside directors were on the board, from which four were PSU students. To complete the board, there were two faculty members and three expert members on the board, who were chosen for their expertise in journalism or business (Daily Collegian, 2009b).

An important spinoff of the *Daily Collegian* is the *Weekly Collegian*, which is mailed on subscription to off-campus readers, such as parents, alumni, or other people involved with the PSU community. Subscriptions are also available for on- and off-campus readers (Daily Collegian, 2009a).

5.2.4 The Daily Pennsylvanian

- University type: private, Ivy League
- Enrollment: 20,100
- Newspaper self-description: independent
- Financing: there are four publications at UPenn from which three operate on advertising revenue; the fourth (the *Weekly Pennsylvanian*, for parents, alumni, and other members of the community) operates entirely subscription based. Also there is a stock portfolio and investments to make profit, as well as a handful subscriptions to the *Daily*.
- Office: on campus
- Board of directors: n.a.
- Faculty adviser: no
- Pay: none, except for the editors (300 USD/month)

5 Empirical analysis

- Staff: 300, but a core staff of 15 people does the vast part of the work
- Circulation: 10,000 copies
- Availability off campus: yes, outside campus area but not downtown (Mullin, 2009)

The *Daily Pennsylvanian* at the University of Pennsylvania (Penn, UPenn) was founded in 1885 and has been published daily since 1894 (with two brief interruptions in 1943 and 1945 during World War II). The *DP*, as the paper is also called, became independent from the student government and merged at the same time with Penn's women's newspaper. Incorporation in 1984 meant the formal independence from any control, both financially and editorially, from its host-institution (Daily Pennsylvanian, 2009).

The staff is composed of 300 undergraduate students and five professional, paid staff-members to keep the business running while reporters and editors are in class or during exam periods and holidays. Like some other newspapers in the sample, the *Daily Pennsylvanian* has a weekly spinoff, the *Weekly Pennsylvanian*, which is a compendium of articles from the *Daily*, mailed out primarily to parents and alumni. In addition to this, the *DP* is also published (in a smaller version) during the summer session (Daily Pennsylvanian, 2009).

The Daily Pennsylvanian became widely known after an episode in 1993, known as the "water buffalo incident." During the exam period, a group of African-American sorority girls were partying between dorm houses. Several students shouted racially insulting words out of the windows of their dorms. One student, Eden Jacobowitz, called them "water buffalos," which is an insult for African-Americans. Other insulters could not be identified. So Jacobowitz was the only one charged. He defended himself by explaining that water buffalo was the translation of a Jewish insult for a stentorian person and had nothing to do with racial background. Several witnesses confirmed this. A public outcry followed, and nation-wide media coverage, led by the *Daily Pennsylvanian*, being the first source investigating in this matter (Mullin, 2009, Appendix pp. 41-42).

5.2.5 The Daily Princetonian

- University type: private, Ivy League
- Enrollment: 7,300
- Newspaper self-description: independent, nonprofit organization
- Financing: USD 550,000 - USD 600,000 budget every year; 85-90 % comes from advertising, the rest from subscriptions.
- Office: on campus
- Board of trustees: composed of alumni
- Faculty adviser: no
- Pay: only for editors if there is money left at the end of the year
- Staff: 150
- Circulation: 2,000 copies
- Availability off campus: yes, but only on subscription basis
- Also: The *Daily Princetonian* is the college paper in the country that has never been subsidized in any way by the university (Westmoreland, 2009).

The *Daily Princetonian* was founded in 1876, has been published daily since 1892, and claimed to be the second oldest college daily newspaper in the United States. It is composed by a uniquely undergraduate student reporting staff that cover not only campus news, but also national and international matters (Princeton University, 2007). During a short period of time in the late 1800s, the *Princetonian* published six days a week, which was a unusual thing for student newspapers at that time (Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix p. 51).

This newspaper is brought out by the Daily Princetonian Publishing Company Inc. at Princeton University. The tradition of a free student-run newspapers for Princeto-

nians dated back to the eighteenth century. Today, the *Prince* operates independent without university financing and has done so since 1876. The offices are located in a university-owned building on campus, for which the *Daily Princetonian* pays rent every month. There is no faculty adviser or other official tie to Princeton University (Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix p. 55).

Several years ago, Larry DuPraz, a faculty member, oversaw the production. He was the production manager when the paper was still printed in the building on the Princeton campus. After graduation, people would claim they got their degree from the “Larry DuPraz School of Journalism” (even though Princeton University does not have a journalism school), because he served as an important mentor for the newspaper staff (Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix p. 63).

5.2.6 The Columbia Spectator

- University type: private, Ivy League
- Enrollment: 26,400
- Newspaper self-description: independent
- Financing: advertising, a small number of subscriptions, rent-free offices in a Columbia University building
- Office: on campus, Columbia propriety, rent-free
- Corporate board: composed of editor in chief, managing editor, and publisher (all students)
- Faculty adviser: no
- Pay: none
- Staff: 250 (three non-student day staffers: accountant, secretary, ad-manager)
- Circulation: 5,000 copies

5.2 Presentation of the material to be analyzed

- Availability off campus: yes, in Morningside Heights and West Harlem (Repko, 2009)

The *Columbia Spectator* was founded in 1877 and also claimed (like the *Yale Daily News* did) the title “oldest college daily newspaper.” It has been operating without university funding since 1962 (Columbia Spectator, 2009).

According to Ingelhart and his study dating back to 1993 (p. 25), the *Columbia Spectator* has had a faculty adviser. In addition to this, the publication borrowed USD 25,000 to buy typesetting equipment and the university also paid a USD 16,000 phone bill, which could not be paid back by the *Spectator* as well as the grant for the technical equipment. Also loans and gifts from alumni have been a substantial source of income for this daily (Ingelhart, 1993, p. 25). The current situation, however, is different. The *Spec* is located in university property for which it does not pay rent, but does not have an adviser anymore. The paper calls itself editorially and financially independent.

The owner of the newspaper is the Spectator Publishing Company Inc., which is managed by the editor in chief, the managing editor, and the publisher. The publishing company reports to a board of directors composed of former staff members of the *Columbia Spectator*. The paper employs a full-time professional staff for graphics and advertising. The remaining staff is composed of about 250 undergraduate Columbia and Barnard students. Like the other newspapers in this sample, the *Spec* is published five days a week, from Monday to Friday during the academic year. (Columbia Spectator, 2009) It is free for students and is distributed in over 150 distribution boxes in Morningside Heights, on and off the Columbia campus (Columbia Spectator, 2007).

5.2.7 The Tufts Daily

- University type: private
- Enrollment: 10,000
- Newspaper self-description: independent
- Financing: advertising, occasional loans
- Office: on campus, rent-free

5 Empirical analysis

- Board of directors: no incorporation, therefore the paper is under the university's business umbrella
- Faculty adviser: no
- Pay: none
- Staff: 60-90
- Circulation: 4,000 copies
- Availability off campus: no (Russonello, 2009)

The *Tufts Daily* was founded in 1980. It is financially independent and does not receive student fee money or other funding from the university. Nevertheless, it's a student organization that operates under the Tufts business umbrella as it is not incorporated (Russonello, 2009).

In it's Constitution, the *Daily* clearly claimed First Amendment rights for the publication as well as the position as a forum for the expression of diverse and even critical viewpoints. No funding is received from Tufts university, except for rent-free offices, which is also common at some other newspapers in this sample (Tufts Daily, 2009).

As the editor in chief, Giovanni Russonello, a history major, explained: The *Tufts Daily* is funded solely by advertising revenue and loans when needed, but it can't operate as a business, so the managing staff has to go through the university for certain financial transactions. The newspaper does not work together with any department of the university, nor does it have a faculty adviser. The *Tufts Daily* newsroom is located on campus, The *Daily* employs about 90 unpaid staff members and has a print circulation of 4,000. It is only available on the Tufts campus and therefore serves primarily as a student newspaper. Tufts University is the smallest university in the country with a student-run daily newspaper (Russonello, 2009).

5.2.8 Washington Square News

- University type: private
- Enrollment: 51,000
- Newspaper self-description: independent
- Financing: advertising and rent-free office space
- Office: on campus, rent-free
- Editorial managing board: composed of two students and two professors from the journalism department
- Faculty adviser: yes (faculty member)
- Pay: 40 people are paid by stipends, the rest does not receive pay
- Staff: 60
- Circulation: 7,000 copies (cut back from 10,000)
- Availability off campus: yes, newsstands out in the streets in Greenwich Village
- Miscellaneous: The *Washington Square News* is put out only four days/week in print with an online-edition on Friday (Smith, 2009)

The *Washington Square News* (WSN), the daily newspaper for New York University (NYU) students, is distributed in print four times a week, from Monday to Thursday during the academic year. The Friday issue was cut in January 2009 for financial reasons. On Friday, there is an equivalent online-issue with the same content as in print. The online-distribution was chosen to lower printing costs. Founded in 1973, the paper has already earned several awards. In the lack of an official NYU-campus, the paper is distributed at over 100 outlets throughout Greenwich Village and lower Manhattan and therefore also reaches a considerable readership outside the NYU community. The *Washington Square News*' print copies are available free. Off-campus readers can sub-

scribe to an e-delivery, an electronic version of the paper distributed via e-mail every day (Washington Square News, 2009; Smith, 2009).

In 1993, when Ingelhart (1993, p. 31) conducted his research study, the *Washington Square News* was being published by the editorial board, which was considered as the publishing agency. A quarter of its operating budget came from a subsidy of New York University.

Today, the newspaper operates on its own budget, but is located in university property for which it does not have to pay rent (Smith, 2009). Interestingly, the *Washington Square News* does not carry the name of its host-university in its title, unlike most of the other publications in this sample, but is named after Washington Square, near the central buildings of New York University in Greenwich Village.

5.2.9 Yale Daily News

- University type: private, Ivy League
- Enrollment: 12,500
- Newspaper self-description: independent
- Financing: advertising and subscriptions off campus
- Office: on campus (owned)
- Board of the Yale Daily News Publishing company: composed of two students only (the editor in chief and the publisher); they report to the board of directors to the Oldest College Daily Foundation (the editor in chief and the publisher serve as directors there as well)
- Faculty adviser: no
- Pay: none (except for professional staff)
- Staff: 300

5.2 Presentation of the material to be analyzed

- Circulation: 7,500 copies
- Availability off campus: yes (Kaplan, 2009)

The *Yale Daily News* was founded on February 28, 1878 and calls itself as the nation's oldest still existing college daily newspaper. Like all other publications in the sample (with one exception) it is put out five days a week, from Monday to Friday during the academic year, except for exam-periods and holidays. Interestingly, the newspaper spoke of itself as a paper to serve Yale University *and* the town of New Haven, CT. This already is a hint to the question asking for the functions and role of the newspaper in the community surrounding the host-college or university, when the self-description of the publication clearly states that it is not uniquely composed for student readers, but for a whole town-community (Yale Daily News, 2009).

The staff of the *Yale Daily News* is solely composed of undergraduates. Reporters are mostly freshmen and sophomores, whereas editors are mostly juniors. The owner of the newspaper is the Yale Daily News Publishing Co., which is headed by the editor in chief and the publisher. The publishing company also has a full-time, non-student employee, who assists with the direction of the company (Yale Daily News, 2009).

When it comes to the definition of independence according to Ingelhart, the following can be stated: The *Yale Daily News* uses the name of its university in the title. However, its board of directors is composed uniquely by students and alumni of the college, and there is also no faculty adviser (Ingelhart, 1993, p. 37). According to Ingelhart, this newspaper can almost be considered as independent by fulfilling all the characteristics listed in chapter 2.2.4 "Independence" of this thesis.

The *Yale Daily News* is distributed for free on campus, but is also available in distribution boxes off campus, where it can be taken free of charge. The off-campus subscription is available for a fee. All articles can also be viewed on the website www.yaledailynews.com. A typical day in the newsroom of the *Yale Daily News* can be read on www.yaledailynews.com/aboutus/adayinthelife (Yale Daily News, 2009).

5.2.10 Anonymous college newspaper

- University type: private
- Enrollment: n.a.
- Newspaper self-description: independent
- Financing: advertising and subscriptions off campus
- Office: off campus
- Board: n.a.
- Faculty adviser: no
- Pay: n.a.
- Staff: n.a.
- Circulation: n.a.
- Availability off campus: yes (Anonymous, 2009)

This newspaper is incorporated and is generally known as one of the best examples for independent college journalism. Since its beginnings, this newspaper has been completely independent from its university as it was financially strong enough to sustain itself, even to pay its editors and to have its own building and printing facilities off campus. Further dates of this publication cannot be given, as the editor interviewed wanted to remain anonymous and as any further information would put this anonymity at risk. (Anonymous, 2009)

5.3 Methodological approach

5.3.1 Qualitative interviews

Qualitative interviews are a common method in social sciences. In the case of this thesis, the interviews were conducted with “experts” in a certain field: the editors in chief of ten college newspapers in the United States. With reference to Bogner and Menz (2002, p. 37), these interviews were conducted in an explorative way. The experts have knowledge to which the researcher doesn’t have access. The interviews served as orientation in a relatively new or not widely explored field. They helped to structure the research field and in the end also to formulate the hypotheses. The experts were also part of the field and part of the group the research targets.

Bogner and Menz (2002, p. 37) suggested composing an interview guide, which should be very open and only contain the key questions. This ensures that the interview is not focused too much and that the expert is able to bring in his own thoughts and knowledge. It is also important that the focus with regard to content is not on comparability, completeness or the ability to standardization of the data. It serves primarily as orientation in the field and collection of knowledge.

These interviews with editors of college dailies composed a comparative study. With reference to Flick, the cases analyzed were not compared individually, but were conducted individually, then grouped and compared in a comparative or contrastive way. In addition to this, the interviews also formed a snap-shot of the situation at a certain time. Even though there might be retrospective elements that served the process of interviewing, the research was not primarily conducted to unveil a retrospective perspective (Flick, 2000, pp. 254-255).

The following methodological approach was chosen for the interviews:

- number of people interviewed: individual interview
- form of contact: face-to-face interview
- number of interviewers: one-to-one interview
- extent of standardization: guided interview (partially standardized)

- interviewer's claim of authority: neutral
- function: to investigate (Bortz & Döring, 2003, pp. 238-244)

The characteristic that determines the interview the most is the standardization. For this thesis, a partially standardized, guided interview was chosen to be most effective for the research purpose. Guided interviews are conducted with a limited amount of subjects to talk about and a list of questions. The questions on this list, called interview guide, do not have to be checked off one after the other. The interviewer can change the order and the wording of the questions if it seems appropriate in the specific situation of the interview (Gläser & Laudel, 2004, pp. 39-40).

In addition to this, the interviewer does not have to ask every single question on the list, nor talk about every single subject scheduled for this interview. He can change the plan as he likes if he has specific and comprehensible reasons for doing so. This method has the advantage that the interviewer can respond to the person he interviews; he can adapt the interviewing situation to his respondent if necessary. Therefore, the interview guide must not be seen as strictly binding per se, but more as orientation for the interviews (Gläser & Laudel, 2004, pp. 39-40). Christel Hopf (1978, p. 107) described this form of the method as “permanente spontane Operationalisierung.”¹¹

There are no generally accepted rules for the transcription of guided interviews. Therefore every researcher has to make his own rules. For this thesis, the guidelines of Gläser and Laudel (2004, pp. 188-189) were used:

- The interviews were transcribed in standard English.
- Non-verbal statements were generally not transcribed, unless they change the meaning of the statement or had a particular importance for the research interest.
- Striking characteristics of the answers (such as hesitations etc.) were transcribed.
- Interruptions of the interview were noted.
- Incomprehensible passages were marked.

¹¹“permanent spontaneous operationalization” Translation by the author.

The interviews were analyzed with aid of the model of Meuser and Nagel (2002). The information provided in the interviews were divided into large categories. It is not most important what one single editor said, but which opinions and experiences they shared concerning their work for a college-newspaper. Meuser and Nagel (2002) considered the common knowledge and shared aspects as the most important facts of the analysis of interviews with experts in a certain field.

5.3.2 Content analysis

The **sampling unit** means the physically available materials (Rössler, 2005, p. 38). For this study, the sampling unit were the single issues of the following ten college-newspapers:

- *Massachusetts Daily Collegian* (University of Massachusetts Amherst)
- The *Daily Campus* (University of Connecticut)
- The *Daily Collegian* (Pennsylvania State University)
- The *Daily Pennsylvanian* (University of Pennsylvania)
- The *Daily Princetonian* (Princeton University)
- The *Columbia Spectator* (Columbia University)
- The *Tufts Daily* (Tufts University)
- *Washington Square News* (New York University)
- *Yale Daily News* (Yale University)
- Anonymous College Newspaper (Anonymous College)¹²

The issues of these newspapers composed an artificial week of the 2009 spring semester 2009. The artificial week consisted of the first Monday-issue in January, the

¹²One of the editors interviewed wanted to remain anonymous because of the publicity-policy of his university.

second Tuesday-issue in February and so on. Due to differing publication periods, not all chosen issues were from the same date. But all in all, a whole semester was covered by the sample, which seemed appropriate for this study.

For the cases of the *Tufts Daily* and the *Washington Square News*, exceptions had to be made because of issues that were not accessible. The archives of the *Tufts Daily* at the Tufts University library unfortunately were not complete. For this reason, the author had to chose issues from other weeks. The accessible sample issues still form an artificial week of the spring semester 2009. The *Washington Square News* on the other hand cut its Friday print-edition in January 2009. The articles from the online edition were not clearly identifiable and could not be used for the sampling. Therefore, the author had to chose a Friday print issue of December 2008 as a substitute. Unfortunately, the chosen sample-issues did not form an artificial week of one semester, but were the best possible solution for the sampling.

After the pretest, the total number of articles that would have to be analyzed was estimated about 2,000. As this would have been too much for the time frame and the possibilities of a master thesis, a second sample out of the artificial week had to be taken. As a result, every second article of the issues composing the artificial week was chosen to be analyzed. The articles were chosen from left to right and from the top of the page to the bottom, so that the lead story still was part of the sample. This method was chosen to limit the number of cases for the analysis down to a reasonable quantity.

The **recording unit** means all elements of the sampling unit that are relevant for the research. (Rössler, 2005, p. 40) In this case, not all elements of an issue were being encoded. Following elements within the issues of the college-newspapers were not considered relevant:

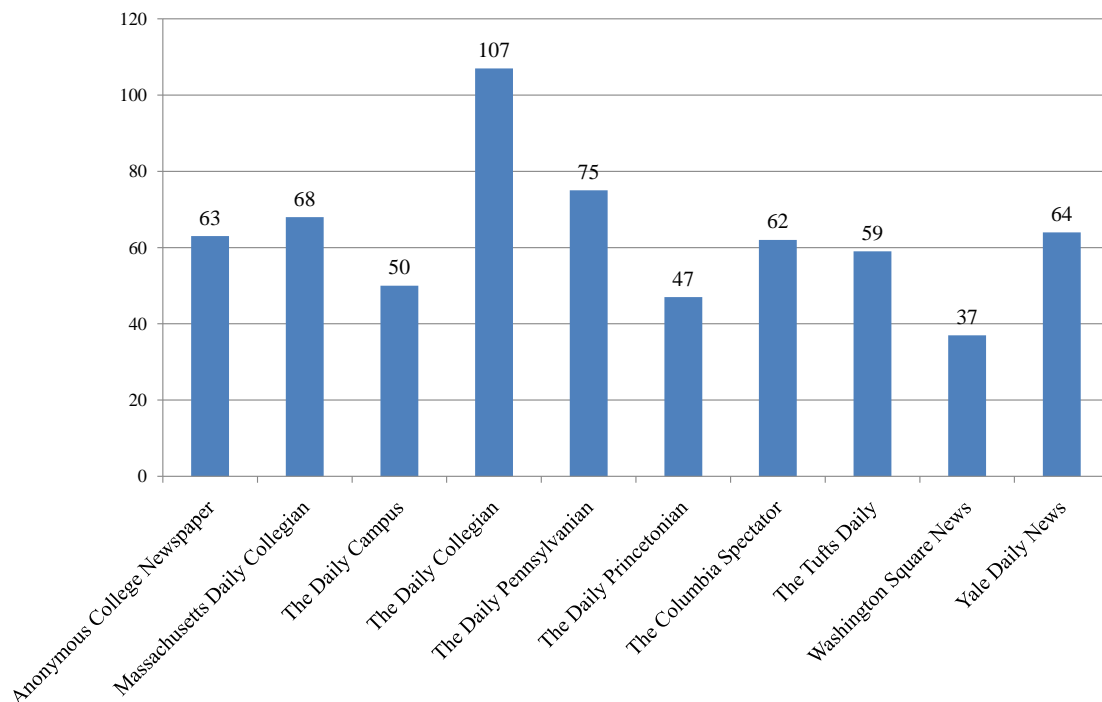
- advertisements
- logos and emblems
- calendars
- horoscopes
- crossword puzzles and sudokus

- articles that were marked as agency material only
- announcements of articles (for example on the frontpage)
- magazine inserts and supplements
- special issue inserts
- results of sporting events if they were listed only and not commented
- contact information
- classifieds
- corrections
- weatherforecasts
- short event-tips from editors concerning weekend activities etc.

Apart from these exceptions, all the articles were coded. The total number of recording units in the sample was 632 articles.

The **content unit** means a single attribute within the recording unit. In every research study there are several content units. It can be distinguished between formal units and content-related units and various subcategories of them (Rössler, 2005, p. 41). As there were no former studies that treated the same main units and had similar research interests, the categories could not be replicated and were formed by the author following the specific research interest of this thesis. For the exact content units of this study see the appendices.

The **context unit** is the last of the four units that have to be defined when doing a content analysis. This unit makes it possible for the researcher to apply different contexts that are necessary to encode a certain element. The context unit is necessary to capture the correct context of the recording unit. For example if the recording unit would be a single sentence, it would not be sufficient to encode every sentence separated from the context, since it might be necessary to take a look at the whole article to capture the correct meaning of a sentence (Rössler, 2005, p. 42). For this study, the recording units were complete articles. In general they are closed and complete units of



Ill. 3, Number of articles in college newspapers, depiction by the author

information. Therefore, it might not be necessary to encode the next larger recording unit (which would be the editorial department or the whole issue of the newspaper).

The main purpose of the content analysis was to determine which topics student-publications treat and, above all, if they contain critical journalism or not (“critical” was defined as seen in chapter 2.2.3 “Critical vs. obsequious journalism”). As already mentioned in a previous part of this thesis, it was not important to the author to find out who criticized a certain institution (for example the university). It does not matter within the content analysis if criticism is expressed by the editor himself or if it is expressed via a quotation of a third person. A journalist can always decide whom he or she wants to interview and which quotation he wants to print in his article. Therefore, a differentiation between criticism from the editors and criticism from third parties would be an artificial one and was thus neglected.

The analysis of the encoded units was made quantitatively with the statistics-program SPSS.

5.4 Pretest

A pretest was conducted with thirty articles from current issues of the newspapers in the sample. The articles chosen for the pretest of the content analysis were not relevant for the actual research study. The pretest showed, that the codebook was not complete yet. Therefore, changes in following variables had to be made:

- Type of text: the categories “review”, “column”, and “image with short text” were added.
- Main subject: the categories “faculty”, “student organizations and student groups”, “organization”, “housing situation”, “admission procedure”, “parents, families, neighbors, environment”, “science and research”, and “jobs, life after graduation” were added.
- Minor subject: the same categories were added.

Also, the sampling was changed. As the total number of articles relevant for the content analysis was estimated after the pretest to be too large, the author chose to only analyze every second article of an issue, beginning at the top left side of a page and continuing to the bottom right side. This was considered an appropriate method to limit the number of articles for the analysis.

6 Results

6.1 The functions of a college daily newspaper

The functions of a student newspaper on a university campus are various. The chosen experts gave many differing personal views on how they see the role of the publication in the college community. Yet one function was of constant importance to all ten editors questioned: **Information**. Every single one of the editors in chief who were asked to talk about their job answered that information was the main or at least one of the most important functions of the student newspaper on campus (Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 8; Russonello, 2009, Appendix p. 25; Mullin, 2009, Appendix p. 39; Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix p. 53; Repko, 2009, Appendix p. 68; King, 2009, Appendix p. 77; Smith, 2009, Appendix p. 89; Skena, 2009, Appendix pp. 98-99; Kaplan, 2009, Appendix p. 114; Anonymous, 2009, Appendix p. 122).

To keep the students informed about what is happening in the community in which they spend four important years of their lives was considered of crucial importance. The editors acknowledged that college students have to sacrifice the majority of their time to their studies. Furthermore, they tended not to attend university board or student government meetings. As a result, they were not well-informed about the decisions the administration or the student government made that affect them. So all editors questioned saw the information function as the main function a publication has to fulfill for the best interests of the students.

College newspapers offered a very “personalized form of news and writing” (Russonello, 2009, Appendix p. 30) which appealed to readers of a younger age more than to the average consumer of a professional newspaper. Also, the content differed largely from that in professional publications. No other publication is interested as much in student affairs and reports as in depth about the university as the student-newspaper does.

The second most important function of a student newspaper was, according to the interviewees, the **forum function** (Mullin, 2009, Appendix pp. 39-40; Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix p. 54; King, 2009, Appendix p. 80; Smith, 2009, Appendix p. 89; Skena, 2009, Appendix p. 99; Kaplan, 2009, Appendix p. 114). This function is of special importance as the student government, that is supposed to look after the best interests of the student body, has no means to reach all or at least a majority of the students. Their decisions and actions often remain unknown. Whereas everybody on campus has access to the student newspaper (Mullin, 2009, Appendix p. 39). “The only way people are going to hear messages of real importance [...] is through the student newspaper” (Mullin, 2009, Appendix pp. 39-40).

Therefore, the forum function is essential for the student government, but also for the students and the student body as a whole. An ideal college newspaper should provide space for students to express their opinions, to have a voice, and to be heard in their community (Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix p. 53). “It can be an institution that both informs people of what’s going on in their world and then serves as a place to offer dialog and debate among the people in the community” (Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix p. 53). The opinion pages are open to everyone who wants to enter in a dialogue with the students as well as with the administration and to express his thoughts and comments about a certain issue.

Moreover the **socializing function** was mentioned by the editors (Repko, 2009, Appendix p. 72; Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 18). The newspaper gives people something to talk about; it serves as an icebreaker for conversations, which is especially meaningful for freshmen, who find themselves in an entirely different community and have to integrate and adapt as quickly as possible. The newspaper helps with that by providing them with a common set of topics: “It makes them sort of a community” (Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 18).

Without mentioning the term “watchdog,” many editors claimed the **controlling** and **watchdog-function** as significant role of their campus publication (Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 8; King, 2009, Appendix p. 83; Kaplan, 2009, Appendix p. 118; Russonello, 2009, Appendix p. 25). “We try and keep an eye on the administration,” declared Christopher Duray (2009, Appendix p. 8), editor in chief of the *Daily Campus*. The watchdog-role of student newspapers was automatically considered as referring to the college administration. A campus paper has to look after the best interests of the student body and therefore control the decisions of institutions such as the administra-

6.1 The functions of a college daily newspaper

tion, who decide over how university and campus life is organized (Russonello, 2009, Appendix p. 25; Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 18).

Editors of student-run newspapers feel obliged to fulfill this function properly because of the dearth of control for universities and colleges: “If the *Daily Campus* wasn’t there, they [the students, KL] really wouldn’t have anybody looking out for their best interests or telling them what’s going on. And that’s important” (Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 18). Especially for universities of a larger size where a bigger student body is affected by administrative decisions, the controlling function and the possibility to openly express criticism is even more essential (King, 2009, Appendix p. 83). To put this fact in a historical perspective: In 1965, Roberta Clay (p. 84) still advised young student journalists not to be too critical with faculty and university staff, “especially for papers at small colleges where student-faculty relationships are likely to be close and quite personal.” Today, many student editors reach for the ideal of a critical and alert publication that is not afraid to point out when it disagrees with something.

But not only critique is among the functions of student-run publications. The university also might get praise from this forum when it is deserved (King, 2009, Appendix p. 84). There is however a very fine line between praise and obsequious journalism in some cases. The empirical findings concerning critical and obsequious journalism in college newspapers will be discussed in the chapter 6.3 “Critical journalism in college newspapers.”

Another statement that was made by several of the editors questioned was the **service** aspect of a student publication (Russonello, 2009, Appendix p. 34; Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix p. 57; Kaplan, 2009, Appendix p. 116; Anonymous, 2009, Appendix p. 122). “We definitely do the university a service,” stated Giovanni Russonello (2009, Appendix p. 34), editor in chief of the *Tufts Daily*. The service function consists primarily in spreading the news about important university-related decisions and informing the student body. By having a campus publication that is entirely run by students, the university or college does not have to worry about building up its own information organ to reach its community. So even though a paper might be entirely independent and does not have to publish what the administration thinks is worth publishing, the university depends on it to inform the student-body.

Also **education** was mentioned as a crucial factor in the duties of a student publication. One editor, Michael King of the *Massachusetts Daily Collegian*, even considered the possibility for students to gain experience in journalism as the main function of his

newspaper (2009, Appendix p. 79). Melissa Repko compared the educational function of the *Columbia Spectator* with being on a sports team or another club, where you learn something and at the same time the team spirit develops, holds the group together, and forms its identity (2009, Appendix p. 75).

Only one editor in chief mentioned **entertainment** as a function of the student newspaper (Repko, 2009, Appendix p. 68). This might be due to the fact that entertainment is still considered as a taboo for quality publications. Students of course strive for an ideal and normative image of journalism. In addition to this, mainstream journalism education might still propagate that entertainment is something bad and has no space in quality media. Especially for a young audience such as college students, entertainment is a crucial factor when reading a news medium. Unfortunately, the entertaining aspect of collegiate publications was repudiated by the majority of the interviewees.

Summing up: Just as communication theory sees it (see chapter 4.2 “Functions of mass media”), the information function is the uniting factor of all media functions. Without information, no other function can be fulfilled properly. In other words: Information overlaps every other role a newspaper can fulfill for its community.

Apart from this main function, many other functions of college newspapers were identified by the editors in chief, such as providing a forum, socializing, serving as a watchdog, providing a service for both students and administration, educating students, and entertaining them. This initially overlaps with the set of functions developed in the theoretical part of this thesis to serve as a background for the conduction of the interviews.

Editors in chief of college publications therefore considered almost the same functions essential for their newspaper as theoreticians did for the mass media in general. This can either result from general practical experience the editors have in their field, or from a very strong background in journalism and communication education, from which they derive their knowledge of journalism theory and apply it – consciously or not – to their own publication.

Nevertheless it can be considered as confirmed that the functions college publications fulfill for their environment do not differ greatly from general mass media functions, although neither the captive audience nor the content are comparable to traditional, professional media.

6.1.1 Role and relevance on campus

The editors in chief interviewed about their work at the student newspaper considered the relevance of the publication on campus as an important factor for its success. “Even if people find fault with the newspaper, everybody on campus has an opinion of the newspaper, which to me means that it is just as relevant an institution as it has been” (Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix p. 60).

To remain relevant on campus, Matt Westmoreland (2009, Appendix p. 60), editor in chief of the *Daily Princetonian*, considered the free distribution, a good online representation, and a good and catchy layout three major paths to success. A selling newspaper on campus would not be successful among a student readership.

The circulations of the ten college newspapers in the sample ranged from 2,000 issues per day on smaller campuses to up to 20,000 print issues every day at very big universities. The average circulation of the college newspapers analyzed was about 16,000 issues per day.

A positive point for college media is that the captive audience is assembled at the same place as the content is gathered and produced. The readership does not go away, because every year a new freshmen class comes in and becomes readers of the student newspaper. Even as the internet takes over a vast number of the readers of professional publications, college media do not see a decline in their readership (Russonello, 2009, Appendix p. 27).

In general, the editors in chief felt like their work was important and affected change on campus. This served as a motivating factor for the complete staff to put in as many hours as there were necessary to produce a daily newspaper (Repko, 2009, Appendix p. 67). But still, some editors complained that the status of the newspaper was not always worshipped enough among the campus community: “Is of critical importance to the campus, even though students might not acknowledge this as much” (King, 2009, Appendix p. 83). Many editors felt like there were no other institutions that were interested in what is going on on U.S. college and university campuses. Student newspapers are the only possibility the student body would learn information that affects student lives. Nobody else would care about important decisions if the campus newspaper would not report on it (Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 18).

Relevance therefore was an important motivating factor for the newspaper staff. Rachel Smith (2009, Appendix p. 92), editor in chief of the *Washington Square News* (WSN) at New York University explained that for NYU the newspaper has an even more important role since there is no real campus and therefore no real sense of community, because university buildings are spread all over Manhattan and so are NYU-students. The WSN serves as a uniting factor, bringing all NYU-students together and creating a community. As an example, Smith mentioned the housing guide the WSN publishes every year which is very popular among students and an important discussion topic and icebreaker for freshmen. But still, Smith wished for her newspaper to be more integrated into the NYU community.

Unlike traditional, professional media, college newspapers hardly experienced a declining readership or a drift-away to online news sources. This might result from the fact that they have direct access to the paper in their everyday-lives, when they attend classes or go to the dining halls: Newsstands are only a few steps away. The paper can be taken out when walking by and accompanies the student through their day. Therefore, college media is not subject as much to declining numbers of readers as professional newspapers are.

6.1.2 The role of the editor in chief

The editor in chief plays an important role in the college newspaper hierarchy. Some editors referred to themselves as “problem solver” (Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 7) to whom people come to when something is going wrong. Others were even responsible for the content and read every story besides doing organizational and logistical tasks (Russonello, 2009, Appendix p. 24). Others saw themselves as managers of the paper who dealt with the bigger picture things and ensured that the production ran smoothly (Mullin, 2009, Appendix p. 36).

Several editors in chief mentioned that they served as the public face and representative of the paper and also had to take responsibility for the content that was published (King, 2009, Appendix p. 77; Skena, 2009, Appendix pp. 97; Kaplan, 2009, Appendix pp. 115; Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 7). That also entailed dealing with people who have complaints about the publication and its content. The nature and reasons of these complaints will be discussed in a later part of this thesis.

The following roles of editor in chiefs of college dailies could be identified:

- **The manager.** The editor in chief is not directly involved in the daily production of the paper, but oversees the production and deals with bigger personnel, financial, or ethical decisions. The editor in chief who embodies the management-role normally does not look at the content of the paper on a daily basis. Like Giovanni Russonello (2009, Appendix p. 24), editor in chief of the *Tufts Daily*, explained it: “I’m guiding things. I’m not doing things from the bottom up.” Also Juliette Mullin (2009, Appendix p. 36), editor in chief of the *Daily Pennsylvanian*, described her work as not directly related to the content production and more focused on big, general decisions. She is also the person to whom everybody reports at the newspaper. The management-role entails to be the public face and representant of the newspaper as well.
- **The hands-on person.** The editor in chief reviews the list of stories and often also the whole content, every single article of the paper. He writes editorials and reactions to letters to the editors if necessary. He is responsible for writing corrections and even deals with the printer and big advertising customers. For example, Christopher Duray (2009, Appendix p. 8), editor in chief of the *Daily Campus*, described his position as being responsible for editorial content, reviewing and discussing the list of stories and writing editorials.

Obviously, these roles can overlap in many cases and may tend to change over time. Also, not all publications are structured the same way. Some may have a managing editor who specifically deals with the management-role. In other cases, the managing editor is the one who is involved in the content-production and has to read all articles that are going to be published. Other newspapers may employ an executive editor who has the task of overseeing the production and reading the content of every single issue every day, so that the editor in chief can focus on other things. The role and tasks of an editor in chief depend largely on the size of the paper and on how much personnel it has to cover different roles and functions. At small papers, the editor in chief may more likely be the hands-on person that directly deals with the content and is involved in the content production of every issue. Still, this does not mean that he does not have to embody the management-role as well. When papers have a bigger staff, the roles tend to be split up. As a result, the editor in chief is not directly involved in the content on a daily basis any more.

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One editor summed it up briefly: “The job is a lot of what you make of it” (Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 8). An editor in chief generally has the freedom to choose what he wants and what he does not want to do, “which can be very dangerous in that position if you’re someone who is not extremely motivated” (Mullin, 2009, Appendix p. 37).

In the interviews, the number of editors who described their position more like a management-role was equal with the number of editors who saw themselves more like the hands-on person directly involved in the content-production.

No matter which role an editor might embody, the recruitment of the successor can follow two different ways:

- **Elected by staff.** The editor in chief can be elected by all members on the staff or all editors of a newspaper.
- **Elected by board.** The editor in chief can also be elected by a board of directors or another entity who decide over important issues concerning the paper. In many cases, faculty members or professionals as well as advisers might be on the board and involved in the decision-making.

In the interviews, most editors explained that the successor for their position was elected by the staff more than by a board composed of faculty, professionals, and students. Generally, an editor in chief was elected every year (Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix p. 53). The position rotates in short terms which makes it difficult to get comfortable with the job, since after a couple of months of training, the person has to leave the position again. Also the amount of work that is necessary to be in this position is considerable. All editors in chief reported that they worked between 40 and 80 hours per week for their job at the newspaper. The average was a workload of about 60 hours per week (Russonello, 2009, Appendix p. 34; Repko, 2009, Appendix p. 76; King, 2009, Appendix p. 86; Smith, 2009, Appendix p. 96; Skena, 2009, Appendix p. 109; Kaplan, 2009, Appendix p. 120; Mullin, 2009, Appendix p. 37; Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix p. 65; Anonymous, 2009, Appendix p. 125).

This fact is especially interesting since all the editors in chief were at the same time full-time students at the university and had to handle their school-work as well as their work at the newspaper. Despite the tremendous workload an editor in chief at a college newspaper has to manage, all experts interviewed answered that they liked their job and were motivated:

My favorite part of being in this job is getting to work with a collection of really dedicated staffers who put the newspaper before anything else, including sleeping, their friends, their schoolwork, and their classes, to be able to work at a product that we put out more than 135 times a year and say that this is contributing to life and our community in a way that nothing else is that we could be doing. (Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix p. 53)

6.1.3 Topics and types of texts in college newspapers

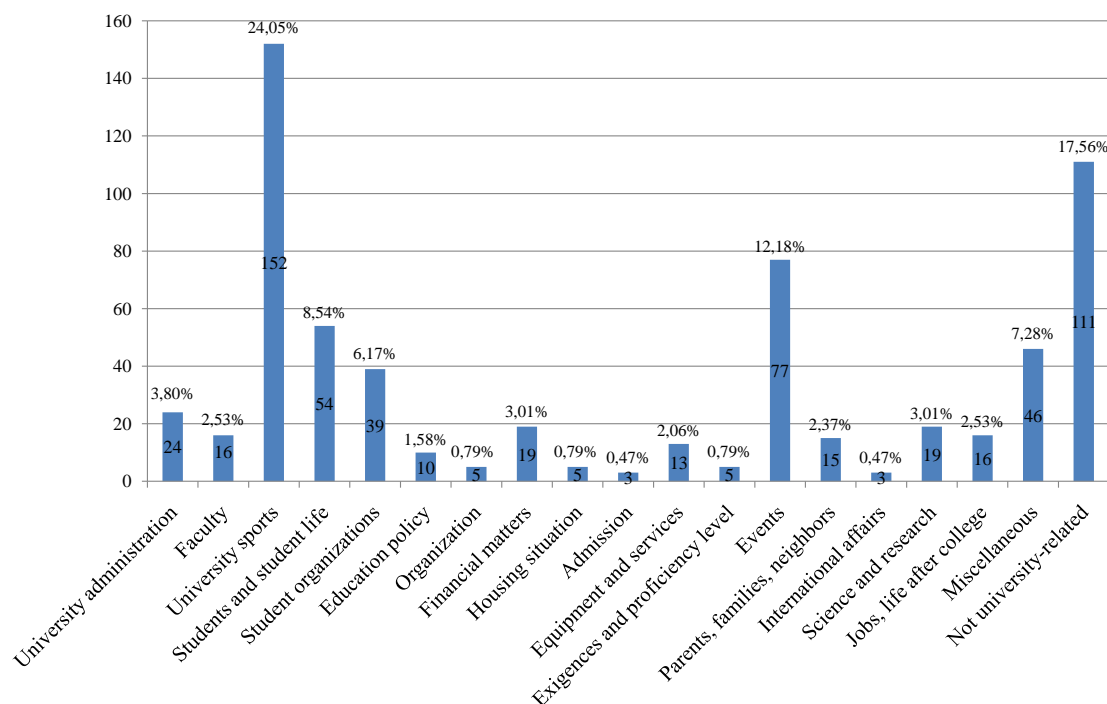
The topic range of college newspapers differs widely from that of professional publications. At first glance, the reader can notice that sports has a dominant section in a student newspaper. Almost a quarter of the articles published had sports as their main topic. Following sports, events on and off campus were the second most reported topic (12.18 % of all articles analyzed). The category “events” covered events hosted by students or events at which students participated as well as general events on and off campus without student participation. The third most reported topic with campus-relation were students and student life (8.54 %). This was a very broad category summing up general student activities (that were not organized in a club or organization) and general topics such as studying, going out, relationships, etc. A total of 18 % of the articles did not have a university-connection at all.

Already in 1965, sport reporting was a major issue in college newspapers and it was one of the most professional departments of the publications. The reason might be, according to Clay (1965, p. 105) that sport reporters at college newspapers have a great variety of role models, whereas editors that cover university-related topics might search longer before finding a professional role model.

Other important topics were student organizations (6.17 %), the university administration (3.80 %), financial matters (3.01 %), science and research (3.01 %), faculty (2.54 %), and jobs (2.53 %).

Interestingly, almost one fifth (18.04 %) of all articles did not have anything to do with the university. Those articles treated topics such as President Obama’s inauguration, local and national politics (except for education policy), the national and local economy during the financial crisis, bands and artists, book, film, or CD reviews, traveling, and fashion.

6 Results

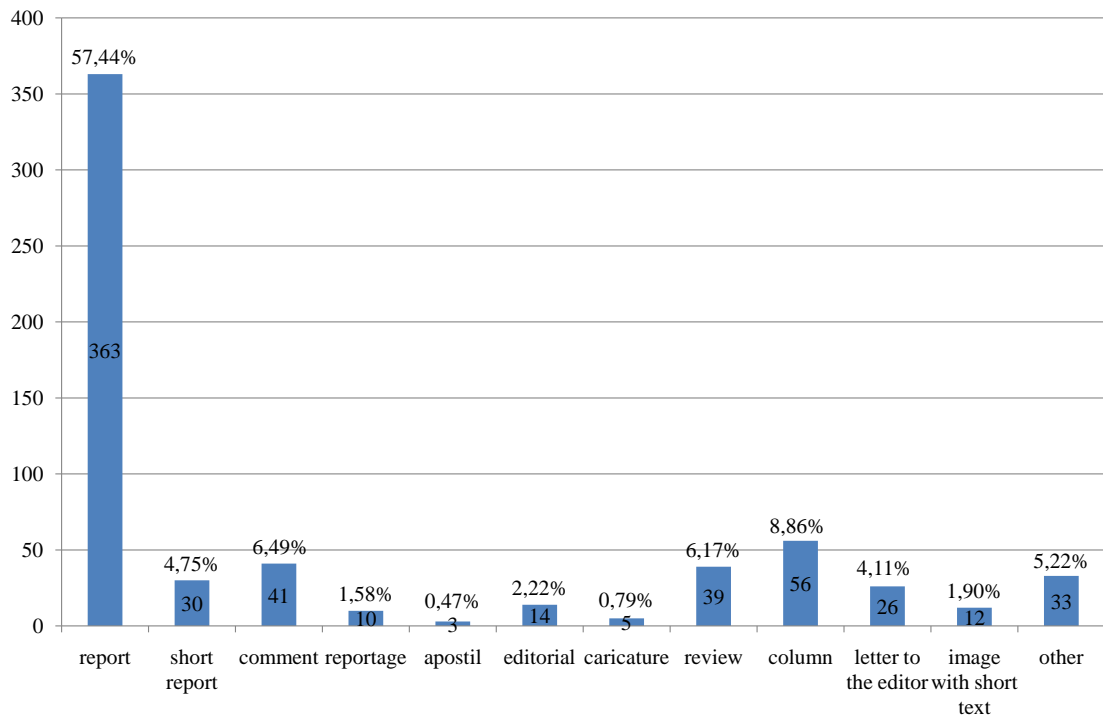


III. 4, Topics in college newspapers, depiction by author

Concerning the types of texts most frequently used in daily college newspapers, as expected more than half of the texts (57.44 %) were classical reports. The second most important type of text within college newspapers was the column (8.86 %). Here it can be assumed that this type of text was so popular because most college newspapers work with regular contributors who write texts once a week. It is therefore a pragmatic reason to have many student columnists, since it facilitates the work flow and the organization of the content production at a student newspaper.

A relatively large section in campus publications was the commentary section, which accounted for 6.49 % of all articles during the period of the analysis. Similarly important were theater, concert, CD, and book reviews, which made up for 6.17 % of the content. 4.11 % of all articles were letters to the editors and 5.22 % were other types of texts such as interviews, short stories, poems, etc.

Furthermore, all college newspapers worked with a considerably large number of pictures and images. Of the total number of 632 articles, more than 37 % were accompanied by a photograph or another type of image. It can be supposed that the large



Ill. 5, Types of texts in college newspapers, depiction by author

number of visual material was used in order to attract the young audience, generally not familiar with or at least not used to reading high quality professional newspapers, which contain fewer pictures.

6.1.4 College newspapers as local newspapers

College newspapers do not only have an important status on campus, but sometimes even serve as some sort of community or local newspaper. To fulfill this function, the publication has to be available off campus and for non-students as well (for example through newsstands that are not only set up on campus, but also on off-campus locations). Furthermore, the content has to be adapted to appeal to a non-student audience as well. Many colleges are situated in a small town that often does not have its own newspaper. Therefore, town-inhabitants are content with having a publication that treats their interests as well and covers topics that concern them such as local politics and local events.

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In the interviews, six editors in chief answered that their newspaper was considered as a local paper as well (Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 18; Mullin, 2009, Appendix p. 39; Repko, 2009, Appendix p. 69; Smith, 2009, Appendix p. 91; Skena, 2009, Appendix pp. 103-104; Kaplan, 2009, Appendix p. 114), whereas only three editors negated that their newspaper served a local function (King, 2009, Appendix pp. 83-84; Russonello, 2009, Appendix p. 32; Anonymous, 2009, Appendix p. 124).

For Juliette Mullin (2009, Appendix p. 40), editor in chief of the *Daily Pennsylvanian* at the University of Pennsylvania (Penn) this function as a local paper was particularly important also for the students:

Our second most important job [after informing the students about what is going on on campus, KL] in my opinion is enlightening as to what's going on around them, both at Penn but also in the city. The students at Penn do some pretty amazing things. Penn is one of the biggest community serving schools of the country, in terms of the amount of funding we put into community service and the amount of students who do it. And I love covering that. I always push us to cover more of that. At the same time, you know, Philadelphia has more issues than most cities in this country. [...] We have high rates of crime, high rates of disease, high rates of STD, a lot of run-down parts of the city. We have this really really wealthy enclaves where we have wealthy things and all of a sudden we have really poor parts of the city. That's something Penn students should know about, because Penn is after the Catholic church the second biggest land owner and employer in this city. That's big. And that means that I think Penn has a responsibility to this city. So our job is to enlighten students to issues going on in the city. If the state hasn't passed a budget yesterday for Philadelphia and Pennsylvania, on Monday no one would've been there to collect trash. And students have no idea about this. They're not reading the *Inquirer* [Philadelphia local newspaper] every day. So that's also part of your job.

One of the particularly poor parts of Philadelphia is West Philadelphia, where the University of Pennsylvania is located. Since there is no real campus, the newsstands are out in the streets and the paper is easily available for citizen of West Philadelphia, PA. Therefore, also these residents are considered to be regular readers of the *Daily Pennsylvanian* (Mullin, 2009, Appendix p. 48).

The same is true for the *Columbia Spectator* and its relationship to the West Harlem neighborhood. As well as West Philadelphia, PA, Harlem is considered as one of the problematic neighborhoods in Manhattan. The *Columbia Spectator* covers besides campus issues also local politics, which is very important to editor in chief Melissa

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Repko, since people in the Columbia neighborhood often feel missed or overlooked and consider the university as the “big cheese” in the area that dominates everything. So locals from Morningside Heights and West Harlem consider the *Columbia Spectator* their local paper because it covers local news more than any other media outlet in the city (Repko, 2009, Appendix p. 74). “That’s the role of a local college paper. We can report on things that other communities wouldn’t care about, other groups of people wouldn’t care about. But if we can’t catch those stories, then there is no story” (Repko, 2009, Appendix p. 69).

The second student-run daily newspaper in Manhattan, the *Washington Square News*, is distributed all over Greenwich Village. More than other newspapers, the *WSN* has a non-student readership. Especially because of the big Anti-NYU-community (comparable to the situation of Columbia University), editor in chief Rachel Smith thought her paper was responsible for explaining NYU-activities. Nevertheless, it did not cover local news as long as there were students involved (Smith, 2009, Appendix p. 93).

Another example for a student newspaper that also serves as local paper can be found at Yale University. The *Yale Daily News* felt responsible for the neighborhood as well and wanted to act as a watchdog not only on campus, but also in the city of New Haven. The city news desk of the newspaper was as big as the university news desk. Even though the writers were supposed to have a Yale affiliate in mind when writing an article, the political coverage of the city was stronger than the one of the local daily. The paper put more emphasis on political issues and was therefore widely read in local political circles (Kaplan, 2009, Appendix p. 114).

A special case is the *Daily Collegian* at Pennsylvania State University. The university is located in a small town called State College, PA. Except for the University, there is not much more to be found there. The biggest part of the town is occupied by university buildings and houses of PennState affiliates. Other than that there are a small number of stores, bars, housing, and entertainment facilities located around the campus area. The *Collegian* is available off campus and editor in chief Rossilynne Skena considered the paper also important downtown, where readers could purchase it for 30 cents per copy. The major newspaper in State College, PA is obviously the student-run publication. This conclusion could be drawn from the fact that local politicians approach the newspaper when announcing their candidatures and local events are published rather in the campus newspaper than in the competing *Centre Daily Times*. This is a professional newspaper for the whole county, but does not specifically treat

State College, PA. Therefore, locals tended to rather read the *Daily Collegian* when looking for local information (Skena, 2009, Appendix p. 125). Even though the newspaper caters more to the interests of students, it sometimes scoops the regional *Centre Daily Times* when there is an important event in State College, PA. “We like it because we get to compete with the professionals and we especially like it when we beat the professionals at their own jobs,” Rossilynne Skena claimed (2009, Appendix p. 126).

The editor in chief of the *Daily Pennsylvanian* however mentioned an example where local coverage became news at a national level. This can happen when there is a major incident on campus and the coverage about this incident is taken over by national newspapers. Especially the University of Pennsylvania and its prestigious Annenberg School for Communication have a long tradition of sending people into journalism. Many alumni and former newspaper staffers now occupy prominent positions at national newspapers, broadcasting stations, or news agencies. The “water buffalo incident” (see chapter 5.2.4 “The Daily Pennsylvanian”) was one issue where the coverage of the college newspaper was taken over and published at a national level (Mullin, 2009, Appendix pp. 42-43).

This incident also was a lesson for the university, Mullin explained: “Most of the time our coverage stays isolated to campus but sometimes it gets blown up and they don’t want to look bad when that happens. So they really care what we write about them” (Mullin, 2009, Appendix p. 43).

The content analysis of a sample of articles from all ten college newspapers analyzed revealed that roughly two percent of all articles were about neighbors. But since the category also included parents and families, it cannot be exactly evaluated how large the proportion of articles about the neighborhood was. Nevertheless, two percent of all articles does not sound considerably much. However, compared to other topics, it is not little either. Parents, families, and neighbors had about the same number of articles as the topic “admission” did. In addition to this, about half of the editors in chief mentioned the role as a local newspaper as important for their publication.

Generally speaking, about six of the ten editors in chief considered their newspaper a local newspaper as well. Especially the publications that were produced in problematic areas of a town felt responsible to cater to the interests of the neighboring community, since there is no other media outlet that would be interested in publishing stories about them to the extent the student newspaper is able to. Therefore, the reason for serving

a broader community is the sense of responsibility to the neighborhood and the feeling that important topics are being neglected by traditional, professional media.

6.2 College newspapers and their staff

College newspapers are big companies with a large staff. The ten newspapers in chief analyzed were produced by a staff that counted between 60 and 300 members. The average was about 170 staffers per publication. Dealing with a staff this large is not always easy for the editors in chief, who are generally responsible for personnel issues.

At most newspapers in the sample there was no general recruiting. Every student who wants to contribute can come to the weekly meetings and pick a story. Priority was given to editors and to staff writers who contribute on a regular basis. But apart from that, pretty much every undergraduate student is free to write for the campus newspaper (Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 15). At the start of the year, usually a large number of students show up and are interested in writing for the newspaper. But during the course of the semester they stop coming, which makes it difficult for many student newspapers to find committed reporters (Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 15; Russonello, 2009, Appendix p. 27).

When the newspaper is relevant enough for the student body, in most cases it is no problem to recruit new staffers. Juliette Mullin (2009, Appendix pp. 37-38), editor in chief of the *Daily Pennsylvanian (DP)*, stated:

I always think the hardest job at the paper can be being a reporter, because they are the ones that are making the calls between classes or stepping out of class to take calls from their sources. That for me sometimes can be the worst job at the paper. The best job in some ways but also the hardest.

For the *Yale Daily News*, recruiting has never been a major problem, since 300 students of the yearly freshmen class of 1200 sign up for the newspaper. Editor in chief Thomas Kaplan (2009, Appendix pp. 115-116) explained, why:

Some people do it because they want to be a journalist, that's my case. Some people do it because it's a fun extracurricular activity. It gives you the opportunity to be a part of a big organization with a lot of people that

produces a product that you can be proud of. And I think that's something that kind of is what's fun about this compared to a lot of like extracurricular clubs you have in college is at the end of the day you produce a product that people are reading and talking about. We're doing a service for the community in that regard. So I think that is obviously a benefit. But I mean people come here for a lot of different reasons. Some people probably want to put it on their résumé, I think some people are attracted to sort of the history. I mean I think of like extracurricular organizations on campus, we definitely have sort of the greatest history and mystery and sort of cloud and all of that. I mean from this building we have to you know all the things, alumni who served as editors here to just sort of the unique circumstances of being such a large organization. So I mean we have a staff of 300 students and an endowment that's over a million dollars and an operating budget each year in the high six figures. It's not like most extracurricular activities and I think people are drawn to that.

Among obvious reasons like a passion for journalism and reporting, also the relevance of the newspaper in its community is an essential factor when it comes to recruiting new writers for the college paper staff. If people experience that the newspaper makes a difference and can change something in their society, they are more likely to be willing to work with the staff, to put in many hours for no or little pay and to help publish a newspaper that is relevant among their peers. This is a motivating factor that cannot be underestimated.

The *Collegian* for example is part of a special journalism training offered by Pennsylvania State University. The news adviser, who is a faculty member of the College of Communications, holds a "candidate class" each year where he teaches potential journalists the fundamentals of journalism. The candidate program is well known and has a good reputation. Therefore it is not difficult for the *Collegian* to recruit new writers. With the help of the program, the editor in chief together with the adviser can already determine who has the skills, the talent, and above all the commitment and willingness to engage at the student newspaper (Skena, 2009, Appendix p. 103).

Commitment is also an issue that comes up regularly. But editors in chief often see their hands tied. Students pay a lot of money to study at a specific university. Therefore, an editor in chief cannot ask them to skip classes because they have to cover an important event (Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 22).

Christopher Duray, who works with a smaller staff than most of the other editors in chief, reported that many journalism majors at the University of Connecticut did

not join any of the journalistic student activities on campus, which disappointed him and sometimes even made him angry, since the *Daily* as well as other publications would need more people who were committed. Students who chose journalism as their major should be willing to gain experience in this field. Duray did not understand why many of them did not seem interested in contributing at all (Duray, 2009, Appendix pp. 15-16).

The biggest challenge of being executive editor of a student newspaper is that at the end of the day we are a voluntary organization. We have about a core of about 15 people who put in about 40 hours a week. And it can be hard to get those people to do what you want them to do when the threat of firing them isn't a real threat most of the time. Because most of the time it will be difficult for you to find someone to fill that job. Or finding someone to fill that job is more hassle than it's worth, because they're gonna not know what to do on their first few days (Mullin, 2009, Appendix pp. 44-45).

At some colleges and universities though, the problem of finding contributors might not be existent. Melissa Repko from Columbia University explained that 300 recruits at the beginning of the semester was a normal number. But not all of them were motivated and willing to stay on staff longer and write more frequently than just one article every now and then. Especially in college, people tended to focus primarily on their careers and not on extracurricular activities such as the student newspaper (Repko, 2009, Appendix p. 73). "It's not hard to find people to write, it's harder to find people who are truly committed" (Repko, 2009, Appendix p. 73; see also Kaplan, 2009, Appendix pp. 116-117).

Also Rachel Smith from NYU reported that for her school, that is known for having a strong journalism department and attracting a lot of journalists, it was not difficult to find new writers. On the open houses for recruitment there usually were 150 to 200 potential staffers. For this reason it could be quite competitive to join the staff of the student daily (Smith, 2009, Appendix pp. 92-93).

Another problem with fledgling reporters is the dearth of journalistic skills and basic knowledge. Especially at universities not having a journalism department, it takes a long time to train new writers and to teach them the skills they need to have for a job at a daily newspaper. Publications with difficulties to find new writers are happy about everybody who wants to contribute. So there are no obstacles when it comes to recruiting; everybody is hired on the spot. Unfortunately, this sometimes

also includes writers lacking talent (Russonello, 2009, Appendix p. 30; Smith, 2009, Appendix pp. 92-93; King, 2009, Appendix p. 80).

Apart from personnel-finding issues, motivation is an important factor when it comes to the student staff of a campus newspaper. Only two newspapers in the sample paid all or at least the majority of their employees; many do not have a means to compensate the people who worked for them, except for bylines. So it is important that they have fun, build friendships, and form a community to be motivated, get involved, and stick with the paper (Repko, 2009, Appendix p. 76; King, 2009, Appendix p. 83; Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix p. 59). Thomas Kaplan pinned on free food every night and newspaper-parties to keep up morale and motivation (2009, Appendix p. 117). Also Matt Westmoreland knew that the staff has to show that it has fun while working with the paper to make new students join the organization and to motivate all contributors (2009, Appendix p. 59). Otherwise, the editors in chief have to command their staffers, who are students as well and have about the same age. This is not an easy thing to do for some of the editors (Repko, 2009, Appendix p. 67).

Finally, when it comes to personnel, the job rotation posed a big problem. The majority of the jobs rotate every year. "So that means nobody really gets comfortable with it until they are about to finish" (Russonello, 2009, Appendix p. 23). The high turnover results from the fact that people graduate and leave the paper when they are fully trained (Smith, 2009, Appendix p. 90). For this reason, many newspapers work with a smaller core-staff that puts in 40 hours and more per week to provide at least a little continuity over the course of an academic year (Mullin, 2009, Appendix p. 46).

6.3 College newspapers and their host-institutions

The ten college newspapers analyzed for this thesis had very differing relationships to their host-institutions. Some described a perfect working-relationship, whereas others claimed that there were problems of accessibility and some kind of hostility between the newspaper and the administration. In every case, the university and particularly the administration remained an important news source for the student-run newspaper. They were the first source to ask about changes, decisions, policies, and events concerning the student-body and the campus community. Still, it was not easy for all newspapers to gather the information they needed.

Within the research for this thesis and the accomplishment of the interviews, the following methods of gathering administrative news for college newspapers were identified:

- **Freedom of newsgathering.** The ideal form is that reporters of student newspapers have the possibility to gather information freely even within the administration. They are allowed to interview administrators and even high-ranked officials such as deans or the university president. They are granted access to the data they need and are guaranteed at least the same rights as professional reporters.
- **Press releases.** An extreme position concerning newsgathering of student-newspaper reporters is when they have to rely uniquely on press releases from the university. They are not allowed to interview administrators or professors, nor are they granted particular access to data. They have to depend completely on the university releasing a statement about a certain matter.
- **Inquiries to the PR department.** The middle-position is when college newspapers have to file an inquiry to the public relations department of the university if they want a statement from an administrator or professor. They are not allowed to do independent interviews, but are referred to the PR department which treats their inquiry.

Of course there is a grey area between all these forms of relationships between a host-institution and a student-run publication. In the interviews, all three forms were to be found in differing degrees of intensity.

Several editors in chief complained that the university would prefer the reporters of the student newspaper running everything by the public relations department before or even without speaking to anyone else. Editors understood that it was the job of the spokesperson to protect the university and its reputation. Therefore they preferred if every piece of information the newspaper got would come from the PR department and if every interview would be done by representatives of the university and they passed on the answers to the newspaper. Employees at some universities were urged not to talk directly to the student newspaper and to refer them to the office of public affairs. Journalists obviously do not want to be fed PR, but prefer to speak directly to the person who is concerned. Unfortunately this was not very easy at some universities

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(Duray, 1009, Appendix p. 10; Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix pp. 63-64; Kaplan, 2009, Appendix p. 119).

“We are sort of at odds with each other, ideologically, the newspaper and the administration. But I can’t make them misbehave, as much as I’d like to” (Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 10). Very briefly, Duray (2009, Appendix p. 19) summed up the purpose of the college newspaper and its connection to the administration: “It’s our job to make sure that they’re doing their job right.”

To improve the situation, Duray was relieved that the newspaper had enough staff to cover every public meeting the administration held and to report about every decision they made. “It helps that the university is aware that somebody is looking at what they are doing. It doesn’t make for as many interesting stories, but it keeps them from misbehaving, certainly” (Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 11). Still, sometimes the university tries to make important decisions without the student newspaper constantly looking at them. Duray mentioned the example where a university board meeting was held during Spring Break, where there were almost no students (and no reporters) on campus. The decision concerned the increase of tuition fees and therefore Duray considered it “egregious” that the meeting was scheduled when nobody could attend (Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 11).

Other editors in chief were convinced that an independent daily newspaper was more of a convenience to the university than a burden: “I think that by and large the administration is happy to have this daily paper. It tries its best to be liberal minded about freedom of speech and freedom of information” (Russonello, 2009, Appendix p. 26). The *Tufts Daily* gets one interview with the president per semester to discuss the most important topics, but also to get feedback and critique (Russonello, 2009, Appendix p. 29). Matt Westmoreland, editor in chief of the *Daily Princetonian*, spoke of mutual respect between the newspaper staff and the administration. His writers were in regular contact with university representatives, who acknowledge the services the newspaper provides for their community (Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix p. 58).

The same is true for the *Daily Pennsylvanian*, where the reporters also were given the possibility to interview the university president once at the beginning of each semester. These meetings were obviously planned and the writer wouldn’t be able to do in-depth reporting: “We’re just gonna get what she wants us to know this year essentially. Which is fine, it creates good will and it means we get some time with the president, so if we ever have to meet with her one on one she knows who we are” (Mullin,

6.3 College newspapers and their host-institutions

2009, Appendix p. 47). It's "all about building good relationships and making sure the reporters are trustworthy," Juliette Mullin (2009, Appendix p. 44) stated. She put newsgathering above other tasks at the paper and refused to serve as the mouthpiece of the administration by publishing their press releases:

They still respect that we don't run press releases and you might as well give us the real news, because if you don't we'll find it anyway. We run so far as to literally stake out the house of the former dean of admissions to try to get a story. So they know we're not little kids that will run a press release if you send it to us. And they don't treat us that way, which is nice (Mullin, 2009, Appendix p. 50).

At New York University, the student newspaper was in close connection with the administration, because – just like at other universities – they were the major news source. But the *Washington Square News* dealt more with the press office than with the administrators directly. Editor in chief Rachel Smith spoke of a "healthy animosity" between the newspaper and the university press office. "The spokespeople at the university think that we are annoying to them in a certain way, because we print things that they might not necessarily want us to print" (Smith, 2009, Appendix p. 91). Smith continued: "It's not like an openly hostile relationship. They are sort of generally annoyed with us, but that means we're doing a good job, I think. If we found something they didn't want us to write. That's obviously news to the university, that's news they should know" (Smith, 2009, Appendix p. 91).

To Rossilynne Skena at Pennsylvania State University, the administration was a source and a subscriber at the same time. PennState bulk-subscribes to the whole circulation of the newspaper to distribute it on campus for free. This is a particularly interesting connection since this case is the only one in the sample where the university pays directly for the issues of the newspaper. (In other cases, the newspaper might be sponsored like other student clubs are.) But being a subscriber does not necessarily entail an open communication between the administration and the newspaper. The *Daily Collegian* has to rely mainly on press releases from the public relations website of the university. The newspaper staff can of course determine if a release is worth a story, but there are no regular meetings or interviews with administrators. The student newspaper has to depend largely on the PR department as a news source (Skena, 2009, Appendix pp. 100-102).

Another example for an “abnormal” relationship – in a positive way – is the *Yale Daily News*. Thomas Kaplan, editor in chief, explained that even the university president talks to newspaper staffers almost every day and is reachable for comments daily.

I’ve never talked to another editor at another college paper who’s had that kind of relationship with the administration. And it does create some points of concern. You have to be very careful about that. The positive working relationship does become too cozy of a working relationship where you’re afraid to write stories that might be critical, because of the fact that you deal so closely with these people. So that’s kind of the risk that comes with sources that make themselves so accessible. But on the whole we have a very positive, I think, professional relationship with the administration. [...] It’s a very unique approach, and a wonderful one. We really value it (Kaplan, 2009, Appendix p. 112).

But Kaplan also saw the value from the side of the university and the president in particular. He is always up to date when there is a story being published that involves him. Since he is asked for comments on many topics, he can always add his two cents and clear misunderstandings especially when it comes to sensitive topics. He is never blind-sighted about what is published in the student newspaper (2009, Appendix p. 112).

6.3.1 College newspapers and the Journalism Department

The connections between college newspapers and a journalism or communications department, school, or program were as various as the connections between them and the administration. As a rough guideline, the following possible forms of connections were identified with the aid of the interviews:

- **No connection.** The school does have a journalism or communications department, school, or program, but the newspaper has no relationship or connection to this institution.
- **Adviser connection.** The journalism or communications department, school, or program sends an adviser to help with problems concerning the daily production as well as ethical or financial issues. The roles of an adviser can be various, see chapter 3.4.1 “Faculty advisers.”

- **Educational connection.** The newspaper and its staff is involved in an educational program. Students might but do not have to be granted academic credits for working with the paper. Generally, faculty members serve as advisers and educators at the same time.
- **No journalism or communications department, school, or program.** The school does not have a journalism or communications department, school, or program.

Of course these categories are not exclusive. A newspaper can have an educational connection to a department and still have an adviser. There can even be an adviser connection between a school and a college newspaper without the school even having a journalism or communications department, school, or program. All four possibilities were encountered in the interviews in different forms.

The University of Connecticut for example offered a class where students could earn credits for reading and critiquing the *Daily Campus*. Unfortunately, in 2009 not enough students signed up for the course, therefore it was not offered any more. But generally editor in chief Christopher Duray (2009, Appendix p. 14) described his and his newspaper's relationship to the journalism department as very close: "We're really tied with those guys." The *Daily Campus* is an example for a mix of adviser and educational connection.

Princeton University on the other hand is no school that is known for sending a large number of graduates into journalism. Hence, there is no journalism department, but only a small journalism program. This program is not directly tied to the *Daily Princetonian*, but however the newspaper regularly invites visiting professors to come and talk about their field of interest and research to the newspaper staffers (Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix pp. 58-59). This example shows an educational connection where the school does not have direct influence on the newspaper.

Another example for a very close educational connection is the *Massachusetts Daily Collegian* at the University of Massachusetts. Students working with the paper can get academic credits for this work. But the credits are only for internships (which means, they would also get academic credits for working at a professional newspaper), not for their journalism courses in general, since there is no supervision from the journalism department (King, 2009, Appendix p. 79). This connection is particularly interesting since the school promotes engaging in an extracurricular activity such as the campus

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newspaper by offering the same status and therefore also the same credits as professional newspapers. The administration acknowledges the educational function and the relevance of the student publication by granting credits. This connection would – for this specific characteristic – even be considered as independent according to Ingelhart (see chapter 2.2.4 “Independence”). King also mentioned that the Collegian Advisory Board was composed of professors and other members of the UMass community who discussed the paper, gave advice and feedback if asked for (King, 2009, Appendix p. 80). The *Massachusetts Daily Collegian* also relies on the journalism department to teach students the basic ground rules of journalism, such as ethics and law. They, on the other hand, teach writing and reporting, since this is considered work that is “learning by doing” (King, 2009, Appendix pp. 84-85). In addition to this, the journalism department serves as an advertiser for the student newspaper and should promote the publication and encourage talented people to get involved (King, 2009, Appendix p. 87).

The classical adviser connection is realized between New York University and the *Washington Square News*. Professors of the journalism department serve on the board directing the student publication. Additionally, the adviser is also a faculty member of the NYU journalism department (Smith, 2009, Appendix p. 90).

An interesting connection exists between the *Daily Collegian* and Pennsylvania State University. The journalism department runs a so-called “candidate program” where faculty from the department teach basic journalism ground rules and writing and reporting techniques to determine which students are skilled and talented enough to work with the student newspaper. The final decision is taken by the editor in chief of the paper (who is helped by the professor leading the candidate program). The faculty is also involved in the board of directors, who deals with the financial and other big decisions concerning the paper (Skena, 2009, Appendix p. 100).

One of the most renowned schools of communication is the Annenberg School at the University of Pennsylvania. Nevertheless, Juliette Mullin, editor in chief of the local student newspaper, did not consider the school as a partner at all. They did not receive advice nor comment on their newspaper, but worked completely on their own. The only help they got from non-students was through their alumni organization which was created for this exact purpose. Alumni who worked with the paper in their time as a student were reachable when there were problems or questions former students could help with (Mullin, 2009, Appendix p. 46).

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Also Giovanni Russonello, editor in chief of the *Tufts Daily* explained that his newspaper stood alone when it came to the involvement of the school: “We don’t work with a department, we’re completely on our own and in some ways that hurts, in some ways that helps” (Russonello, 2009, Appendix p. 27).

Summing up, two editors in chief answered that their school did not have a journalism department nor equivalent. Russonello explained that Tufts University only offered a minor in communications and media studies, with which the paper has no official relationship (2009, Appendix p. 26).

Four of the editors in chief questioned worked at newspapers that had an adviser from the journalism department or other departments (Smith, 2009, Appendix p. 90; Skena, 2009, Appendix p. 100; Duray, 2009, Appendix pp. 11-12; King, 2009, Appendix p. 82). Duray added that his newspaper did not have an official faculty adviser, but that he was in regular contact with professors from the journalism department who were prepared to help and advise whenever they were needed. In his opinion, this relationship came closest to an adviser (2009, Appendix p. 12).

The educational relationship had very different specifications among the newspapers analyzed. Three editors in chief explained that their newspaper had some kind of educational connection to the host-institution. Matt Westmoreland (2009, Appendix pp. 58-59) regularly invited professors from the small journalism program at Princeton University to come and talk to his staffers about their specific fields of study. The *Daily Collegian* at Pennsylvania State University profited from a faculty-run candidate program to find future writers for the newspaper (Skena, 2009, Appendix p. 100). The University of Connecticut offered a course called “Daily Campus critique” in the past that analyzed and critiqued the student newspaper (Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 14). These three cases are different forms of educational relationships between the host-institution and the campus publication.

However, the majority of the interviewees answered that their newspaper did not have a connection to the department of journalism (or its equivalent), even though the school has one. Among them is Thomas Kaplan (2009, Appendix p. 118) from the *Yale Daily News*, Juliette Mullin (2009, Appendix p. 46) from the *Daily Pennsylvanian*, Melissa Repko (2009, Appendix p. 70) from the *Columbia Spectator*, and the anonymous editor (Anonymous, 2009, Appendix p. 123). Also, Rossilynne Skena (2009, Appendix p. 100) was counted among this group, since there was no formal connection with the College of Communications at Pennsylvania State University.

Briefly, two newspapers had no journalism department (nor equivalent), four had an adviser, three an educational connection, and five no connection at all with the journalism department or its equivalent. The total number sums up to more than ten because some roles overlapped for some newspapers (such as the adviser and educational connection).

6.3.2 College newspapers and advisers

Since several of the editors in chief answered that their newspaper was assigned a faculty adviser for editorial and/or financial matters, this topic should be devoted a separate chapter.

Christopher Duray spoke in the interview about the financial adviser of the *Daily Campus* at the University of Connecticut. The adviser is also the contact to the school, he serves as a link to the administration. He supervises the finances of the newspaper, since it is partly financed through student fee money. This is also the reason why the *Daily Campus* is confronted with a second adviser who oversees the production: the student affairs adviser. This person is not specifically assigned to the newspaper, but controls every club that gets student fee money and looks after how the granted sum of money is spent. Duray explained: “Her actual influence and what she can do with this paper is zero. She can talk to me and she can bring issues up with me. But I’ve no obligation to deal with them, whatsoever” (2009, Appendix p. 11).

Also the *Massachusetts Daily Collegian* has a financial adviser assigned by the school. This is particularly interesting since the newspaper does not receive university or student money. However, the university oversees finances and is “serving as sort of a bank almost” (King, 2009, Appendix p. 81). The financial adviser is a paid employee of the university and oversees the finances of the publication. In addition to this, editor in chief Michael King put together the Collegian Advisory Board which consists of professors and other members of the college community who meet once a month to talk about the problems the newspaper is having and offer advice (King, 2009, Appendix p. 80). The *Massachusetts Daily Collegian* does not have an editorial adviser.

The student-run newspaper at NYU is advised in two different ways. Firstly, there are faculty members on the editorial managing board of the newspaper. Secondly, the

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Washington Square News has an academic adviser who critiques the paper and helps when there are problems. But “he doesn’t tell us what to do,” Smith (2009, Appendix p. 90) insisted. The editor is not directly involved in the daily production, but serves more as a sounding-board for upcoming problems (2009, Appendix p. 90).

Besides the above-mentioned candidate program for the *Daily Collegian* at Pennsylvania State University, the faculty member serves as news adviser for the campus paper as well. Advising also takes place through the candidate program, since they are tightly connected to the journalism department and all students participating in the candidate program are also working in the newsroom of the *Daily Collegian* while they are in class (Skena, 2009, Appendix p. 100).

In summary, none of the editors in chief interviewed for this thesis considered a faculty adviser for their newspaper as a negative thing. But still, they accentuated that the adviser had no say in the editorial content of the publication, nor was he able to prior review articles or censor in any way. This shows that they are aware of the negative influence an adviser can possibly have on a newspaper. But in their particular cases, all interviewees experienced their adviser as helpful and motivating rather than restraining.

6.3.3 College newspapers and independence

Every single editor in chief highlighted the independence of his student newspaper from the university or college. When closer examining the ties between the host-institution and the publication, one can see that independence has different meanings for each of them. The different views upon independence should be explained and compared by means of the examples of the individual newspapers.

“With the exception of that student fee money, we have a pretty strong independence from the paper [sic!; university, KL]. And they have always kind of respected that,” Christopher Duray (2009, Appendix p. 12) stated. The *Daily Campus* has office space provided by the university and is allocated student fee money, which is paid by the students every year to support different student activities and clubs. Still, Duray claimed editorial independence for his paper. Neither the adviser, nor the school itself has influence on the editorial content (2009, Appendix p. 12).

The *Tufts Daily* is “financially independent,” but not incorporated as a business. This means that the newspaper operates under the business umbrella of Tufts University. They cannot make transactions or receive payments without going through the university (Russonello, 2009, Appendix pp. 25-26). Nevertheless, Russonello considered the newspaper as independent.

Another view on independence was the one of Matt Westmoreland, editor in chief of the *Daily Princetonian*. “The *Prince* is entirely independent from the university. It’s the only college newspaper in the country that has never been at some point subsidized by the university [...]. So we are independent through and through” (Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix p. 54). The offices of the newspaper are located on campus grounds and within university buildings. But the space is rented and not provided free of charge (Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix p. 56).

Michael King considered the *Massachusetts Daily Collegian* as independent, but also thought that the newspaper would be challenged by this step into independence. This was the reason why he put together a legal brief, stating how the paper wants to live its independence and what its rights are. Luckily, according to King, they never had to use it, but it served as a security, should the newspaper ever be in any trouble concerning its independence from the university. Nevertheless, total independence can not be assigned to the *Massachusetts Daily Collegian* since it receives free office space on campus and is also a student club in its classic definition for the students of the University of Massachusetts. In addition to this, as mentioned afore, the university assigned a financial adviser, looked after the finances of the newspaper, and served as some sort of bank to the publication (King, 2009, Appendix p. 81).

As much as the other editors in chief did, Rossilynne Skena insisted on the independence of her newspaper:

There is no one who has prior review of articles from the university. So that’s really good for us because we’re able to investigate, we’re able to really peel the layers off of the issues. We’re also able to comment on the university or the borough and say, you know “PennState, you really screwed up here.” Or “PennState, you did a good job.” We don’t have anyone from the administration who is there to look over our shoulder (Skena, 2009, Appendix pp. 98-99).

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The newspaper that comes closest to Ingelhart's definition of independence (see chapter 2.2.4 "Independence") is probably the *Yale Daily News* at Yale University. Even though the newspaper carries the name of Yale University in its title (which would not be "allowed" for an independence according to the definition of Ingelhart), Kaplan spoke of complete independence. The *Daily News* does not receive university funding in any way. Its office building is located on campus grounds, but has always been their property and has been specially built for the newspaper several decades ago. Also the relationship to the university is characterized by mutual respect and respect for the independence and freedom of the press: "They do not try to meddle in any way with our coverage" (Kaplan, 2009, Appendix p. 111).

None of the newspapers in the sample can be considered truly independent from the point of view of Ingelhart. But as already stated afore, this degree of independence is nearly impossible to reach for a student publication, since there always will be and have to be ties between the newspaper and its host-institution. It is also doubtful if there even is a student-run newspaper that entirely measures up to the exigences of Ingelhart, since this would prohibit the newspapers to carry the name of their host-institution, to be a student club for students of a specific university only, and even to pay rent for university-owned office-space or appliances. Still, some newspapers more than others have achieved a high degree of independence. For more dependent newspapers, it has to be kept in mind that many of them would not exist if they would claim further independence, especially when it comes to finances.

All editors in chief had one thing in common: They accentuated that there was no member of the university who had prior review of articles or could decide which articles not to run etc. At some universities, the editor in chief was chosen by a board of faculty members (among students and, in some cases, professional journalists). Several newspapers were assigned an adviser from their host-institutions. But none of the editors in chief spoke of prior review, repression, nor censorship they had to endure. Therefore, it generally seems that even though none of the newspapers is completely independent according to Ingelhart, they all have managed to achieve the highest possible degree of independence and do not have to fear negative university-influence on the editorial content.

6.3.4 College newspapers as a means of internal communication

As already indicated in the theoretical part of this thesis (see chapter 4.4 “Internal communications”), college newspapers do also fulfill the role of a medium of internal communication for their host-institutions. This is also true for independent newspapers. The editors in chief were well aware that the university needed them and that this dependence may entail more freedom.

I never really feel limited by the administration. I am not afraid that they'd cut us off, because we're too valuable of a resource for them to get out their message. We can't be always on their side, but we can also be a great tool for them get out word to alumni about a new dean or a new department. So because of that we really have a lot of freedom to deal with critical issues. There's really no situation I can think of where I felt like they were gonna cut us off (Repko, 2009, Appendix p. 74).

A university is a big corporation and a society in itself. It surely needs a way to publish important messages and to reach the largest possible number of members of its society. If it wasn't for the college newspaper, the university would be forced to establish its own medium to reach the students and the community as a whole. This was already diagnosed by Thomas Fischer (1973, pp. 66-69), who considered the role of the student newspaper especially important for the university. The institution would need a publication anyway to communicate news, schedules, policies, etc. This publication would also cost a lot of money; it would need a professional staff that would demand higher salaries than student editors (who mostly work for no financial compensation whatsoever).

Therefore even a student-run newspaper that is not financially independent and would cost money to the university or college would save costs, because no specific university-owned publication to communicate news would be needed anymore. In addition to this, Ingelhart (1993, p. 45) argued, a “laboratory” for journalism students is needed, where they could practice skills in writing, newsgathering, and managing a publication. Every institute of post-secondary education which includes a journalism department or school needs some kind of activity where students can learn journalistic skills in practice. A campus newspaper “kills two birds with one stone” by offering a medium that publishes internal news which is essential for the university or college, and by providing a practice laboratory for journalism students to gain working experience in the media sector.

One issue, where the function as an internal means of communication was particularly valuable and important for the university, was mentioned by Melissa Repko from Columbia University. At the beginning of her term as editor in chief of the *Columbia Spectator*, a student suicide upset the small campus community. When covering this tragedy, the newspaper worked very closely together with the administration. They gave them many suggestions for their coverage, such as publishing information about where to go when a student has problems, about the campus crisis center, and psychological aid for students. At this point, the administration found the coverage and information provided by the student newspaper helpful and important, since it was the best means to reach the whole community and to inform them about important services provided on campus to prevent such tragedies from reoccurring (Repko, 2009, Appendix pp. 70-71).

College journalists are very well aware of the service they provide to their universities for little or no cost (Russonello, 2009, Appendix p. 33; Anonymous, 2009, Appendix p. 122). Therefore many of the editors in chief felt very secure in their position and role and were not afraid to be critical of the university.

6.4 Critical journalism in college newspapers

As mentioned earlier, college newspapers see critical journalism as one of their major tasks in their community (see chapter 6.1 “The functions of a college daily newspaper”). They are supposed to be critical about issues concerning the student body, concerning the neighborhood, but especially the function of critique is directed towards the administration: “We try not to let them get away with anything. There would really be no point to the paper at all if we were slacking off at that point” (Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 19).

This role was taken very seriously by the editors in chief interviewed for this thesis. They saw it as their responsibility to be critical since they were the only ones that got so close to the university and could report from the inside. They were the only medium that cared about these issues. Other newspapers would not be interested as much in university news. Therefore the campus newspaper is the only media outlet that is able and willing to observe the actions of the administration (Repko, 2009, Appendix p. 69). “That’s the role of a local college paper. We can report on things that other

communities wouldn't care about, other groups of people wouldn't care about. But if we can't catch those stories, then there is no story" (Repko, 2009, Appendix p. 69).

Most editors in chief reported that they felt independent and not pressured by the university to write in a specific style or to favor a specific opinion. Even though the university might be directly or indirectly involved in the production of the newspaper, "they couldn't tell us what to write," explained Rachel Smith (2009, Appendix p. 90) from the *Washington Square News* at NYU. Some editors even favored their student status when it came to covering the university and the administration, because they were granted more access than professional reporters. They know the system from the inside, they are familiar with the people and therefore it is easier for the student journalists to do investigative pieces due to an extended access to internal university information (Mullin, 2009, Appendix p. 42).

Especially those editors in chief of newspapers with a very close relationship to their host-institutions reported that this might be difficult in certain situations, since a working relationship that is too close would limit the possibility for criticism. So they, as editors in chief, have the responsibility to draw a very clear line between the student newspaper with its staff and the university, which can only exert control upon the students to a certain degree, but not upon the student journalists (Repko, 2009, Appendix p. 69; Kaplan, 2009, Appendix p. 112).

Still, at some universities the major problem when student journalists are doing in-depth reporting is accessibility and the denial of relevant information by the university or the administration in particular. Some were overwhelmed with the public relations from the university: "When we talked to the school [about a critical topic, KL], they were feeding us a lot of PR" (Mullin, 2009, Appendix p. 41). The editors in chief saw it as a major goal of the university to publish positive information about themselves and to avoid publicity scandals:

I would say there's not a lot of people who are critical of the university. I think the university is a very well run machine to put out a positive image of themselves. And sometimes because of that the bad things they're doing get sort of lost. And I think we sort of try to find things that aren't fair to students. So that's really who we are there for: the students. So it comes off as critical to the university, but I don't think that's necessarily a bad thing (Smith, 2009, Appendix p. 94).

Also at other universities, administrators and university officials do not always talk to student reporters or are only willing to comment off the record when it comes to critical issues, even though the person in question might have a critical opinion and be critical of his employer. But not many want this information to be published under their names (King, 2009, Appendix p. 85). “So when somebody talks to us, we have the ability to put that thing in print. But it’s just a matter of who’s gonna talk” (Russonello, 2009, Appendix p. 32).

I have the huge benefit that I sit on 125 years of history and the *DP* has become such an institution at Penn and such an important one of that, that they kind of have to talk to us. They can’t really get away with not talking to us. And when they don’t talk to us, we say it (Mullin, 2009, Appendix p. 42).

Thomas Kaplan from the *Yale Daily News* made an interesting point when saying that in his opinion, some college newspapers can be a little too critical when it comes to topics concerning the administration. They tend to treat their host-institution or the administration as if they were their enemies and it is the newspaper that is there to protect the students from harm done by them. Kaplan considers this attitude as counterproductive and harming the relationship with the university (Kaplan, 2009, Appendix p. 118). “I feel like there is a mutual respect and we are not going to editorialize saying they don’t care about Yale students, because they do. And editorials written with that kind of tone I think are sometimes counterproductive” (Kaplan, 2009, Appendix p. 118).

Duray (2009, Appendix pp. 19, 22; see also Repko, 2009, Appendix p. 74) from the University of Connecticut saw it as the “goal” of his newspaper to criticize the administration: “We always are keeping an eye on them to do that. I mean you have to do criticism objectively. You know, I can’t write an editorial that’s like ‘President Hogan sucks, he’s doing this thing, he should watch out.’ [...] Criticism stops at the commentary section.” Melissa Repko from the *Columbia Spectator* used a metaphor to describe the strict separation of opinion and news: the “chinese wall” (Repko, 2009, Appendix p. 69).

Criticism always has to be backed by facts. In news articles, criticism cannot be expressed by a single journalist, but only through the comment of a third person who makes a critical claim about the university. Due to the clear separation of news and opinion, an opinion in a news article can only come from somebody other than the

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journalist. Criticism has to be done via other people (Russonello, 2009, Appendix pp. 32-33; Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix p. 62; King, 2009, Appendix p. 85; Repko, 2009, Appendix p. 74).

This is paradox, since it is the journalist who decides whom to interview and whose comment to print. This is also direct critique since he would have the power to stir the article in a completely different direction by quoting for example the administration only.

In the content analysis, roughly 20 % of the total number of articles of 632 were identified as critical reporting. Every newspaper in the sample published articles that criticized a member of the campus community. Some examples drawn from articles in the sample should illustrate how criticism is passed on several matters:

Every student registered for the UConn text message alert system probably received a text warning them about a “suspicious activity” that occurred at approximately 6:30 Saturday evening around Hilltop Apartments. Depending on your cell phone service, you may have received the message at 9:30 or even as late as 11; not exactly the most reliable way to keep students safe and informed.

For this particular disturbance, the text system caused more panic than relief. The message literally stated, “UConn police reporting suspicious incident at Hilltop Apartments at 6:35 P.M.” It then told students to refer to the UConn emergency alert Web site and Huskymail for more information. Whether or not students immediately rushed to their laptops to check their e-mail, the only message to be found was a pretty worthless description of a less than “suspicious” activity.

The e-mail explained that a male, about 6 feet tall and wearing a red jacket, came within a few feet of a female who began to feel uncomfortable. After an unknown period of time, estimated to be very brief, both parties turned and left in opposite directions without having spoken. This suspicious activity ultimately ended in zero harm and nothing illegal. With many students out around campus, all that was accomplished by the UConn Police alert was an increased level of fear.

However, last Wednesday night at Charter Oak Apartments, an actual crime occurred. The Hartford Courant reported on Saturday that a drug deal went sour - so sour that students really had something to look out for. A UConn student living in Brown Hall prearranged a drug deal with two non-students. In the course of the illegal transaction, these two non-students pointed a

gun at the student and proceeded to beat him and rob him, taking about \$ 6,000 in cash and \$ 3,000 in merchandise. Once the two men left, someone apparently called the police to report the incident. The two assailants were not apprehended until Thursday night, according to the *Courant*. UConn, however, chose not to inform students of the attack because the police knew who the assailants were and were confident that the two had left campus. While UConn police also noted that the victim was specifically targeted, The *Daily Campus* reported, this would have been UConn's best opportunity so far to utilize the text alert system because of the presence of a gun.

While it is great of UConn to continuously implement new ways to protect our campus, this time their efforts do not seem quite as noble. Students are beginning to question whether this really is an effective use of funds, or just a big publicity stunt. Regardless of UConn's intentions, students just want to feel safe on campus. We can just hope that UConn's methods will keep us safe and prevent further incidents (Daily Campus, 2009b).

This articles was clearly critical of UConn's approach to crime alerts via a text messages. The editorial critiqued that students were informed about minor incidents where no harm was done and nothing illegal happened, whereas they were left in uncertainty when there was an actual crime with guns involved. This articles was considered a perfect example for a critical approach to a university-related topic.

The second example was published in the *Columbia Spectator* and treated the allocation of funding for the Manhattanville expansion and the way Columbia University did (or did not) inform its community about the spending of the money:

Now, there may yet be a good explanation as to how Columbia plans to overcome these legal challenges in a way that would still qualify the project as "shovel-ready." So far, unfortunately, they are either unwilling or unable to provide us with any such reasoning, which leads me to my main critique: transparency. According to the president's stimulus Web site, transparency and accountability are paramount in the administering of our tax dollars. It says: "We cannot overstate the importance of this effort. We are asking the American people to trust their government with an unprecedented level of funding to address the economic emergency. In return, we must prove to them that their dollars are being invested in initiatives and strategies that make a difference in their communities and across the country."

The fact is that right now, no one knows anything about Columbia's specific plans to receive stimulus funds, except that they exist. The administration has kept mum, coyly refusing to confirm or deny the existence of their application, or tell us what agencies are involved. Local politicians that might

have kept them accountable are being kept in the dark. And ultimately, in the current economic climate, no one knows whether the Revised General Project Plan (which was supposed to begin last year) is even still economically viable. No matter what your position on the expansion may be, surely we can all agree to hold our university to the same standards to which we hold our government. We have a right to know about and participate in a process which, after all, is being carried out in our names.

The Student Coalition on Expansion and Gentrification does not oppose Columbia seeking stimulus money for the expansion. We do, however, oppose them doing so in a nontransparent way. By doing so, Columbia would be going against the paramount goal of its alumnus-president, just months after he so tactfully reminded us of that balance between progress and service. Ultimately, Columbia is defined by its affiliates and vice-versa. Whether we like it or not, as students, people will judge us based on our school's actions. So let's show the whole city that Columbia still cares about the principles of transparency and accountability. Let's do some service to our community. Please join us in a student-community rally, this Saturday, from 12 to 2 p.m. at the Sundial, to say, "No blank checks for the expansion." A petition will be circulating to demand a meeting with the administration, which has ignored our repeated requests for a meeting to discuss these issues. Come, rally, and be heard! (Totushek, 2009).

However, also articles that were defined as obsequious could be found in the sample:

I don't know exactly what he [Glen Miller, basketball trainer at the University of Pennsylvania, KL] said in the locker room on Wednesday at Tom Gola Arena against La Salle, but the Quakers have responded in a big way. They are playing with passion and intensity. They are playing with direction. Leaders have emerged.

And after last night, I am more convinced than ever before that Miller is the right man to lead this team, and that this team, with all of its youth and inexperience, is ready to make a legitimate run in the Ivy League this season.

Perhaps it's wrong of me to make such a bold claim after only 60 minutes of Big 5 basketball, when anything can happen. To be fair, Penn did lose both games.

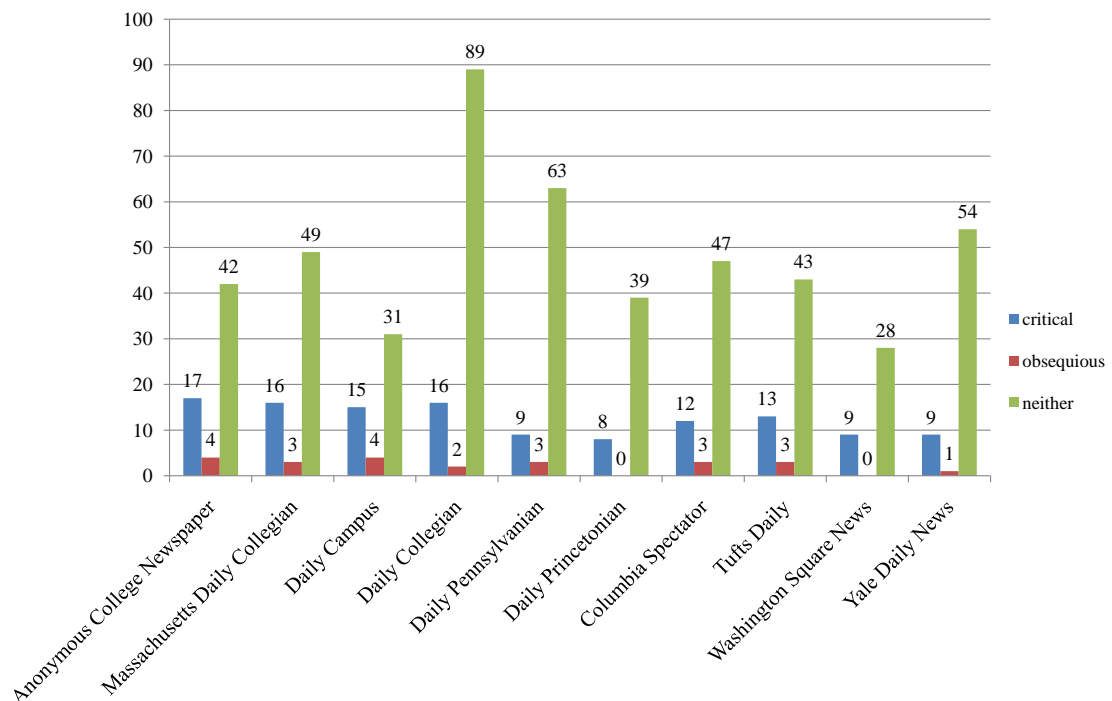
On Saturday, however, Miller squeezed every last bit of effort out of his young team, coaching them and challenging them to play like there was no tomorrow (Todres, 2009, pp. 11, 14).

A second example was drawn from the *Yale Daily News*:

The new contracts are truly unprecedented, and are incredible for maintaining job standards and preventing layoffs despite the wretched state of the economy. They also help ensure that, as the University grows, union membership will grow too - thus creating hundreds of good jobs that will help build a strong economic foundation for families in New Haven.

These new contracts offer a powerful example to all those who are cynical about the possibility of change. They also demonstrate the power that organized groups of people can have in improving the conditions of their lives.

If Yale, through the efforts of its thousands of employees, can not only change but actually improve the local economy in this time of crisis, then why shouldn't we, as thousands of students and citizens of this city, help realize similar change through other local institutions? (Baran, 2009)



Ill. 6, Critical articles in college newspapers, depiction by author

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The largest number of critical articles was found in the anonymous daily newspaper (17 of a total number of 63 articles). However, since the number of articles analyzed per newspaper differed, the largest proportion of critical articles could be found in the *Daily Campus* at the University of Connecticut. Roughly 27 % of the articles in the sample of the anonymous newspaper could be defined as critical. The second highest proportion of critical articles was published in the *Washington Square News* (24.32 %), followed by the *Massachusetts Daily Collegian* with a proportion of 23.52 % of the articles (16 of a total of 62) being critical, and by the *Tufts Daily* with a proportion of 22.03 % (13 articles from a total of 59). The lowest number of critical articles was identified in the *Daily Princetonian* (8 from a total of 47 articles analyzed), whereas the lowest proportion of critical articles in the sample was found in the *Daily Pennsylvanian* (12 %). Interestingly, both newspapers are issued at private, Ivy League universities.

Since a low number of critical articles does not automatically mean the newspaper is the lapdog of the university administration, other variables have to be considered. To put these numbers into proportion, it has to be reviewed also how large the number of articles identified as obsequious was. Generally, only a very small proportion (3.6 %, which makes up for only 23 articles from a total of 632) of the articles in the sample could be identified as obsequious journalism.

No obsequious articles could be found in the *Washington Square News* and in the *Daily Princetonian*. Therefore, since the *Daily Princetonian* was found to be one of the newspapers with the lowest proportion of critical articles, and it had the lowest proportion of obsequious articles too. The style of this newspaper is therefore very neutral and balanced.

The *Washington Square News* on the other hand was found to be one of the newspapers with the highest proportions of critical articles as well as with the lowest proportion of obsequious reporting. From the sample of this thesis, the *Washington Square News* can be considered as the newspaper publishing the most critical content. This is especially interesting since the WSN has several ties to New York University and is overseen by a faculty adviser.

The second and third lowest proportions of obsequious articles were found in the *Daily Collegian* at Pennsylvania State University (1.87 %, which means 2 articles of a total of 107 articles) and in the *Yale Daily News* (1.56 %, which is only one article of a total of 64 articles).

Some newspapers however published more obsequious articles than the average. The highest proportion of obsequious articles (8 %, which accounts for four articles) was in the *Daily Campus* at the University of Connecticut. Interestingly, the *Daily Campus* had the highest proportion of critical articles as well. It serves therefore as the counter piece of the *Daily Princetonian*, which accounted for the lowest proportions of critical and obsequious articles.

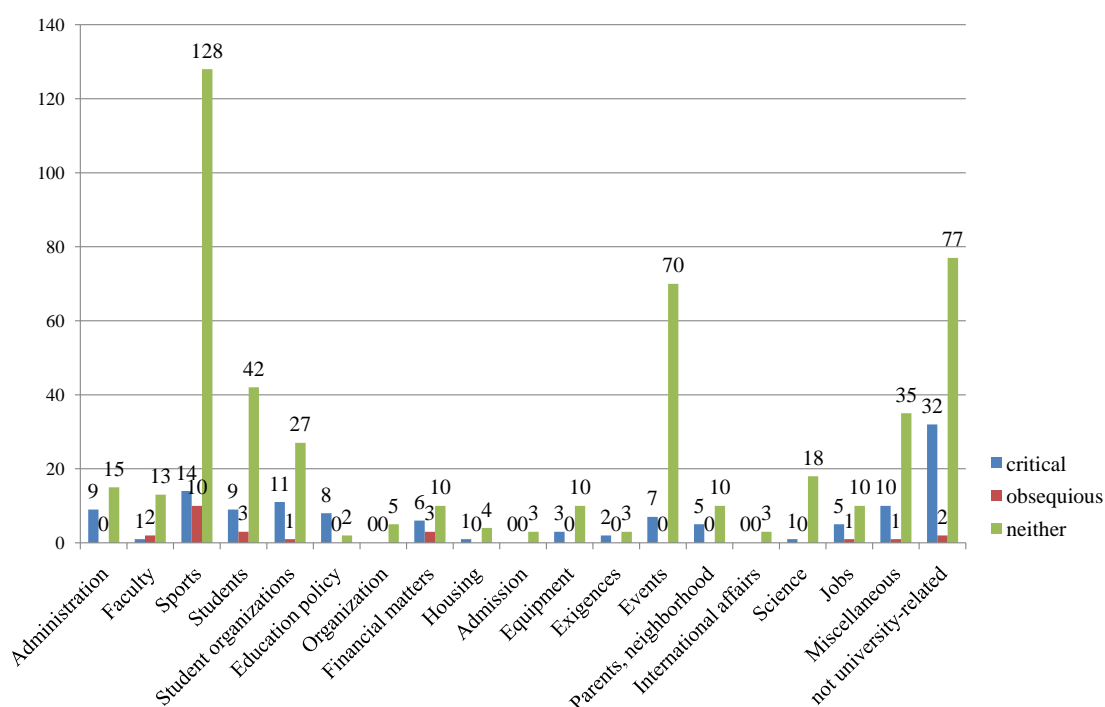
After the *Daily Campus*, the anonymous college newspaper ranked second when it came to the largest proportion of obsequious articles (8 %, which means 4 articles from a total of 50), followed by the *Tufts Daily* (5.08 % or 3 of the total of 59 articles were obsequious) and the *Columbia Spectator* (4.48 %, which means 3 articles from 62).

As one can see from these remarks, no significant differences between public and private institutions were detected. Also, newspapers that had a very close connection to the host-institution (such as one or several advisers or a close educational or even financial connection) did not publish significantly less articles that were considered critical. Of course, the sample was too small to provide for representative conclusions. Therefore it is more a general overview about critical and obsequious journalism in college newspapers that can be drawn from the content analysis.

Generally, these numbers show how many articles were considered as critical or obsequious, but they do not tell which topics the critical or obsequious articles were about. Interestingly, the highest proportion of critical articles (80 %) was found about issues concerning education policy. Yet in total, only 10 articles about this topic were published in all newspapers during the sample period, of which eight were critical. A very high percentage of critical articles were also published about exigences and proficiency levels of courses (40 % or 2 of a total of only 5 articles) and the university administration (37.5 % or 9 of a total of 24 articles). The topic “administration” is particularly interesting since there were no articles in the sample being obsequious when it came to issues concerning the administration. Other topics that were treated quite critical were parents, families, and the neighborhood (33.33 % or 5 articles of a total of 15 articles), financial matters (31.58 % or 6 articles of a total of 19 articles), and jobs and life after graduation (31.25 % or 5 of a total of 15 articles). Large proportions of critical reporting were also found about topics that had nothing to do with the university (28.83 % or 32 articles of a total of 111 articles) and student organizations and groups (28.21 % or 11 articles of a total of 39). No critical articles could be found about organization, admission, and international affairs, whereas no newspaper published obsequious articles about these topics either.

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The content analysis also provided data about the number of obsequious articles about the different topics. The highest proportions of obsequious articles appeared about financial matters (15.79 % or 3 articles of a total of 19 articles) and faculty members (12.50 % or 2 articles of a total of 16). On the other hand, the majority of the topics was not presented by obsequious articles at all. Especially the high number of obsequious reporting about faculty members is interesting and presumably due to the fact that the large majority of the universities and colleges in the sample are very small and therefore offer a close relationship between the students and faculty members, which will lead to a higher number of obsequious articles, since the reporters either are tightly connected to the person they are writing about or maybe even are afraid of negative consequences their article could have if the person in question does not like its content.



Ill. 7, Critical topics in college newspapers, depiction by author

When critical articles are published, generally the university, the administrators, or the person in question responded to the student newspaper in a certain way, either through a call or an e-mail, or through a guest column or a letter to the editor in which he or she responded and published the view on the topic. For the editors in chief, it is important

to provide an opportunity for the university to respond when there are accusations against them (Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix p. 61).

All editors were familiar with angry calls or e-mails from the administration when they did not agree with what was published in the campus newspaper. Some reported that it was usually once every three weeks that they heard from angry administrators (Smith, 2009, Appendix p. 91), others encountered this problem more frequently and were confronted with angry readers every week (Repko, 2009, Appendix pp. 69-70). Still, one editor considered angry calls or e-mails a good sign, because it meant that the paper was relevant and was fulfilling its function as a watchdog and controlling instance on campus (Repko, 2009, Appendix p. 69).

The most common reason for complaints is that the administration considers the content of a specific issue as unfair. It is mostly the fairness of the content that is addressed, not its factual correctness or accuracy (Repko, 2009, Appendix p. 69). When people are calling up angry, usually the editor in chief has to find out if there was really something wrong in the article or if the caller is just angry at himself for having done something the newspaper found out and made public. One editor explained that it was seldom wrong information that got the newspaper in trouble (Mullin, 2009, Appendix p. 38).

We write editorials, our house editorials that usually speak to the university. They offer recommendations or praise for the university. And sometimes we get dialogue from those, like the university will write us a letter back and we print it and we get feedback from them based on that. It's rare that it affects concrete change, but that's our goal, to be a voice they hopefully listen to from the students (Smith, 2009, Appendix p. 90).

The effect a campus newspaper can produce on its community varies from how the newspaper perceives its own role. Some editors in chief liked to see their publication as powerful and able to induce change. They want their newspaper to make a difference, even though this might not always be easy. "I think that while the newspaper can't form policy that it certainly has power for example on its opinion pages advocating what it believes is the best interest of the students" (Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix p. 59).

Christopher Duray (2009, Appendix p. 9) saw the power of student newspapers to affect change more critical:

The extent of the newspaper to influence people is questionable. And that's sort of the way it should be. I think the extent of our actual change, like if I want something to change, I could write an editorial about it. I can make sure that the news is covering it, so that it's in the presence. We can make certain issues, big issues, make sure it's on the front page every single day, make sure everyone knows we don't like it. But at the end of the day, it's the students, it's the people, the citizens, who have to go and actually make that change. And it's frustrating sometimes. Because you know, like I really wish you guys would understand exactly what this issue means and act on it. But no. You can only go so far and laying out the facts before you start getting into a biased area. So it's frustrating because at the end of the day, once we reach the citizens it's completely out of our hands. But that's the way it should be, honestly, because if we've done our jobs right and we found all the facts and we present them correctly, and we get to the citizens and they don't think it need to be changed, then it's nothing that deserves to be changed. And that's democracy. So there you go. It's a tool and a curse (Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 9).

In short: "What you can change is up to the people" (Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 10).

6.4.1 The watchdog role of college newspapers

Without being asked explicitly about the watchdog function of their newspaper, many editors in chief mentioned this term right away and described their self-perception as a watchdog for the campus community and even beyond. "Because if we're not the one who's calling things out, really there is no one else that's gonna call them out" (Mullin, 2009, Appendix p. 39; almost the same statement was made by Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix p. 59; Kaplan, 2009, Appendix p. 118; and Repko, 2009, Appendix p. 73).

Other newspapers have only a marginal interest in universities. Therefore universities don't have their own watchdog such as the government does with the professional press looking at them and their decisions. Student newspapers can be tenacious when nobody else would even publish a story about this matter. It doesn't even need to be undercover or investigative reporting to serve as a watchdog for their community. It already has an effect if the student newspaper is pointing out problems and initiating a public discussion (Mullin, 2009, Appendix pp. 39-40).

There are no other watchdogs on campus. The student government does not have the means and resources to reach a large audience. They can host events and release state-

ments, but they don't have many possibilities to express disapproval of administrative decisions. The campus newspaper on the other hand has the possibility and the duty to inform the whole community about what is "newsworthy" and to act as a watchdog (Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix p. 59).

This role becomes especially important at large universities. Yale University, for example, has more than 10,000 employees and a considerably large endowment. A lot of money changes hands when the administration makes a decision. For large, private universities, the watchdog role is even more crucial since they are not accountable to tax payers and have no one that is constantly and critically looking after what they are doing (Kaplan, 2009, Appendix p. 118). "We are really the only ones who are in a position to do that and to hold decision makers accountable for their decisions" (Kaplan, 2009, Appendix pp. 118-119).

Christopher Duray from the University of Connecticut does not only perceive his newspaper as a watchdog for the school administration, but even for the government of Storrs, CT, the small town where UConn is located. They are covering both, the university and the town, to let them know that there is somebody watching over what they are doing: "It does make them aware that what they're doing is not going to go unnoticed. People are going to ask them questions. And that itself is sort of a deterrent for something that students might not like" (Duray, 2009, Appendix pp. 9). Also Thomas Kaplan (2009, Appendix p. 114) expressed that in his opinion the *Yale Daily News* is not only a watchdog for the campus, but also for the city of New Haven.

When student journalists cover the administration, they pay close attention to attending every single public meeting they have to be able to cover every decision they make. This may not always lead to interesting cover-stories, "but it keeps them from misbehaving" (Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 11).

6.4.2 Stumbling blocks for critical journalism

The perception of stumbling blocks for critical journalism at college newspapers varies among the different editors in chief. Some did not feel any limits at all, others felt limited either

- by the administration itself

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- by the skills of the reporters
- by time and financial resources
- or by their loyalty and love to their college or university

Some editors know that they are a valuable resource for the university to spread important information for the campus community. This gives them much freedom and they do not have to be afraid of being cut off, since they are too valuable for the administration (Repko, 2009, Appendix p. 74).

Others mentioned accessibility of university officials as an important topic when it came to stumbling blocks for critical journalism in college newspapers. Many editors complained that they were not granted enough access especially when it comes to critical issues. Giovanni Russonello from the *Tufts Daily* for example stated that university professors and administrators often refused to talk to newspaper reporters when it came to criticizing the school (Russonello, 2009, Appendix p. 32). The same is true for the University of Pennsylvania: The administration “holds together” and does not talk to reporters when they are asking questions about certain issues (Mullin, 2009, Appendix p. 42). “They get very close mouthed when we try to dig deeper” (Smith, 2009, Appendix p. 94). The editors in chief reported that some administrators were reluctant to talk to newspaper reporters in general, especially about critical topics. Some professors and administrators won’t even speak to student journalists at all (Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix p. 63; Russonello, 2009, Appendix p. 32; Mullin, 2009, Appendix p. 42).

When it came to the administration, also bureaucracy was named as a stumbling block for critical journalism, since it makes it difficult to investigate. Fledgling writers encounter their limits when they try to dig deeper within the administration and are told that they are not allowed to inspect certain documents. They often do not know their rights as journalists and how far they can go for research and newsgathering. Therefore they can be intimidated quickly and give up on investigative reporting as soon as they encounter obstacles (Smith, 2009, Appendix p. 94; Kaplan, 2009, Appendix p. 119).

They are afraid of getting people mad at them and they are afraid of pushing the professors too hard. Because it’s a tough thing to do to force someone to say something that might be uncomfortable to say for them, that might

harm their career. So the best I can do is to push them to ask those questions (Russonello, 2009, Appendix p. 33).

Also, the high turnover at college newspapers entails that there is not much time to establish connections that would help with investigative pieces. A reporter does not get to know sources too well, because he spends the first time at the newspaper with training and when he is well trained enough to do investigative reporting, he usually graduates soon after that. This comes with the territory of being a college newspaper: One can spend a maximum of four years working for the newspaper before leaving college (Smith, 2009, Appendix p. 94; Kaplan, 2009, Appendix p. 119).

One editor in chief at a private university complained that the university was sometimes withholding unpleasant information from the campus newspaper (Mullin, 2009, Appendix p. 49). Only one editor of a private university mentioned that he never experienced problems with the university refusing access to documents with the argument that they are a private institution (Kaplan, 2009, Appendix p. 119). The admittance to view documents and other public information is fairly easy at public universities due to the open records law in every state of the U.S. (King, 2009, Appendix p. 85). But many students might not be informed about their rights. In addition to this, seven of the ten interviewees were students at private universities, where the legal circumstances are different (see chapter 3.6.4 “Newsgathering and the law”). The university can generally withhold all relevant internal information from reporters, since they are a private entity, not subject to state open records laws, and also not accountable to the tax payers.

Even though the university might be responsible for some problems college newspaper editors and reporters are having, several editors in chief announced that they were not afraid of actions the university could take against them if they published something critical about them:

They’re not gonna go and kick me out of Penn. They can’t do that, they would get in so much trouble. I would write like nine columns in the *DP* about Penn’s horrible people and that would be that. The national trouble the school would be in for trying to fire the editor of a newspaper for writing a story would be unreal. Their coverage would be so bad for so many weeks that it would not be worth it for them. So in some ways we’re protected but in some ways, you don’t really want the president of the university to be mad at you (Mullin, 2009, Appendix pp. 41-42).

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This quotation shows that the editors in chief of college newspapers generally are aware of the freedom they have, because they provide a valuable service to the university and they have the power to make actions against them public through their newspaper.

Another major stumbling block for critical journalism may be entailed by the position of the reporter himself and his double-role as a journalist and a university student at the same time. Mullin explained the difficulties a writer may encounter when he is caught between his duties and responsibilities as a journalist and his loyalty and faithfulness to the university he is studying at:

Something that can be hard is that most of us work here because we love Penn. Like really really love Penn in a way that sometimes I feel really corny describing. But I love everything from the campus, the atmosphere of the campus, I love my teachers, I love Amy Gutmann, I think she is a fantastic president, I really do. And when we have to cover things that are negative towards Amy Gutmann, it sucks, because I think she does a fabulous job. But at the same time I think it's my job to report if she does things wrong. We're all fans of this school. We're all cheering for the school. In the sports section we all want Penn to win every game. But that's not what we get to write a lot of the time. And that can be hard for us. It can be hard knowing that something we're doing makes our school look bad. Or something we're reporting on is something that makes our school look bad, because we don't want our school to look bad. But nevertheless it's a job we take really seriously, sometimes too seriously probably. [...] And it's especially hard in sports because whenever Penn doesn't win we just want to write a whole article being like "Penn played really well," even if Penn didn't play really well, you know. And we don't get to write that most of the time. A lot of the time we have to be like "Penn kind of sucked last night." And that's sucks, I don't like running these stories at all. I really like it when Penn wins, because we get to run happy stories (Mullin, 2009, Appendix p. 50).

This confirms what was assumed in the theoretic part of this thesis: that sport is a particularly important issue. Sports teams are the carrier of proud for many students. They can be cheered and celebrated and have an important status in the campus community. For a writer at a student newspaper it can therefore be both, difficult and even to some degree dangerous to write critical articles about the school or about a sports team, because it might enrage other students and create a disruption of the community. Since students are for all college newspapers the main audience, none can afford to rout them by publishing an upsetting article about something or somebody

of which the whole community is very proud. This makes it difficult for the writers to express critical opinions:

Obviously covering those kinds of things [critical issues, KL] are a little tricky for us as students, because we're covering the people that determine our futures. In many ways. But to be honest with you for me personally my time at the *DP* is gonna be more determining of my future than my time at Penn probably. My job experience as executive editor is gonna be what gets me a job, not my degree in Political Communication, necessarily. But it's tough for people because they're determining your future. It's tough with Amy Gutmann, because when we ask her questions about this kind of things you can see her getting upset and mad with you for asking that. But it's still our job to ask them (Mullin, 2009, Appendix pp. 40-41).

When it comes to critical journalism, also the topic of legal issues came up as a stumbling block for college journalists. Some editors in chief encountered legal problems or at least threats to take legal steps after publishing information that was unpleasant for some readers: "We get threatened to be sued a fair amount" (Mullin, 2009, Appendix p. 38). But generally, it stays with threats. It hardly ever happens that the newspaper is confronted with a real lawsuit. For some reason, Mullin (2009, Appendix p. 39) stated, "people like to sue media outlets." Therefore, a college newspaper needs good legal representation, even though it might never come to a real lawsuit. But even though many college newspaper editors may have contacts to alumni who are familiar with media rights, legal consulting costs a lot of money. "So I try to avoid even be in a situation where someone will threaten" (Mullin, 2009, Appendix p. 39).

The first law to refer to when it comes to legal threats against a college newspaper is the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution (see chapter 3.6.1 "The First Amendment and the student press"). Usually, it is a reliable source, even though in history, courts did not always rule in favor for the student press when they referred to the First Amendment (see chapter 3.6.2 "Court cases and rulings"). The people in general respect this law above all others and see it as the foundation of the Constitution: "People take the First Amendment very seriously here. The one thing you don't mess around with is the newspapers. If people hear about it, they get furious" (Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 17). So even though legal issues are considered a limitation for student newspapers in the sense that they try to avoid all things that might get them into legal troubles, even if they have the First Amendment behind them, the people defend the freedom of the press.

These stumbling blocks, even if they may be self-inflicted at some point, are frustrating for the editors in chief, because they continually strive for a better quality of their newspaper which also involves critical, investigative journalism in the best interest of the student community (Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix p. 54).

6.5 College newspapers and finance

Finance was no primary research interest of this thesis. However, while conducting the interviews, many editors talked about their financial situation and the problems they had due to a general decline in advertising or due to the current economic situation in the United States. Therefore, this topic should receive special attention.

The general problem of college newspapers especially at small colleges in rural areas is the lack of advertisers. Many of the student publications analyzed for the purpose of this thesis are located in small towns that would barely qualify as a town without the college. They dominate their entire neighborhood. Except for the college or university, there is not much to be found in some college-towns. This is a severe problem for the financing of student newspapers, since there is a dearth of advertisers who could buy ads.

The *Daily Campus* at the University of Connecticut is a perfect example for this: The newspaper lost 20 % of its income between 2007 and 2008, because the paucity of advertisers located in Mansfield, CT, were in a bad financial shape due to the economic crisis and could not afford to buy as many ads as before. The *Daily Campus* therefore had to rely more on internal advertisers such as the university as a whole, single schools or departments, and student groups. They were offered a discount and were therefore no sufficient source of income either (Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 12).

For most college newspapers, the university itself is the biggest advertiser by giving its money to departments for public relation purposes. The departments then buy advertising space to announce events, classes, lectures, conferences, competitions, etc. Also recruiting advertisements from national companies have been a common source of income for student newspapers. But since the U.S. economy was not in a very good shape in 2009, many companies are not hiring and therefore are not buying any advertising space, which results in college newspapers losing a considerable proportion of their advertising revenue. On top of this, many universities had to make budget

cuts and could not pay for as much ad-space as they used to (Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix p. 55). “We’ve depended a lot on advertisement from the university, just as they depend on people reading the *Prince* to know what events are going on and what courses are being offered and all that” (Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix p. 56).

Many colleges in this situation have to rely on other university money such as student-fees (which is not directly provided, but though allocated by the university).

Every year we kind of become more reliant on this money we get. [...] And ethically I’ve always thought this was a massive grey-area. I probably wouldn’t have accepted student fee money if I’d been in charge at that time. But I inherited it and I was dependent on it, and we’re becoming increasingly dependent on it (Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 12).

One newspaper in the sample had a special relationship to its host-institution. The Pennsylvania State University bulk-subscribes to the whole circulation of 20,000 issues of the *Daily Collegian* to distribute the paper for free on campus. In addition to this, the university is an advertiser and buys advertising space in the publication (Skena, 2009, Appendix p. 100). Bulk-subscriptions are a relatively common means of financial support from the university or college. Among the newspapers that were analyzed within this thesis, the *Daily Collegian* however was the only one that was funded through bulk-subscriptions.

Writers and editors as well as photographers and other staff of student newspapers are volunteers and not paid in most cases. This also saves much money for the organization. As already mentioned afore, many newspapers are provided with rent-free office space and sometimes even appliances and other benefits from their host-institutions. From the ten newspapers in the sample, six relied on some kind of university financing or benefits. Only four editors in chief answered that they did not receive any funding in any form at all from their host-institution. The most common funding was rent-free office space, which is not something to be proud of for most editors in chief: “But it also stands that if we pay for rent we’d not exist, because it’s way too expensive” (Smith, 2009, Appendix p. 91).

In good economic times, college newspapers are even able to build an endowment to draw from when advertising revenue declines. The *Daily Campus* for example was able to build a big surplus over the previous years when they were not in so much economic trouble (Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 13). Also the *Daily Princetonian* has an endowment

of one million US-dollars as a “cushion” for worst-case-scenarios such as getting kicked out of their building or for major repairs and bad economic times (Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix p. 56). The same is true for the *Yale Daily News* (Kaplan, 2009, Appendix p. 117) and the *Daily Pennsylvanian* (Mullin, 2009, Appendix pp. 47-48) who also have an endowment and draw from their profits of previous years or, like in the case of the *DP*, from profits from an investment. Other newspapers, however, even depend on loans (Russonello, 2009, Appendix p. 25).

The few college publications that do pay their employees also struggled with financial issues and debt. Michael King (2009, Appendix p. 77) announced that the *Massachusetts Daily Collegian* had to suspend payment of some of its contributors, because the advertising sales declined in such a dramatic way that they were in danger of not being able to produce the paper beyond the end of the semester. Cutting people off the payroll was a measure of last resort.

Generally speaking, student journalists are paid very little, if anything at all. At the *Daily Campus*, writers get 10 USD for a story when they are beginners, experienced writers get paid 12 USD and editors 14 USD. The editor in chief is paid for his working hours (Duray, 2009, Appendix pp. 14-15). The *Washington Square News* pays every person who is on the masthead (i.e. regular contributors) by a stipend of a couple hundred dollars for the semester (Smith, 2009, Appendix p. 91). The *Yale Daily News* does not pay students, but it pays the office manager, the financial manager, and of course the handyman (Kaplan, 2009, Appendix p. 120). The *Daily Princetonian* pays his contributors according to the profit they have been making:

The *Prince* is a nonprofit organization. And the way it works is that the business staff makes as much money as possible and pays for all our expenses, printing and rent, phone lines, and the car for delivery, all of that. And then at the end how much money is left is split among the editors. So writers never get paid, but if you stay with the organization long enough, you’re likely to become an editor. And at the end of a good economic year, there’ll be a pretty significant amount of money left. At the end of this year there’ll be no money left (Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix pp. 54-55).

King (2009, Appendix p. 81) also mentioned that the newspaper had a considerable amount of debt to the student government association. This debt dates back several years and regularly poses a problem: The positions at the newspaper as well as at the student government association turn around every year. So every year, someone new

is confronted with the debt that dates back several years. When new people inherit a position, they often do not know what they inherited with it, such as debt (King, 2009, Appendix pp. 81-82). The same statement was made by Melissa Repko (2009, Appendix p. 68), who was frustrated when she took over the job and did not know beforehand how bad the financial situation of the *Columbia Spectator* was. Many people are very idealistic at the beginning and make many plans about projects and things they want to change at the newspaper. But then they see the limitations they have to deal with and that many of the goals envisioned cannot be reached because of the scarce financial resources.

Summing up, only two newspapers from the sample of college daily newspapers were able to pay the majority or all of its staffers. The rest of seven newspapers did not pay or only paid a minority of the students working for them. One managing editor did not want to specify information about finances and payment. It can therefore be clearly seen that college newspapers in general struggle with finances, more so in difficult economic times. By not paying staff, the financial pressure eases, but that alone does not solve all problems. That is the reason why some of the newspapers have to operate in the red or take loans to ensure their further existence. Just like professional newspapers, college publications struggle with a decline in advertising sales, which accounts for the majority of the financial problems for student papers.

6.6 College newspapers and journalism education

Educating young journalists is considered as a very important, if not the most important task of a campus newspaper. At universities with a journalism school or department, many students already obtain a (mostly theoretical) education of journalism or other professions in mass media. The education function is therefore especially essential for colleges without educational programs in journalism or media studies and their related fields.

For universities without a journalism school, the campus newspaper is the “number one place to go” when seeking a career in journalism. Students receive training from more experienced reporters and editors (though they are students as well) and get the opportunity to report, write, and publish, as well as to collect bylines and publications for future applications to professional newspapers. At a student newspaper, reporters

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learn like every reporter at a professional newspaper learns: by doing (Mullin, 2009, Appendix pp. 50-51; Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix p. 66).

And you learn it the way every other reporter learns it. If you are a crime reporter you will have to call up the Philadelphia police department. And you'll be treated like a piece of dirt for even asking the questions that you ask. The same way the Philadelphia Inquirer reporters are treated like a piece of dirt for wanting to know progress on the case (Mullin, 2009, Appendix pp. 50-51).

Mullin also explained that some students rethink their decision to envision a career in journalism after having made the experience of practical journalism at a campus newspaper. She considered this a positive thing, since as still students, they are young and can make career changes. It would be more difficult to change one's mind when already working as a reporter for a professional newspaper. Therefore, Mullin thought the student newspaper was a good way for potential journalists to find out if journalism is really the right career path for them (Mullin, 2009, Appendix p. 51).

Since working with a student newspaper is really hard work considering the hours one has to put in and the professionalism among the writers, staffers often do not consider their work as education primarily: "People don't see it necessarily as part of their education. But this is where you do most of the learning" (Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 16). Educating journalists is an important part of the work of the *Daily Campus*. "The editors here are kind of teachers in another quality" (Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 22).

Journalism education at a college newspapers is a relevant service to the university. Since many schools are not able or sometimes not willing to provide practical, hands-on education for journalists, students gaining experience in a real newsroom helps completing the educational purpose and gives them a broader perspective on the work in the media business.

I often think of the *Daily* as serving that purpose [educating journalists] at little to no cost for the university. [...] Often we go underappreciated, because the *Daily* provides at very little cost to the university a place for over 100, close to 200 people to develop some sort of writing skills, or business skills if that's their department, or artistic skills if that's their department. And it's a benefit for them to get practical training in all these things. Which I can't be bemoaning too much the fact that the university doesn't

quite appreciate it. [...] We definitely do the university a service (Russonello, 2009, Appendix pp. 33-34).

Russonello also added that Tufts University attracts many students that are interested in learning more about journalism and becoming a journalist. Many students would not come to study at Tufts if there wasn't a student newspaper (Russonello, 2009, Appendix p. 34).

Still, also among college newspaper editors in chief, the gap between those who fight for a theoretic education in addition to the practical side of things and those considering only newsroom-experience as education for a career in journalism (see chapter 3.4 "Journalism education") remains and was also clearly visible in the interviews. Juliette Mullin, editor in chief of the *Daily Pennsylvanian* at the University of Pennsylvania, a major in Political Communication, belongs to the second group:

I think that [the student newspaper] is a perfect training ground for a reporter. I don't believe in journalism schools. I applied to journalism schools and it came down when I was to choose between my schools at the very end, I was choosing between Medill, which is the journalism school at Northwestern and widely regarded to be the best one in the country, and Penn. And I ended up choosing Penn, because after a while of looking at what journalism schools did... Journalism school doesn't teach you to be a journalist. Journalism teaches you to be a journalist, that's it (Mullin, 2009, Appendix pp. 52).

All the interviewed editors in chief considered the practical work in the newsroom of a college newspaper as educating and an essential part of the education they got as journalism students. Nevertheless, a slightly different position is the one of Rossilynne Skena at Pennsylvania State University. She is a journalism major and saw the benefit this major brings for future journalists and saw it best working in combination with a practical approach:

I think the *Collegian* is just the best example of student journalism working. You now I definitely wouldn't sacrifice my College of Communications journalism degree. That was wonderful training. I got wonderful professors. But you can't really do so much in the classroom. There is so much you can do there. You can hear about all the theory, talk about all the case studies you want. But until you're actually in the newsroom doing it, it's hard to be prepared, I think. I would be frightened going into this market now without having any in-newsroom journalism experience every single day. So

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the College of Communications is wonderful and their degree is absolutely something I will tack up on my wall and be proud of it for years. But it's this work in the *Collegian* too that will definitely remain with me and it's this work that I draw on when I'm in the newsroom ten years from now hopefully working as an editor" (Skena, 2009, Appendix p. 110).

These differing points of view are often due to different traditions of universities and colleges when it comes to sending alumni into journalism and to the importance of journalism education in each curriculum. Not every school attracts future journalists as effectively as others. Yale University, for example, has a long standing tradition of "producing" journalists. For this reason, about a fourth of the students starting as a freshman each year sign up for the *Yale Daily News*. As already mentioned, not every single student sticks at it until the end. The interest for writing for the student newspaper can be enormous at some colleges. Thomas Kaplan from Yale University quoted: "The *Yale Daily News* is the best writing class you can take at Yale" (Kaplan, 2009, Appendix p. 120). Teaching is an essential element of the work at the paper. It is part of the job of an editor in chief to give workshops in writing and reporting for beginners, since it is not required to have any journalistic experience to work with the campus newspaper. Freshmen can come in without ever having written and published a story and they can learn how to do it with the help of other editors and writers (Kaplan, 2009, Appendix p. 120).

One editor in chief considered the close teaching relationship between editors and new writers and reporters as a big plus compared to professional publications, where reporters don't have time to sit down with fledging writers and go over the basics of writing and newsgathering. The everyday work at a professional newspaper is much too hectic and transient. In most cases, there is no time for education at a daily newspaper:

It's definitely one of our primary responsibilities to teach people the craft of journalism. That's obviously something that we have that professional newspapers don't have as such a primary goal. We do side-by-side editing, where an editor sits down with the writer and goes through, changes things, and explains why. And that's not something that happens at professional newspapers or at least not the ones that I've observed. And that makes a difference in terms of teaching people how to do good writing and how to report (Anonymous, 2009, Appendix p. 125).

Still, teaching fellow undergraduate students is not always easy, answered one of the editors in chief: “Sometimes it feels like the blind leading the blind” (Smith, 2009, Appendix p. 96).

Summing up, every one of the editors in chief interviewed for this thesis answered that it was a big or the major role of their newspaper to educate future journalist and to teach people who were interested in the media business. It is a common practice that an editor sits down with an unacquainted writer to edit a story side-by-side. Some of the editors in chief give workshops for new reporters to teach them basic techniques they need to know for their job at the newspaper. The time that is spent on educating new journalists is seen as enriching and positive, since professional media demand applicants to already know the techniques, because there is no time to educate them. Rachel Smith, editor of the *Washington Square News* even answered that the *WSN* avoids people who already have a lot of experience and who possess the skills (for example in the graphics department) because they like to train students and want to give them the opportunity to learn something new (2009, Appendix pp. 95-96).

6.6.1 “Piggy in the middle”: The double-role of a student-journalist

One topic of interest for this thesis was the double-role of reporters as students and full-time journalists at the same time. All editors in chief answered that this was an issue of time management and priorities more than of being respected by authorities (and the school) as a real journalist. Most interviewees answered that they avoid a student being exposed as both, being a student and a journalist in the very same situation. But at some papers, this happens anyway:

Being a student, interviewing a professor, sometimes it’s beneficial, because you could have a really good relationship with your professor and he’ll give you a great interview. Or you could have a really bad interview with your professor and the article doesn’t make them look good. And the next day you got to sit into their class and what’s worst: They’re grading you (Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 21).

Other editors considered this a faux-pas. Matt Westmoreland (2009, Appendix p. 65) stipulated that writers at the *Daily Princetonian* could not interview friends or their

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professors, since they have to be completely impartial. Also Rachel Smith from the *WSN* could identify with their problem that writers were in clubs and then wanted to write stories about the club. Newspaper policies at the *WSN* don't allow that. She also added that in some cases it could be really helpful to be a student and to cover the university as a journalist, since the reporter is familiar with the system, knows the structures and the people he has to talk to. The only problem that comes up is when people are in clubs or want to interview their peers, which is a conflict of interest (Smith, 2009, Appendix p. 95).

Thomas Kaplan summed up this situation as follows: "We try to limit students from sort of exposing themselves both as students and journalists in the same context. So for instance we wouldn't assign a reporter to write a profile of their faculty adviser" (Kaplan, 2009, Appendix p. 119).

"There's also the problem that you can't really interview a teacher and you won't wanna publish something about a teacher if it's negative if you're in that teacher's class" (Russonello, 2009, Appendix p. 33). It is also considered as a role of the newspaper and its writers to be faithful to the university (Mullin, 2009, Appendix p. 49).

For editors in chief, the time commitment of a full-time newspaper-job and the juggling of responsibilities and duties were mentioned as the main problems when it came to the double-role of college-journalists (Mullin, 2009, Appendix p. 50; Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix pp. 64-65). Often, an editor had to choose the work at the newspaper over his schoolwork to ensure a good quality of the publication (Westmoreland, 2009, Appendix pp. 64-65). Frequently, the loyalty of student-journalists was pulled in different directions (Repko, 2009, Appendix p. 67).

The position of the editor in chief entails another difficulty when it comes to being exposed as a student and as the top person at a newspaper at the same time: "[I] come here, do a bunch of paperwork, I critique the issues, I go over it with my editors. And then I go to class and the professor will come and talk to me about how you run a paper. It's just weird; you go from like being on top to being on bottom" (Duray, 2009, Appendix p. 21).

For members of staff other than the editor in chief, the setting of priorities is often the biggest challenge. Many writers are not dedicated to the work at the newspaper and put their studies above other activities. Those are the ones, who only write a couple

of articles every semester and don't contribute on a regular basis. It is fairly different for regular writers and reporters as well as for editors, explained Giovanni Russonello (2009, Appendix pp. 34-35): "I think the majority of the people at the Daily make this their number one priority by far."

When it comes to choosing a priority, the editors in chief differ in their points of view. Melissa Repko saw herself clearly as a journalist more than as a student when saying: "I sometimes think how much time I'd have for the *Spectator* if I weren't a student" (Repko, 2009, Appendix p. 75). This quotation also shows the important status the newspaper has for the editors and the importance of working there compared to the schoolwork. Yet still working for the student-newspaper would not or not easily be possible if she wasn't a student.

For Michael King, the decision between schoolwork and the work for an extracurricular activity was clear. He witnessed people who were not able to balance the two commitments, since some extracurriculars can be more demanding than others and one of the most demanding organizations is the campus newspaper (King, 2009, Appendix p. 86). But the ultimate decision was easy for this editor in chief:

In my mind, you have to put your academics and your student obligations first. But at the same time we sort of do demand a lot of our students who work for us, even of those who don't get paid, especially the newsroom. I'd say the newsroom is probably the most demanding work (King, 2009, Appendix p. 82).

A positive side effect is that editors often use their work at the campus newspaper for projects in class. They also tend to follow the news a lot and may therefore be more informed than others, which is a vantage for them in their university courses (Repko, 2009, Appendix p. 75).

Generally, the interviewees did not report major problems when students were not treated like real journalists because of their young age or their status as a student. For a well established and renowned newspaper, the situation is of course much easier than for a paper that has only be existent for a short period of time. An established publication generally does not have to fight for respect and to ensure that their writers are being taken seriously (Mullin, 2009, Appendix p. 43). Rossilynne Skena mentioned one place where hostilities could happen: in the courthouse. Sometimes students are not taken seriously as journalists because of their age and because their professional

colleagues that might cover the same incident are likely to be decades older than them and have more experience. But when a newspaper is well respected in its community and has built itself up as a reputable newspaper, the problems tend to fade away (2009, Appendix pp. 108-109).

6.7 Answers to the research questions

Even though the whole chapter 6 “Results” is supposed to answer the research questions asked at the beginning of this thesis, this subchapter should provide a brief overview over the results and sum up the data gathered with the help of the interviews and content analysis.

6.7.1 What is the role of student daily newspapers on campus?

First and foremost, the student newspaper serves as medium of information for the campus community. It informs about all events that are relevant to the lives of the people living in the campus-community. This includes students as well as administrators, faculty members, and general university staff. Beside this major role, it also fulfills other functions that are important for its audience. The interviewees considered the forum function as crucial, since it is the college newspaper that provides a possibility for the students to express their opinions and concerns about certain issues. A student publication should give students a voice by offering them space to express themselves in the newspaper.

In addition to this, the socializing function was essential, especially for freshmen. The newspaper serves as an ice-breaker and conversation starter for the students and provides topics to talk about. It unites the student body to a real community. This is of crucial importance to beginning students because they have to integrate themselves in a new community and adapt to a new lifestyle. College newspapers therefore give advice and a common set of topics to talk about with other members of this community. Furthermore, the watchdog-role was mentioned by the interviewees. All editors in chief interviewed for this thesis considered serving as a watchdog and a controlling organ for the university an important task of their medium.

Another essential aspect uncovered in the interviews was the service role of college newspapers. It provides a valuable service by publishing internal information and spreading the word to the campus community. It therefore serves as a medium of internal communication for the university as well. The universities actively search contact to the campus publications to publish their (internal) news and activities. They approach student journalists to inform them about what happens in the community that might interest students and other community members. Further roles that were mentioned during the interviews were education and entertainment.

Summing up, the most important roles of a college newspaper mentioned by the interviewees were:

- to inform the campus community
- to provide a forum for the student body
- to serve a socializing function: ice-breaker, communication starter for freshmen
- to unite the student body
- to serve as a watchdog and to control the actions of the university administration
- to fulfill a service role by publishing important (but not generally newsworthy) information
- to serve as a medium of internal communication
- to educate
- to entertain

6.7.2 How is the collaboration between college newspapers and their host-institution?

College newspapers and their host-institutions have several types of relationships with each other. Generally, following possibilities were identified:

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- the host-institution as a news source
- the host-institution as sponsor
- the host-institution as educator
- the host-institution as adviser
- the host-institution as decision maker

It comes with the territory that a college newspaper always has some kind of connection to the university or college, since it is a major news source above all. This connection, however, is a two way street. The newspaper relies on the university, respectively the administration, to release information. On the other hand, also the administration depends on the student newspaper to publish relevant news about what happens in the campus community. The process, therefore, is reciprocal.

Some publications also were financially sustained by their host-institution through the allocation of university funds or student fees as well as through rent-free office space or appliances. This, however, was not primarily seen as a possibility for the administration to influence the newspaper, but as a necessity to ensure its survival. Especially at small campuses in rural areas, the financial support from the university is necessary to keep the student newspaper in business.

The university or college can also serve as an educator when the newspaper is involved in a special educational program, or as an adviser when the newspaper is assigned a news or financial adviser to help with problems that occur in the daily production of the paper. This was the case at several newspapers analyzed in the course of this thesis. The adviser-connection was a very common one, where a faculty member serves as a “helper” for the newspaper staff. No editor in chief who worked with a faculty adviser saw this person as a threat to the independence of the newspaper. However, they were aware that an adviser can potentially pressure a newspaper. Nevertheless, no one of the interviewees made this negative experience. Special educational programs involving the student newspaper, however, could not be found frequently among the newspapers in the sample. The best example for an educational connection where students working for the newspaper receive credits and grades from faculty members is the candidate program of the *Daily Collegian* at Pennsylvania State University (see chapter 6.6 “College newspapers and journalism education”).

Finally, the members of the university community or the administration serve as board members at some college newspapers. In these cases, the administration is involved in the decision-making at the newspaper to a certain degree. It may even oversee finances or choose people for the posts of an editor, the editor in chief, or the business manager. In this case, the university has a say in the most important decisions concerning the college newspaper.

6.7.3 How do editors in chief understand their editorial freedom?

Generally, the interviewees attached great importance to their individual independence from their host-institution. Every single one of the editors in chief regarded his or her newspaper as independent to a high degree. Nevertheless, the individual perceptions of independence differed greatly from each other and from the definition of Ingelhart (see chapter 2.2.4 “Independence”). Concerning the three different states of independence according to Ingelhart, only two were encountered in the interviews: the amorphous state and the state of independence. Most newspapers in the sample, however, existed in an amorphous state of independence and depended on their host-institutions editorially and financially in several ways. Nonetheless, editorial freedom was a matter of course for the editors in chief since they all described their newspaper as independent from the university or college. Financial independence, however, could not be achieved by all newspapers in the sample. As already mentioned afore, some are relying on university money to ensure their survival. Nevertheless, according to the interviewees this did not affect the editorial independence of the publications. Even though the editors in chief reported several problems with the university and its administration when it came to critical reporting, they did not experience constraints in their editorial freedom.

6.7.4 How do editors in chief understand their possibility to fulfill the controlling function regarding the university?

Editors in chief do not only see the possibility, but the necessity of the student newspaper to control and – when necessary and deserved – to critique the university and its decisions, since there is no other media outlet that would watch institutions of higher education, especially when they are privately funded. Private universities do not have

to hold themselves accountable to the tax payers and therefore do not really have a controlling institution that oversees its actions. No editor in chief expressed concerns about their freedom to criticize their host-institution, since they were not under the control of the administration. Even though some newspapers were funded by the university and in some cases faculty members served as advisers or even represented the university on the board of directors of the student newspaper, the editors in chief highlighted that they were free to be critical whenever they wanted to be. Nevertheless, the university generally reacts upon critical articles and releases a statement or a reaction to the reproaches made by the student journalists.

6.7.5 What is the self-perception of editors in chief concerning the watchdog-role for the university and the campus?

College newspapers have the reputation to see themselves as fearless watchdogs of the campus community who fight for and look after the best interests of the student body. This attitude was confirmed by the interviewees. All editors in chief felt obliged to act as a watchdog since the university itself has no watchdog to overlook its actions and the way it spends public or private funds in particular. As editors in chief of college newspapers feel that they are the only ones who care about things that happen in a university community, they take their watchdog role very seriously. Generally, the editors in chief also explained that the student reporters usually strive for the ideal of an investigative journalist who uncovers hidden information within the university administration.

6.7.6 What kind of influence does the university exert on college newspapers?

Since all editors in chief insisted on their editorial freedom, none of the editors mentioned that he or she ever felt pressured by the university. However, the administration or university representatives in general express their anger when they are not satisfied with the way the newspaper treats a certain issue or when they feel like the university is presented in an unfair way. Some universities even try to control the information that is given to newspaper reporters in advance by not letting them speak with the person concerned but providing and channeling all information through the public rela-

tions department. Nevertheless, also the opposite case is possible at some universities, where even the president is reachable for student reporters on a daily basis and internal documents are provided voluntarily upon request.

To sum up, it can be said that college newspapers do not have serious problems with the exertion of influence by the university. Generally, the relationships are good, even though an (overly) critical newspaper can be constantly at odds with the administration. But the editors in chief generally were very secure when it came to their position and status in the community. They were aware that the university relies on the newspaper and that it would risk a public relations scandal when threatening reporters of a student newspaper because of publishing a critical article.

On the other hand, the anonymous editor in chief showed that even an allegedly independent newspaper can be restrained by the university. He was not allowed to speak “publicly” about his status as the editor in chief of the college newspaper at this respective university. This clearly shows that even though a newspaper might be independent, private universities can establish strict policies that limit the freedom of college newspapers and student journalists.

6.7.7 How do editors in chief react upon the exertion of influence by the university?

This question can be answered briefly: they make it public. The editors in chief answered that when they experience pressure from the university, they were not afraid to publish it. Generally, media outlets are quite confident when it comes to their position and relevance in a community. Universities depend on the campus newspapers to spread internal news to the community. Without the student-run newspaper, they would have to establish their own medium which would cost much more money and afford more inconveniences than dealing with a critical watchdog-publication on campus. Therefore, editors in chief seldom felt limited because they have the possibility to publish grievances, which is a good pressurizing medium, since generally even the threat to make something public that is uncomfortable to the university suffices to prevent them from oppressing the newspaper. But here again, the anonymous newspaper is the exception.

6.7.8 What are the problems for editors emerging from their double role as students and journalists?

First and foremost, the time commitment was mentioned as the major problem for the interviewees. They were confronted with the necessity to juggle a full-time job as a journalist with the responsibilities of being a full-time student. On average, the editors in chief spent 60 hours per week in the newsroom working for the college publication. Furthermore, for some newspaper staffers it was difficult to handle the double-role when interviewing a professor who was grading the reporter. But many editors in chief mentioned that this was considered a faux-pas and that they have newspaper statutes that prohibit reporting about a matter in which the reporter himself is involved personally (which includes interviewing his professors, his peers, or writing about a club one is a member of).

In addition to this, also loyalty and love for the host-institution was mentioned as a big problem when it came to delicate topics that might not be comfortable for the university. The interviewees explained that it was difficult to be critical about the university they are very proud of and feel loyal to. The editors in chief would prefer it if they would only have to praise the university, but at the same time they feel obligated to be critical and serve as a watchdog for their community, too. Critical articles might even cause a disruption of the closely-knit campus community when the newspaper writes negatively about the university.

Concluding, following problems concerning the double role of student journalists were mentioned by the interviewees:

- time management
- working relationships with their professors
- conflicts of interests
- loyalty to the host-institution (when it comes to critical topics)
- loyalty to the student body

6.7.9 What is the status of college newspapers concerning journalism education?

The interviewees considered the newspaper as an important institution of journalism education. Especially for schools without a journalism school or department, the educational purpose of the student newspaper is variegated. Journalism classes offer a broad perspective on differing issues of journalism and media, but they can rarely provide the students with a practical education of writing and reporting. The campus newspaper, therefore, is in many cases the only possibility to gain practical experience in the media sector and it is the place to go if a student strives for a career in journalism. For this reason, the educational role of the campus publication is embraced by the editors in chief.

Nevertheless, being a teaching newspaper might not always be easy, since fledgling reporters do not always provide good content. It takes much more time to produce a publication with an unacquainted staff because side-by-side editing as well and proof-reading of every single article is necessary in the daily production. In addition to this, editors or the editor in chief of college newspapers are also involved in workshops and training sessions for unpracticed reporters to enhance the quality of their newspaper. In any case, teaching future journalists has a very important status for college newspapers and is one of the most valued tasks of the editors in chief.

6.7.10 What is the status of college newspapers in the regional media landscape?

Six of the ten interviewees stated that they see their newspaper as a local newspaper besides its main role as a publication for the campus community. More than half of the newspapers are also distributed off campus and openly available for a non-student audience. Especially at those universities situated in very small towns (such as the University of Connecticut or Pennsylvania State University) or universities in diverse and sometimes problematic neighborhoods (such as Columbia University or the University of Pennsylvania) considered it as their duty to also report local news for the same reason for which they report campus events: There is no other media outlet that cares about these issues, even though a large community is interested in this kind of news. The majority of the interviewees therefore felt responsible for their neighboring

community too and also published off-campus news for this target audience. Four of the editors in chief, however, did not regard their publication as fulfilling the purpose of a local newspaper. Nevertheless it can be assumed that the status of college newspapers in the regional media landscape is high, since some college dailies even serve as the only daily newspaper in their region.

6.8 Reflection of the methods

6.8.1 Content Analysis

Some striking characteristics were found during the content analysis, which clearly separate student-run publications from general interest newspapers. For example the articles are usually very long, often one large page and more. This might be due to organizational reasons, since it is easier to organize a smaller number of longer texts.

The large number of columns in college newspapers can be traced back to the fact that it is easier to organize the production of a newspaper when there is a secured number of articles that are published regularly. Due to the many non-paid and part-time contributors, it seems difficult to get the necessary texts on time. Therefore columns might be considered as an appropriate means to organize the production of the newspaper.

Generally, the content analysis was an appropriate means of getting a brief overview over the content and arrangement of college newspapers, as well as over the topics that are favored most and the amount of critical reporting. Nevertheless, the sample was much too small to provide representative statements. In addition to this, the definition of “critical” or “obsequious” posed several problems during the analysis. Both definitions were defined with the help of the dictionary and several key examples. The content analysis was conducted before the interviews to serve as an additional basis for the discussions with the editors in chief. The interviews, however, provided for many interesting pieces of information that could have been useful during the content analysis and that could have served to define the afore mentioned terms more clearly. Nevertheless, to reverse the order would not have been a good idea, since the analysis of the newspapers also was a valuable and helpful source for the conversations with the experts.

6.8.2 Interviews

The interviews were suitable methods for exploring the topic of college newspapers. No major problems were encountered during the field-work. However, the author noticed that some of the interviewees held back interesting information while the discussion was being recorded and started to speak more freely when the voice recorder was turned off. Despite this, the information provided after the official interview was not lost, since the author formed a transcript from memory and sent it back to the respective expert to ask for permission to also use the unofficial part of the interview for the research purpose. Some editors in chief even added the paragraphs in question to the transcript and made further comments to provide the author with more detailed information.

Another inconvenience during the field work was caused by one expert being reluctant to talk to the author, because he was not supposed to give public statements about his position at the newspaper. This editor in chief wanted to remain anonymous. This made it difficult to actually use the data collected during the interview. Especially since the newspaper is considered as being one of the publications that, according to literature treating college newspapers, came very close to the definition of independence of Ingelhart (see chapter 2.2.4 “Independence”), it is surprising that the editor in chief of this publication was not allowed to talk to researchers about his job using his real name and the name of the newspaper he was working at. All other experts were able to answer the questions freely and did not have to ask for permission to speak about their jobs for research purposes.

7 Summary and conclusion

College newspapers: the watchdogs or the lapdogs of the university? After the content analysis of ten daily newspapers and interviews with editors in chief of college newspapers, this question cannot be answered clearly. In reality, they are a bit of both. Student publications and their host-institutions depend on each other. The university needs a publication to spread internal news about issues that concern the campus community. The student newspaper on the other hand needs the university and its cooperation as it serves as the most important news source and they also depend on its good will to be able to distribute their newspaper on campus. Concerning the systemic approach chosen for this thesis, it is therefore difficult to speak of a system and its sub-system. Both, the college newspaper and the university, are more partners that depend on and respect each other. Both fulfill crucial functions for the society and both need each other. Nevertheless, in the sample of this thesis the watchdog was to be encountered more frequently than the lapdog.

Generally, the editors in chief of college newspapers considered their publications as fearless watchdogs of the campus community. There is no other media outlet to watch over the actions and decisions of a university administration. The college newspaper is the only medium that is particularly interested in the events on campus. The interviewees therefore felt obliged to fulfill the watchdog-role for their campus community. In addition to this, in some cases the watchdog-role even extended to the town or city in which the university is located. This was especially true for small towns that don't have their own daily newspaper.

Most interviewees explained that the connection to their university was comparatively good. In general, college newspapers can be a little overly critical at some point, which leads to them sometimes being at odds with the administration. But no editor in chief expressed serious concerns about being controlled or oppressed by the university when it comes to critical topics. All interviewees felt like their writers were free to publish critical thoughts when it is justifiable: "We're happy to rip into them when we need

7 Summary and conclusion

to and when we see fit” (Kaplan, 2009, Appendix p. 120). Considering this fact, times seem to have changed since the late 1960s and 1970s (see chapter 3.1 “The student press and its history”). Freedom of information and freedom of the press have are of crucial importance not only to students and student journalists, but obviously also to administrators and college and university officials. Whereas censorship, oppression, and lawsuits were a daily occurrence at some colleges several decades ago, it became quiet(er) at the courthouses. In addition to this, the spirit of protest of the 1960s and 1970s has passed. Student newspapers nowadays seldom cover delicate political matters such as the Vietnam War.

On the other hand, however, there are several stumbling blocks for critical journalism at college newspapers. The majority of the newspapers analyzed was not able to fulfill the watchdog role completely unrestrained. First of all, the reporters at student newspapers were inexperienced and not well informed about their rights and legal principles such as freedom of information laws or the open records law at public institutions. Some interviewees, therefore, found that it was particularly hard to do investigative pieces, since they were all beginners and investigative journalism is a complex and difficult task.

Secondly, newsgathering in general tends to be a problem when the university is not very cooperative. Even though none of the editors in chief felt controlled or oppressed, some of the interviewees mentioned that the administration did not provide much information when it came to topics that might be uncomfortable for them. In addition to this, many university employees are not supposed or not willing to talk to student reporters at all. Some universities would prefer to direct the entire information flow through the public relations department without the students directly speaking to the person in question. However, the newspaper staffers generally saw this as a First Amendment violation and protested. But still, newsgathering within the administration tended to be difficult at some colleges. Some editors in chief on the other hand stated that they had a very good relationship to their host-institution and that they were provided with every information they needed upon request.

This might seem like college newspapers are uniquely the fearless watchdogs for their campus community. But a function of a college newspaper is – according to the experts interviewed – also to be loyal to the university and to praise when it is deserved. Even though only a very small percentage (3.6 %) of the articles could be identified as obsequious, the editors in chief mentioned that it can sometimes be difficult for them to report critically on university-related matters, since many of the students are very

proud of their university and the sense of community is generally very strong. Being too critical about a member of the university, especially about a sports team, can cause a disruption in the community. The editors in chief therefore found it complicated since their loyalty is being pulled in two directions.

But this does not automatically mean that college newspapers are the lapdogs of their university. Even though the editors in chief consider loyalty to their school an important point, they did not want to let this influence the editorial content of the newspaper too much. Also, the content analysis showed that critical reporting was much more present in the newspapers (20 % of the articles) than obsequious journalism (3.6 %) was. Generally, college newspapers strive to be as professional as traditional, non-student newspapers. They fulfill the same functions and serve the same main purpose: information. Even though the content differs largely, due to the special target audience, the goals and professionalism is the same.

Beside information, education is considered as a major function of college newspapers. The interviewees considered this a big advantage over professional newspapers, since they were able to do side-by-side editing and invest much time in the training and education of future journalists. At professional newspapers, training and education gets sometimes left out due to time constraints and financial reasons. The editors in chief of college publications felt well prepared for the job market and considered their time at the top of a student newspaper an important lesson for their future career: “They realize the value of having an independent newspaper, the value of knowing that when students work here, they’re prepared to go out in the real world and write a news article, because of the training they’ve had here” (Skena, 2009, Appendix p. 106).

College newspapers provide valuable service and fulfill important functions in their community and for their host-institutions. They serve as institutions for journalism education as well as ice-breakers and socializers for students forming a community. This important status gives the newspapers a lot of self-esteem to defend their position, especially when it comes to critical topics and their publication in the campus paper. Newspapers that do not encounter boundaries and limits when doing critical and investigative journalism are outnumbered. The majority of the editors in chief mentioned that there were obstacles for them, which were variegated and sometimes even self-inflicted.

Even though this study is not really comparable to previous research in this field, a development becomes apparent: College newspapers today are able to serve more

as watchdogs for their communities than they were before. They are by trend more independent and report in a more critical way than some years ago (see chapter 2.3 “Current state of research”). College journalists are even more critical than expected after the literature review concerning the legal backings and the turbulent history of these publications. They might sometimes be afraid to bark, because they always want to be faithful and loyal to their universities. But they certainly try their best to fulfill the watchdog-role for their communities and to look after the best interests of the students. They all strive for an ideal: the investigative journalist, the watchdog.

7.1 Notions for further research

Studies about college (daily) newspapers can definitely be considered a blank spot in the journalism research landscape. A number of studies were conducted in the 1960s and 1970s, but in recent times this topic has been somewhat neglected. College newspapers have a very important status within their respective communities. They are the media of future leaders, especially in the Ivy League colleges. Also, the networking aspect is significant. Marketers have reacted to the growing importance of college newspapers, whereas journalism research seems to be several steps behind. Considering the influence and status of college newspapers, it is astonishing that there is not more research done about this media, which are mostly regarded from a marketing point of view by communication and journalism research.

For the author of the thesis, this small study served as a first orientation in this field. To pursue this research, a complete survey among all college daily newspapers in the United States would be interesting and necessary. This could, obviously, not be conducted the same way as this study was pursued. A possible approach to this neglected field of research could be made in three steps.

A potential first step would be to send questionnaires to editors in chief of all college daily newspapers in the U.S. For a more complete approach to this topic, it would be necessary to also query representatives of the university who work with the newspapers, such as advisers, faculty members of the board, or members of the public relations department. This would provide two opinions on the connection between the newspaper and its host-institution.

The questionnaires could provide data about the different perceptions of independence, the hierarchy of newspapers, and their self-perception. The next step would be a content analysis of a sample of the newspapers. This content analysis could be conducted roughly the same way the content analysis of this thesis was done. It would provide data about topics, types of texts, and particularly about the status of critical and obsequious reporting in college newspapers.

The third step would include interviews with a small number of editors in chief as well as with representatives of the colleges and universities that are involved with the student newspaper. Questions would target the importance of critical reporting, the connection between the two systems, and problems that occur for both parties involved. Another point of interest would be the status of student publications on campus and their value for the host-institutions.

This three-step-plan would provide a more complete and comprehensive image of college newspapers in the United States and help fill in the blanks in the journalism research landscape. Of course, such a capacious study would go far beyond the possibilities of a thesis, but could be a possible approach for a more extensive study.

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8.1 List of Tables

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- III. 3: Number of articles in college newspapers, depiction by author.
- III. 4: Topics in college newspapers, depiction by author.
- III. 5: Types of texts in college newspapers, depiction by author.
- III. 6: Critical articles in college newspapers, depiction by author.
- III. 7: Critical topics in college newspapers, depiction by author.

9 Appendices

The page numbers of the appendices are starting with 1 again, since it facilitates the writing process and the location of citations from the transcripts of the interviews to use a different page numbering than in the main part of the thesis. The author decided to employ arabic numbers, because roman numbers seemed to be too confusing for the reader because of the large number of pages in the appendices.

9.1 Arrangement and execution of the interviews

9.1.1 Christopher Duray

The interview with Christopher Duray, editor in chief of the *Daily Campus* at the University of Connecticut, was arranged via e-mail on April 30, 2009. It took place on August 24 at 2 PM at his office at the *Daily Campus* on the campus of the University of Connecticut. The interview was interrupted twice, by a phone call and by a person knocking on the door of the office. It took 62 minutes. Before the actual talk, Christopher Duray explained that the *Daily Campus* owns the building on campus, in which the newspaper is produced.

9.1.2 Giovanni Russonello

The interview with Giovanni Russonello, editor in chief of the *Tufts Daily* at Tufts University, was arranged via e-mail on 10 May 2009. The interviewer first contacted the editor in chief of the spring term 2009 at the “Tufts Daily,” but she responded that she will be graduating at the end of May and that Mr. Russonello will be her successor. Giovanni Russonello immediately agreed on the interview. It was conducted

on September 3 at 12.30 PM in his house in Somerville, Massachusetts, which is near the Tufts University Campus. The interview was interrupted once. The talk took 47 minutes. Before the actual interview, Giovanni Russonello explained, that he had just brought out the first issue of the *Tufts Daily*, which is the freshmen orientation issue, and handed it over to the interviewer.

9.1.3 Juliette Mullin

The interview with Juliette Mullin, executive editor and president of the *Daily Pennsylvanian* at the University of Pennsylvania was arranged via e-mail on 2 May 2009. It took 52 minutes and was conducted on 19 September 2009 at 1 PM at the *Daily Pennsylvanian*'s offices at Walnut Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

9.1.4 Matt Westmoreland

The interview with Matt Westmoreland, editor in chief of the *Daily Princetonian* at Princeton University, was arranged via e-mail on 11 May 2009 and took place on September 14, 2009 at 6.30 PM at a Starbucks Coffeeshop at 120 East 87th Street in New York City. The interview took 56 minutes.

9.1.5 Melissa Repko

The interview with Melissa Repko, editor in chief of the *Columbia Spectator* at Columbia University, was arranged via e-mail on 17 June 2009. It took place on September 18th at 11 AM at a small café near the Columbia University Campus. The interview took 36 minutes. Before the recorded interview, Melissa Repko mentioned the bad economic situation of newspapers in general and also of student newspapers such as the *Spectator*. After the talk, she explained, that the only way Columbia University could really threaten them is by kicking them out of their office space, which is in a Columbia-owned building, which they don't pay rent for. She mentioned, that this is something they inherited from many years ago and are not able to change (even though they would like to), because the *Spectator* would not exist if they had to pay

rent, because office-space in Manhattan is much too expensive for a student organization.

9.1.6 Michael King

The interview with Michael King, editor in chief of the *Daily Collegian* at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, was arranged via e-mail on 13 April 2009 and was conducted on August 20, 2009 at 1.30 PM in the Du Bois Library on the campus of the University of Massachusetts. The interview was not interrupted, but as it took place in the cafeteria of the Du Bois Library on campus, there was a lot of noise and people were walking by which caused some difficulties concerning the transcription of the talk. The interview took 38 minutes.

9.1.7 Rachel Smith

The interview with Rachel Smith, editor in chief of the *Washington Square News* at the University of New York, was arranged on 27 April 2009 via e-mail and took place on 23 September 2009 in the WSN-newsroom at 7 East 12th Street, New York City. It took 28 minutes.

9.1.8 Rossilynne Skena

The interview with Rossilynne Skena, editor in chief of *Daily Collegian* at Pennsylvania State University, was arranged via e-mail on 7 May 2009 and was then conducted on 21 September 2009 at 2.30 PM at her office at 123 Burrows Road, State College, Pennsylvania. The interview took 40 minutes.

9.1.9 Thomas Kaplan

The interview with Thomas Kaplan, editor in chief of the *Yale Daily News* at Yale University, was arranged via e-mail on 27 April 2009 and took place on September 11th, 2009 at his office at the newspaper on Yale campus, 202 York Street, New Haven,

Connecticut. It took 36 minutes. After the interview, Thomas Kaplan talked about a student who went missing and that this was the story he is dealing with most of the time. Two days after the interview, the body of the missing grad student was found in a wall of a laboratory building on campus. A suspect is under arrest. Several of the other editors interviewed highly praised the quality of the news coverage of the Yale Daily News concerning this case of murder.

9.1.10 Anonymous editor

The interview with the managing editor of an anonymous college newspaper was arranged via e-mail on 26 and 27 April 2009. The editor immediately agreed on the interview, but wanted to remain anonymous because of restrictions of his university concerning “public statements” about his position as editor in chief of the college newspaper. The interview was conducted on September 10, 2009 at 8 PM at an office at the newspaper. It took 10 minutes.

9.2 Interview guide

This interview guide was used for all the interviews with editors in chief of college daily newspapers. The general questions were asked at the beginning of the interview, whereas the specific questions served when the person interviewed did not mention the relevant details by himself. They were asked at the end of the interview. The order of the questions is not the same as the order of the list, because it was changed whenever it seemed appropriate for the course of the interview.

- General questions:
 - You are editor in chief of the ... newspaper at the ... University. Please tell me a little bit about your job.
 - In your point of view, what is the major purpose of a student-run newspaper?
 - What is the role of your newspaper on the campus?
 - What are the challenges you have to face as editor in chief?

- How is the connection between your newspaper and the university?
 - * How (close) are you working together?
 - * Which kind of problems did you experience in the connection between your paper and the university?
 - * Are there talks between the editorial board and the university board about your newspaper?
 - * Do you get feedback, proposals for articles or information from them?
 - * Are you criticized for or complimented on your newspaper?
- How do you finance your newspaper?
- Which problems do you face as editor in chief of a student-run newspaper?
- In your eyes, how important is your newspaper to the students of this university?
 - * Do you get feedback or information for articles from the students?
 - * How great is the willingness of the student to work with the student newspaper?
 - * Are your writers paid for working for your newspaper?
 - * Do writers get credit for working for your paper?
- From your point of view, how important is your newspaper in the region around the campus.
 - * Is your newspaper available off campus?
 - * Do you think it is also read by non-students or students of other universities?
 - * What's the circulation of the paper?

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- * How many people are on your staff?
- Specific questions:
 - How do you consider the possibilities of your college newspapers to criticize the university?
 - Where do you see the limits of critical journalism for a college newspaper?
 - In your opinion, what are the problems student-run newspapers could face (when newsgathering)?
 - What are the possibilities of a student newspaper to react upon these problems?
 - How do you consider the double-role of your editors as students and journalists at the same time? Do you think this might entail problems?
 - To which degree do you see your student-run newspaper as an institution for journalism education?

9.3 Transcripts

The interviews were transcribed in standard English because they served as information donors. Latent content of the interviews was not important to the researcher, so the interviews were simplified and no accentuation, volume of the voice etc. were transcribed. Only hesitations and striking emphases were mentioned.

9.3.1 Christopher Duray

KL: So, you're the editor in chief of the Daily Campus here. . .

CD: That's right.

KL: Let's start with. . . maybe you can just talk a little bit about what's your job exactly, what you like about it, what you don't like about it.

5 CD: Okay. Well, specifically as the editor in chief, the thing that I spend most of my time on is being the public face of the Daily Campus, dealing with other people who have complaints or questions. . . Oh, I'm sorry.

[phone rings]

CD: Okay, that was a perfect example. Whenever someone has a problem, they come
10 to me. And a lot of people have problems.

KL: For example, what problems?

CD: Well, the biggest problem we have is. . . we run a police blotter. So every week we go to the police station and we get a list of people who got arrested, what they did and. . .

15 KL: Just students, or..?

CD: Just anyone in the area who got arrested. Usually, I mean, the most of them are students. Sometimes it's students from other schools. But we print those out each week. And it's always been sort of an ethical question, how much information you put

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in the police blotter. But I think at the end of the day it gets lots of readers and so we
20 wanna keep it up. Right now we have the system where a year and a half, so eighteen
months after we printed it, we take it off the internet. I mean college it's kind of a
crazy place. If someone gets a DUI... and the charges get thrown out and dropped.
And then they've got to find a job and they google their names and the first thing
that comes up is that police blotter about something they weren't even really charged
25 for. So we try and take them down. But before we take them down I still get lots
and lots of complaints about that. Or actually right now we've been having a problem
where... if you search from the Daily Campus website, all the ones that are supposed
to be down you don't get out. But Google can still find them somehow. So I got my
IT guys working at that. So basically I'm just the problem solver. If something goes
30 wrong, people come to me. And then I either point them out to someone who could do
a better job fixing it or I fix it myself. Basically just oversight is a big part of it. I'm
responsible for editorial content. That's the job description, "responsible for editorial
content". So I review the list of stories we've got. I talk about it with the section
editors. I should probably tell you about the way the organization here... I'm going
35 on and on and... So, I'm at the top, the editor-in-chief. And then right below me is the
managing editor, who is in charge of production. So every night when they are here,
laying things out, editing stories, she is watching on them, she is reviewing the papers
for type errors. She's sort of my right hand man also. Like I've got the ideas and
she makes sure they are implemented correctly. And then below her there are section
40 editors. So we've got the news section, the focus section, a commentary opinion section
and sports section. And they've each got their own editors who come up with story
ideas, assigns them to the writers and when they're done, they come back to me and I
will cope with everything and see it's all right. And then I also write editorials for the
opinion section. Sort of, our paper takes the following stands on this issue. You know
45 what an editorial is. Also I have purchasing power. So if we need a new computer or
anything, they come to me and then I go and buy, using the Daily Campus' fund. The
job is a lot of what you make of it, you know.

KL: Okay. And what do you think is the major purpose or the major role of the Daily
Campus here at the university?

50 CD: Well, the most basic role is that we just try to keep the student body informed
about what's happening on the campus. Issues that might affect them. We try and
keep an eye on the administration itself, just to make sure they're doing everything.
And, that's pretty much it. Just keeping the student body aware of what's going
on around them. And just like a real newspaper, there's sort of a watchdog-role, by

55 with what I mean that there's... the school administration or even the Storrs, CT government. Sometimes we cover, just knowing that we're here, sort of watching. It does make them aware that, what they're doing is not going to go unnoticed. People are going to ask them questions. And that itself is sort of a deterrent for something that students might not like.

60 KL: So, you just mentioned the watchdog role of the paper. You also think to have the power, for example, if the administration does something you don't like at all, you think you have the power as a newspaper to change something?

CD: That's different, though. Well, the extent of the newspaper to influence people is questionable. And that's sort of the way it should be. I think the extent of our
65 actual change, like if I want something to change, I could write an editorial about it. I can make sure that the news is covering it, so that it's in the presence. We can make certain issues, big issues, make sure it's on the front page every single day, make sure everyone knows we don't like it. But at the end of the day, it's the students, it's the people, the citizens, who have to go and actually make that change. And it's frustrating
70 sometimes. Because you know, like I really wish you guys would understand exactly what this issue means and act on it. But no. You can only go so far and laying out the facts before you start getting into a biased area. So it's frustrating because at the end of the day, once we reach the citizens it's completely out of our hands. But that's the way it should be, honestly, because if we've done our jobs right and we found all
75 the facts and we present them correctly, and we get to the citizens and they don't think it need to be changed, then it's nothing that deserves to be changed. And that's democracy. So there you go. It's a tool and a curse.

KL: What are the challenges you have to face as an editor-in-chief?

CD: Well, some people can be really persistent. I mean we only put out one or two
80 issues since I actually took the job in May, so right now I've just been dealing with outside people. Well, there's one lady, about the police blotter. She threatened to sue me, like, on five different occasions, because of this problem where Google is accessing the database where we didn't want it to. It's ridiculous because there were no legal grounds, but, god, the persistence of it all. [laughs] I could start out crying "Look, I'm
85 working very hard on this problem." and she's just like "I don't care, I'm still going to sue you." And I was like "Well, what are you going to sue me for? I don't think there are legal grounds for it." She was like "I'm about to go to law school, there are absolutely grounds for it." And then this second you just want to yell "You are

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dumb as anything and you just don't know how the legal system works, you just don't
90 have any idea about libel rights or anything." But obviously you couldn't do that. So
actually, the really big problem is: You have to be nice to people who are like really
mean to you. And that's, any person is trying diplomatic, but... That's what's been
a little frustrating for me also. And, yeah, as an editor in chief specifically. As just a
journalist in general, well, what I was saying earlier: What you can change is up to
95 the people. God, that just annoys me. Last year I was writing for the news section for
example. I am probably getting off top, I'm sorry.

KL: No no, just talk.

CD: There is an instance. I interviewed a janitor, who had worked here for like ten
years. But he was either going to be fired or he was going taking a big pay cut and be
100 forced to work the like 3 AM shift every single night. And I printed the story and I
thought it was like the best work I've ever written. But like a week later, just like none
of the activists were into it at all. And there was nothing else I could do, I did my job
and... I guess people just don't care about janitors. It's hard to tell, you never know
where public opinion's gonna be going at the end of the day.

105 KL: So it seems, concerning the problems you have, they are more with the students
and not with the administration for example?

CD: The administration, they've been okay recently. I'm trying to think of what big
problem we had with them. The biggest thing we had against them was where they
tried to set up a new sort of communications department, where we had to go through
110 their PR person before we were allowed to talk to anybody in the administration. And
we had to sort of work that out, because we saw it as a First Amendment violation.
They saw it as a way to streamline communication. And in the end we won and
no one really follows that policy anymore. But it's in a weird situation with the
administration, because they took a huge budget cut at the beginning of last year. So
115 we've been covering like how they've been managing that, what they've been cutting
specifically. They've been doing a pretty good job of it; I really couldn't complain or
make them out to be the bad guys. We are sort of at odds with each other, ideologically,
the newspaper and the administration. But I can't make them misbehave, as much
as I'd like to. We did write a really great story about the number of adjunct faculty
120 they were cutting. Which is kind of skewed really heavily towards the liberal arts.
Our university is divided in colleges and the college of liberal arts and sciences, which
is like English or History, most of their adjunct faculty got cut, as compared to for

example the graduate programs or some of the sciences. And we covered that and we cover all their board meetings. When it comes to dealing with the administration, I
 125 guess we've just kind of reached the place where we've got people at every single public meeting, we kind of go over every single decision they make. And they are aware of that and it helps. It doesn't make for as many interesting stories, but it keeps them from misbehaving, certainly. And people normally do respond, I mean, they didn't respond to that janitor-thing, but they normally get very outraged. I mean not outraged, but...
 130 what the administration does is always in our heads, I'll say. There are lots of opinions, lots of discussions about what they are doing, whenever we cover them. And whether anything actually comes from them, whether they are able to keep budget cuts high or low, whether... that's up in the air. I'm not sure how the president makes his decisions, but I'm sure students have an influence on that. And frankly: students
 135 would not go to board of trustees meetings if the Daily Campus wasn't there. It's a public forum, anyone is allowed there. But they don't really broadcast when they're going on... Last year they held one during spring break. I can't believe I forgot about this. They were talking about raising tuition prices at this board of trustees meeting, which happened during spring break. And I was able to get up here. I live like two
 140 hours away, but I drove up here to cover it, Christ, this was really really important and there were just like two students on campus when they were talking about it. I think that was the most egregious thing they did. And we covered it and people were pissed off. I mean if they didn't get a resolution, they got public comment. There was some sort of catharsis, and... that's how we deal with the administration.

145 KL: Okay, so that just answered my next question. I also wanted to ask: Do you have a faculty adviser or something like that?

CD: It's not really a faculty adviser. We have a full time employee whose name is Nancy Depathy. She's supposed to be here today, but she had a family emergency. And she's our financial adviser and one of our many contacts to the school. There's
 150 another woman, named Janella Mildrexler and she's our student affairs adviser. But that's not Daily Campus specific. Every single club that gets student fee money, she talks to and sort of overlooks. But as far as an actual adviser goes, I don't talk to her very often. She does stop by a lot, but honestly I resent her presence. Her actual influence and what she can do with this paper is zero. She can talk to me and she can
 155 bring issues up with me. But I've no obligation to deal with them, whatsoever. You know we have to follow our own rules, and they have rules about what we're allowed to use their student fee money on. Like I can't take the money that we get from the students and then buy a bunch of liquor and throw a party. And she actually keeps an

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eye on that and she shows up on all our meetings. We are actually, with the exception
160 of that student fee money, we have a pretty strong independence from the paper. And
they have always kind of respected that. Except this one woman, she annoys me.

KL: Okay, you just mentioned you have a financial adviser. Because the last interview
I did, the person I talked to told me a lot about financial problems they had. Is it the
same here?

165 CD: Yeah. I think, hmm, how much was it? We lost about... it was huge. I think
it was about 20 % of our income between 2007 and 2008 that we lost. Advertising.
You know, the big newspapers are having problems and we're having problems. A big
part of it that we don't have... I mean there are some shops over there but that's
170 pretty much the extent of people who are able to advertise with us. I just talked to
the town of Mansfield-Storrs. They said they are building more shopping centers. So
by 2012 we should have more people to advertise with us. But we just don't have
the businesses. And sometimes the student organizations advertise with us, but they
don't have much money, they are dealing with their own limitations. So we offer them
175 a discount, as brotherhood. So every year we kind of become more reliant on this
money we get. I said student fee money, I should elaborate this. It's not directly from
the school. It's a part of student's tuition. There's the main tuition, there's housing,
there's food and then there's like 50 Dollars as student fees, which goes to us, it goes
to student government, the people who hire bands and comedians who come and play
180 on campus. And that's where it comes from. So it's like not directly from the school,
but it is decided who gets what by the school. And ethically I've always thought this
was a massive grey-area. I probably wouldn't have accepted student fee money if I'd
been in charge at that time. But I inherited it and I was dependent on it, and we're
becoming increasingly dependent on it. We've got our heads above the water because
the last few years we've had a pretty...

185 [interruption]

CD: That was John Kennedy; he's the associate news editor. His dad is in charge,
works in construction. And we've got a little bit of mold and we need to repaint part
of this darkroom we have. I mean we had a darkroom in the 70s, but we're all digital
now. So we got this big darkroom door taken out and we've got to do always repairs.
190 And he offered to do it for free. I mean every decision I make now has this overtone of...
we don't have as much money as we used to in the past. Just decisions like how many
reporters can we afford to cover sporting events, like away games. Suddenly that takes

this big financial edge. Usually it would have been “how many people do we need?”, now it’s... we only send a few. Editorial decisions suddenly become financial decisions, and that’s so annoying. But that’s where we are. Anyways, alright I was saying: We are doing okay now. Our heads are above the water because we did really well, profit wise in previous years. Ever since we’ve been founded, we’ve been turning profits. So we just got a big surplus saved up. Normally we use it for building maintenance; we’ve never had to touch it ever before and we’d like to keep it that way obviously. Because everyone is just envisioning the day when like the roof collapses or a pipe explodes and we have to take care of it, it’s our building. That’s, you know, the annoying side of complete independence. Well, not complete independence. The annoying side of independence. So if things get bad enough we could keep going for a while. Certainly until the town builds some new advertising for us. But yeah, it’s kind of top of my list right now, find new advertisers. But I mean the New York Times doesn’t know how to make money right now. I just don’t even imagine myself as talented as those people. So the solution isn’t... we’ll have to try out some new things, advertisements we’re not used to. Normally we don’t get a lot of advertising from like Hartford for example. It’s the closest big city, but it’s still like half an hour away. So students don’t go there too often. So advertisers don’t put... That’s something we have to start like pushing very aggressively for. So, finance, it sucks.

KL: So, just to be sure: You’re mainly financed by advertisements, and a part of student fee money.

CD: Yeah, it’s a 60:40 split. 60 % comes from outside advertising, and now it’s like 40 %. It was smaller last year. [I want to clarify that I mean currently, 60 % of our revenue comes from advertising, and 40 % of our revenue comes from student fees. Last year, the split was closer to 70 % advertising and 30 % student fees. I don’t know if that was clear.] And advertisers just don’t have the money, that’s the other side. I mean the other side of the coin is, craigslist and everything, internet takes over advertising. But the other side is they have also been losing money. So they’ve been trying to think about what they can do. And so either they pull advertising or they get smaller ads. We’ve been okay though. We have some national ads also. Like Price Warehouse Coopers does a lot of advertising here, some tampon companies, some condom companies do, video game companies, things like that. That’s a different firm that takes all these things that have the interest of college students in mind and then goes to college campuses and sells us an advertising package. Those are okay, but just the local advertisers just don’t have as much money anymore. Maybe it’s getting better, maybe it’s not.

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KL: Something I forgot to ask before: Are you working together with the journalism
230 department or communications departments.

CD: Yeah, yeah. Communications not so much, but journalism definitely. I forgot to mention when I was laying out the organization. Higher than me is a board of directors. And there is a faculty member who sits on that, his name is Timothy Kenny, he's a professor here. And one of the other board members is our reporter at the Hartford
235 Courant, Ed Mahony. And then some lawyers. There's a list in our constitution of people who have to be sitting on there. It's like a bunch of people who've worked at journalism groups. So Tim Kenny, he sits on our board. He's always been a good person to talk to for advice. We don't have an official school adviser. But I was feeling like our professors are the closest thing to an adviser we have. They've always been
240 really great. Every time they see me they ask me what was going on; I bounced some problems off them. We were thinking about sticker advertisements. You see that paper up there? In the top right hand corner, there'd be a post it note sized advertisement stuck on there with like glue that you could peel off. So I just sent him an e-mail, asking "Do you think this is tacky? You probably have a better suggestion; you probably have
245 a better sense of aesthetics than I do." And he was like, "Well, you know, advertising is advertising; it's not such a bad thing." And in the end I agreed with him. There also used to be a class here. It was the Daily Campus Critique. They wanted to do it this year, but not enough students signed up. I don't know why. It was like one credit, once a week, you sit down in a room with a professor and they go over any errors and
250 any good things. But not enough students signed up for it this year, but I was going to go over to the Journalism Department Head and ask if a professor didn't want to come in and critique it. So we just might be doing that. But the only problem is: It's not a class. So if you want students to come, it would have to be late, just to combine all their extracurricular activities, all their classes. And professors don't like staying
255 on campus until like 9 o'clock which is probably what it has to be. But I'll just have to work that out. So, yeah, we're really tied with those guys.

KL: And your editors, do they get credit or something for working here?

CD: No, not credit, but we do pay them money. I mean I'd do it for free, just to put it on my resume. But it's nice to have some money. So the writers get 10 Dollars a story,
260 when they start off. Then after ten stories, if the editor chooses to, they can promote them to staff writers, and they get 12 Dollars a story. It's a lot more money. Editors get 14 Dollars a story if they choose to write, which sometimes they do, sometimes they don't. I get money based on how many hours I worked here. It's about minimum wage

what they pay me. And then the designers. We pay them a little under 50 Dollars
 265 every night they come in and do page layout. And then copy editors, who check for
 punctuation, I think 30 Dollars for the copy editors. I mean it's not a lot. If you're
 on a scholarship here that stipulated you needed a job, you can't do it here, obviously.
 But it's a nice little incentive. But we don't offer credits. I know we should. I would
 be just the worst writer in the world if I hadn't worked at the Daily Campus, quite
 270 frankly. We have news writing classes but that's just a semester and then you're done.
 While I was here, I was writing a story a week when I started, two stories last year,
 just because there was a personnel issue, we didn't have a lot of people who showed
 up. This was so weird. It's probably not related, but they are journalism majors who
 are not part of the Daily Campus, they are not part of the radio or broadcast stations
 275 we have either. Or not we, I should say that do exist. I see them in the street and I'd
 be like "Why aren't you doing this?" And they just like "We don't have enough time
 in the week." Like, okay, I guess. But this is what you're aspiring to, this is the end
 goal. And if you don't practice, you won't be good at it. And they're just like "I know,
 but it's so hard." I mean it's hard but it's not time consuming. One or two hours you
 280 do interviews, you write for like an hour and then you're done. And these people I
 see they are just playing video games, watching TV, they could spend an hour... We
 probably, we do deserve credit. But I mean we're good writers, that's credit enough.
 Practice, practice, practice.

KL: So that would be another question: How great is the willingness of the students
 285 to work here? Is it easy to find new writers?

CD: It's really not. It's a problem we're having, to be honest. It changes, you really
 don't know how many people you're going to have. Like every Monday we have meet-
 ings for the sections at like 7 o'clock there's news, 8 o'clock there's focus. Everybody
 just shows up, there's a list of stories on the wall and then "I'd like this one, I'd like
 290 that one." We give priority to the staff writers and to editors. But everyone can just
 come and take it. At the start of the year, it's like we've trouble fitting people in the
 room. Everyone shows up, ready to go. But when exams are around, mid-terms and
 finals, we've got like three people in that room. And just for various reasons people
 come and go. And usually we have like five regular... like you know they're going to
 295 be be there every week, if something happens you can call them during the week and
 tell them to go do something and then do it. But most people are just worried about
 their schedules. Maybe I'm a little too hard on the people I see in the streets. I mean
 people are busy, busy, busy. But I don't know. People got their own schedules, we've
 got to respect that. But yeah, sometimes they just say they're too busy to come. We

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300 think the solution to that is to make it more part of people's social lives. Like trying
and throw Daily Campus parties, just make them remember we're here, speak friendlier
to them. That's what I think the problem is. People don't see it necessarily as part
of their education. But this is where you do most of the learning. Unless you got an
internship somewhere else. But that's kind of happening everywhere. You gonna have
305 dedicated people, you gonna have people who are not dedicated, you gonna have people
who are not even sure if this is what they want to do. You can manipulate them what
you want, you can raise pay, you can be friendlier to them, you can buy them drinks
at a bar, but at the end of the day, people are gonna do it or they're not gonna do
it. But I think we're gonna make a headway this year. The editor I hired for news for
310 example is a really friendly guy; he's got some good ideas. What also doesn't help is
the fact that everyone knows that there's no money in journalism. I'm not sure what
the numbers of how many people are journalism majors this year are, actually they
might be going up. But based on nothing, pure personal conjecture: It's not really a
motivating force.

315 KL: In general, how many people are on your staff?

CD: Like I said it fluctuates each year. But I'd say a good average would be around
100.

KL: Wow.

CD: I know, it's a lot when you say it like that. It's a lot less without the editorial
320 staff; they're the bulk of it. But we also have people who distribute the paper every
morning. We get it printed and delivered and then people take their cars and they
drive it around campus. We've got a whole graphics design section. Then we've got
the whole business section, we've got a manager for that. People who put together rates,
talk to advertisers. Advertising representatives we call them. And then we got all the
325 writers. It probably never gets more than 100, but it never really gets less. Because
there are just lots of things to be doing, you know. I guess it fluctuates between 60
and 100, depending on the time of the year. I would not feel comfortable saying less
than 60 or 50.

KL: Okay. Concerning the administration, I also wanted to know do you get feedback
330 for your articles or proposal for articles or anything.

CD: When we get something wrong, we get feedback.

KL: For example?

CD: The very first story I ever wrote for this newspaper, I spelled every single name wrong. And then they all e-mailed me and “Thanks for getting our names wrong.” And
 335 last year, they got some numbers wrong in the budget and they sent an e-mail to tell us that we messed that up. That’s understandable. Have they ever suggested stories for us? No, they haven’t. I mean people take the First Amendment very seriously here. The one thing you don’t mess around with is the newspapers. If people hear about it, they get furious. Not even just in schools. Just in our society, people don’t get pissed
 340 off like they get pissed off when the First Amendment is being violated. My opinion might be kind of biased, it’s a corner stone of democracy, it’s what sets America apart. They usually are really good about that. They will send us like press releases. Which isn’t really the same thing like suggesting a story. You’re more talking about like they come over and they are just like “don’t run this” or “you should be focusing more
 345 on this”? Not really. We’ve got a really good relationship with their communications department. And they send out press releases, just like “President Hogan is going to be here at this time to promote this. If you wanna cover it, it’s gonna be here and here.” But they send this out to the Hartford Courant also. But there’s no real pressure from them right now. There should maybe be more pressure, but they’ve been really
 350 good so far. We see how it will continue. I mean that’s a daily, they could change in a heartbeat. I mean you never know. They’re not done with budget cuts. And if we start reporting on something like that, make it a little touchy, you never know. But we got a really good relationship with them in the past. Recently I mean, in the recent past, this current administration. I can’t think of anything specific with previous presidents,
 355 but like now I really can’t complain. And right now, that makes me sad, because I’d love to be like a outlaw-journalist, thumbing my nose in the face of authorities. They aren’t pushing, so all right. We are pushing, but they are sort of recognizing that it’s the game. You know, we talk about stuff and if you don’t like it, then you don’t like it. But it could change in seconds.

360 KL: Do you get feedback from the students?

CD: Yeah, in different ways. I get e-mails from people, talking about things they don’t like, the police blotter for example. On the internet we probably get most of our feedback. We post all our stories online and there’s a comment section beneath it. But it’s not really serious criticism, is it? Comments on the internet? Whenever people
 365 get an anonymous comment on anything, they’re angry and mean-spirited. I’d like to take that fine; I’d take it with a grain of salt. We’re working on a survey right now,

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we gonna send it out when school starts. Just for that reason, to get clear student feedback. We don't really get anything useful. Most of the feedback we get concerns a specific article, an ideological problem or whatever someone wants to talk about. Not
370 really feedback on the paper as a whole. But like I said, we're going to try and correct that. Not just so that we can improve the paper, because obviously we'd like to do that, but because it could help us get advertisers, which is the example I was saying earlier. All things that you do take a financial edge in this sort of crisis. Next year we'll have feedback.

375 KL: Okay, in your eyes, how important is the Daily Campus to the students here?

CD: I think a lot more important than they'd be willing to say. It gives them tings to talk about. Coming to school, especially for the freshmen is sort of daunting. Because you're safe in a High School. It's your hometown, you know this people. And then you leave and you show up and there is massive amounts of people you don't know. And
380 the Daily Campus is a good icebreaker for that. Just socially, gives them something to talk about, gives them something to think about, it makes them sort of a community. And furthermore, like I said earlier: They never go to board of trustees meetings. Not just because they are hard to find, just because students are busy. It might be a bad time. These board of trustees meetings are usually around 3 o'clock where a lot of
385 people have class, a lot of people have homework. But if the Daily Campus wasn't there, they really wouldn't have anybody looking out for their best interests or telling them what's going on. And that's important. So, just giving them something to talk about and actually looking after their rights, because they're too busy to.

KL: Is the Daily Campus also available off campus and in the region around here?

390 CD: Yeah, we put it over at the Mansfield-Storrs town hall and over at the mall, over there. We're kind of like the biggest thing in the region. Actually last time I had a meeting in June with the town planners about these new shopping centers. They are kind of free landscaping for us. By which I mean they are going to place these stores so that our buildings look more prominent. It recognizes also that we're kind of a local
395 paper. There's really nothing else in this area besides the University of Connecticut. It would barely qualify as a town if we weren't here. And so people care about what's going on. Especially because, do you know anything about spring weekend?

KL: Yeah.

CD: All right [laughs]. Yeah, lots of concern about that. And a lot of what we cover
 400 when it's spring weekend time is what the police are doing to make sure everyone's
 safe, what the administration is doing to make sure that's okay. And from what I've
 heard, the locals seem to really appreciate that. We also do other things. Speakers
 come to UConn all the time, academia, famous professors, people giving book talks.
 And we usually run a little preview like "This person is coming this way", like 500
 405 words, throw it in the focus department and then we see people from the community
 to show up. So they find out what's going on, if they want to know, if it's anything
 that concerns them. Well, we do focus at a student newspaper, but there's plenty that
 the locals like to read. A lot of them find it helpful.

KL: Okay, so how do you consider the possibilities of the Daily Campus to criticize the
 410 administration, the university for example?

CD: Oh, that's very possible, that's our goal. We always are keeping an eye on them
 to do that. I mean you have to do criticism objectively. You know, I can't write an
 editorial that's like "President Hogan sucks, he's doing this thing, he should watch
 out." But the thing that really sways people is when you know the facts. You write
 415 that the administration is doing this and it would mean this for you. So, criticism,
 that's maybe not the best word. I would choose oversight for it, because, just as a
 news organization, criticism stops at the commentary section. Just to make sure that
 we're doing our job right. I know I don't need to lecture objectivity. But it's massive;
 it's our job to make sure that they're doing their job right. It's the aspiration of all
 420 the serious journalists here anyways. Because we're all objective, we're all dedicated to
 the idea of no bias, but we're also very dedicated to the idea of social justice, keeping
 bureaucracies honest. And you do that non-biased, because otherwise you're just some
 crazy person. But yeah, that's what we live for. It doesn't happen as often as we'd like
 to, which is kind of the grim part of a journalist, that you don't want anything bad to
 425 happen. But you also really want to report on something bad. That's the weird thing;
 every reporter has that weird moment. Our potential though, we've reporters at every
 single public forum they have. We have most of the administrators at speed dial. By
 that time last year, when I was one of the more prolific writers of the news department,
 all the administrators knew my name and my face, even the president, which threw me
 430 for a loop. But we try not to let them get away with anything. There would really be
 no point to the paper at all if we were slacking off at that point. You said potential?
 Is that what you were talking about?

KL: Yes.

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CD: Did that answer that right?

435 KL: Yes.

CD: Okay.

KL: And where do you see the limits of critical journalism? Because you're on campus, you're partly financed by student money. Where do you think are the limits for your newspaper to criticize?

440 CD: Well, the most obvious limit is what I was saying earlier, that we can't have any opinion or any fiction in the articles. There's a limit right there. Because sometimes you just want to stand on the desk and be like "Enough of this bullshit, that sucks, you suck." But you don't, because no one would take you seriously. People take facts seriously, people take stoic understanding seriously. So that's a limitation right there.

445 By criticism you limit it to what you see, not what you perceive. There's always that edge to a story, where your gut is telling you that something shady is going on, but the only facts you have only really imply, you couldn't prove it. And what you do is you publish the facts that you have and put your nose to the grindstone and you try and search that feeling. But at the end of the day if it doesn't come up with

450 anything, it doesn't come up with anything. And then they've won, and that's hard, because there might be something to that feeling. But if you can't prove it, you can't print it. So there's a limitation right there. Another thing is that... it's a state run school, the University of Connecticut. So governor Rell, Jodi M. Rell who is in charge for Connecticut, has a lot of influence. Not just on the board of trustees, but on the

455 budget, a lot of things. The state, senate and government has a very big influence on campus and on what the administration decides. But they're over at Hartford. And they meet when students have class. If they would meet like really close here, maybe I could find a reporter to cover that, who could just go there, meet for an hour and then be done, come back to class. But as it stands, they would have to spend half an

460 hour driving to Hartford, an hour covering the meeting, maybe half an hour afterwards talking to senators and the government representatives there and then another half an hour coming back. So that's like two and a half hours I think I said. They are students as well as journalists. You can't just go over to Hartford. Once or twice, when they were talking about budgets for the year, I went over there and covered it actually. Well,

465 I'm bragging about myself. We do get over there eventually, sometimes when it's really important. But we're bound by our academics. It's a student paper, it comes with the territory.

KL: That's also another question I wanted to ask. How do you consider the double-role of yourself and of your writers as students and journalists? Does this entail problems?

470 CD: Yeah, there's a problem right there. There's a weird sort of attitude thing also. Personally, it's kind of charming for me, like to come here, do a bunch of paperwork, I critique the issues, I go over it with my editors. And then I go to class and the professor will come and talk to me about how you run a paper. It's just weird; you go from like being on top to being on bottom. I did an internship this summer with the Hartford
475 Courant and it was the exact same thing. I was at the bottom and people were like ordering me around and giving me shitty assignments. And I was just like: "This is confusing." But for me personally, that's charming. But it's hard for these guys to juggle their responsibilities. But like I said earlier, I think there's absolutely time in the day to write one story a week. You start working on it on Monday, you turn it in
480 on Thursday, and you have time. You just have to have the will to understand that you need to prioritize. But other times, there were legitimate concerns. The best I could think of is like layout and designs; this just takes a really long time. Depending on your skill with the program we use. We use Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator and Adobe InDesign. The point is, we use these Adobe products that they never really run into
485 before. So it's kind of this steep learning curve, which means when you're designing a page, you can come in here at 5 or 6 o'clock and you won't be done until 2 or 3 AM. So if you're scheduled to design that night, just not do homework this night. You're either not doing homework or you're not sleeping. But we've got to get the paper out, and there's really nothing I can do about this. We've been messing around with some
490 different scheduled things, maybe starting earlier, but that didn't really work out. We thought maybe splitting up the shifts we work, but not really... By the end of the semester, you get like two or three people who can finish it in like three hours. But it's a tough program to use and you don't really get it until the end of the time. So it just eats up a bunch of hours that you could be working. And that's part of the reason
495 why we pay them 48 Dollars a night for the copy editors. Because we need people to do it, and that's way more we pay anybody else. They probably deserve more, but we just don't have the money to give it to them, frankly. Too bad. The only other thing I could think of is: Being a student, interviewing a professor, sometimes it's beneficial, because you could have a really good relationship with your professor and he'll give you
500 a great interview. Or you could have a really bad interview with your professor and the article doesn't make them look good. And the next day you got to sit into their class and what's worst: They're grading you. So I haven't seen like that be a problem, but sometimes that can't be rally awkward, this student-teacher-relationship. But hands

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down, I'd have to say yeah, there are not enough hours in the day for what you want
505 to do. Their schedules decide their ambition; let me put it that way. I want somebody
to go cover a protest, but they all have class that day. You can't ask them to skip class,
you know what I mean? They are paying money to be here. So it presents problems.
And the best way to get around those problems is to have as many writers as they can.
But people are likely not to take extracurricular activities because they don't have
510 enough hours in the day. It's a weird vicious cycle, but it comes with the territory.
You've just got to do your best. But I think we're going to have more students this
year. I've been talking to some people that got some ambition. You never know who's
showing up. But we'll see. But I'm confident in our staff that they're able to retain
them. They are a lot more charismatic than last year's editors, I think. So that should
515 go, fingers crossed.

KL: Okay. So, to which degree do you see your newspaper as an institution for jour-
nalism education?

CD: Oh boy, oh god. Well, I mean we try do to it right. People come here to learn
how to write, so sometimes they fuck up, to put it bluntly. We're not as good as a lot
520 of other newspapers. But we are better than a lot of other newspapers. Sorry, I don't
really know how to answer that question. Institution... We've got lots of good things,
we've got a great page layout and our senior staff are really good writers. But they're
learning still, you have to take that with a grain of salt. And sometimes the product
isn't something you really like. And most days you cut it, sometimes you run it. You
525 have to always remember that they're still learning. You don't necessarily want to put
them off journalism. I mean that's an important thing, I guess I should have mentioned
earlier: The editors here are kind of teachers in another quality, in that sense. But we
do our part.

KL: Okay, the final question, a short one: What's the circulation of the Daily Campus?

530 CD: 9,000. It was 10,000 last year, but we cut it back, because UConn has depot
campuses all over in West-Hartford and Farmington. But the students there didn't
really care about the news, because it was mostly about the main Storrs campus. And
the distributors hated driving out there. And we could save a little bit of money cutting
back, so it's 9,000.

535 KL: Okay, so that was it.

CD: Well, there's actually something I should have mentioned. We get our newspaper printed at a little local paper. Well, not local but close by, called the Journal Inquirer. We keep them in business to be honest. Because we pay them, I think it's about 30,000 Dollars a year to print 9,000 copies every day, except for the weekends. We keep them
 540 afloat, which may answer that institution question. I don't know which conclusions you can draw from that, but it's ironic.

KL: Okay.

CD: That's it?

KL: Yes, thank you very much.

545 CD: Oh, I'm happy to do it.

9.3.2 Giovanni Russonello

KL: So, you're the editor in chief of the Tufts Daily.

GR: Right.

KL: Maybe you can just tell me a little bit about your job, what you like about it, what you don't like about it.

5 GR: Okay, well, as I think I might have mentioned it earlier it's a little bit too early for me to tell you too much about my job, because I've only made one paper so far. It's a job that rotates every semester. So twice a year. So that means nobody really gets comfortable with it until they are about to finish. It also means we get to still be students. But so far my job consists of organizing everything, from the top-level, but
 10 really trying to delegate as much as possible.

[interruption.]

GR: So anyway, I was saying that my job basically consists of me trying to make sure that everyone else is doing their job really. In advance of the first issue I came up with an idea or two of special sections that we could put in the features section. You can
 15 find it in the middle of the page, 9 through 12. It was an idea but then once I had it

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I suggested it to the section head and they do it. Every day as the articles come in, I edit. I or one of the managing editors. We have two managing editors, one editor in chief. I or one of the managing editors has to read the final version of every article. So that's the technical side of it, in terms of the editorial side, I need to read everything
20 before it goes to print, or one of my managing editors does. For writing editorial, the opinion piece of the paper every day, I'm responsible of course along with the managing editors, for making sure that that content is in line with how we feel. I don't necessarily write all the editorials. I did this time, but I don't always write all the editorials. We often have editorialists come in and collaborate with us. So they come to me and they
25 say: "Here is this issue, I think I might write about it. How do we feel about this? Is what I'm going to write appropriate to what you feel?" So that's the everyday work. The everyday operation is that I'm in the office at all times pretty much that we're operating, to make sure everyone else is doing their job. Just because of my interests, I take a hand in doing the layout; I suggest possible layouts of the paper. Perhaps if I
30 think an article is really wrong I suggest trying to edit it a little bit, but not usually. And then just making sure that everything runs smoothly and seeing if anyone needs any help with anything, and making sure that the photographers are coordinated with the news section and stuff like that. And then by the end of the night I'll be reading the articles that have been edited up until me. Making sure that people come to the
35 office, making sure that everyone knows what days we're publishing. That logistical thing is my operation. And my big initiative - I don't know if you're gonna ask about things like this later - but just a personal interest of mine that I think is probably going to be the defining part of this semester for the paper is that I have decided that I wanna implement a new media department in the paper, which is obviously for online,
40 putting videos, audio, slideshows, features like timelines, that sort of thing on to our website to complement our news coverage. So that's probably going to be my biggest ambition this semester. And I'm doing as much as I possibly can to get a staff for that and to make sure that the people who are already on board with it start moving in the right direction. But again, it's just that I'm guiding things. I'm not doing things from
45 the bottom up.

KL: Okay. In your point of view, what's the major purpose or the major role of the Tufts Daily on campus?

GR: Okay. Well, it serves many roles. A lot of students would say that it's just a place to find the crossword puzzle. But at least that means they're picking it up and it
50 means a lot. Most people do pick it up at some point of the day or at least a few times a week. We're lucky to be a daily because it gives us the opportunity to talk about

as many news pieces as we can, really. And that means that we get to expose a lot of things that people wouldn't know about. How the school works, sometimes revelations that they probably are surprised by and that the administration wish we wouldn't have written about. I think that we serve the same civic purpose that most newspapers do. And I think being a daily also helps to do that. Well, not only, it helps, but it also makes that our journalism also suffers in the daily grind of getting out a paper every day. But in terms of our purpose, aside of the arts section, the sports section and most of the features sections: The news section and the opinion section serve a great civic purpose in proliferating a lot of ideas and a lot of information that people wouldn't always be seeking out. Because there is no other real news organization on campus that provides this sort of coverage.

KL: What are the challenges you have to face as an editor-in-chief?

GR: Well, the biggest challenge for us is not having enough staff. We are the smallest university in the country that's having a daily paper. And we put out a big paper, we put out 20 pages, 16 pages every day, which is not enormous, but it's big for such a small school to have that produced every single day. So I think the challenges for us are usually making sure that we not only keep our head above water, not only produce the bare minimum every day, but also do it to the best of our abilities. We have editors who are writing multiple articles a week regularly. We don't have a huge staff below the editors. It's mostly editors who do the writing. That's our biggest challenge and that's our biggest quandary. We don't ever really know how to solve that problem, because we are just too small as a school and there's only so many students here who are interested in writing for us.

KL: You just mentioned it that you see it as a role or as a purpose to also publish things that the administration doesn't always like that you're publishing. My next question would have been how is the connection between you and the administration or the university in general?

GR: The technical connection is that we remain financially independent. So we are not funded by the university. We get all of our funding from advertising, occasionally from loans, but those are loans that we pay back as needed. But that's a rare instance. Usually we get all our funding from advertising. It gets complicated, we're too small and we're just not incorporated as a business. So we don't have our own legal title. We haven't been designated as our own business because we've never gone to the authorities and said we'd like to become a business, this is the kind of business that we wanna

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become, an LLP or whatever. And so we don't have our papers filed. So what we are is we are a financially independent piece under the university's business umbrella. So we do our financial booking and we handle our finances on our own. But then we have to go through the university to make certain transactions. We were trying to set
90 up an online payment system for our advertisers, to be able to just click and pay us online with credit cards, pay for an ad there. But we can't do that on our own because we're not incorporated as a business and therefore the credit cards won't accept paying us, because we're not officially a business. The school is the business under which we officially operate. So we need to set up a site that uses the schools accounts to get us
95 the money. So it's something that I would like to do in the future when we're not in such economically difficult times. We're just dealing with too many things right now to confront it. But in the future that would be something that we should deal with, just to get true financial independence, meaning we don't have to go through them. Even if we are funded by ourselves, by our advertising, we still need to go through the school
100 which puts us in a little disadvantage in terms of feeling independent and really being able to say "We have no obligation to them whatsoever." That said, if your question was more directed to the relationship between the administration and the editorial staff and how much we get at each other's throats and if they are threatened by us and how receptive they are or not receptive they are to helping us do our job, I think
105 that by and large the administration is happy to have this daily paper. It tries its best to be liberal minded about freedom of speech and freedom of information. And every semester we have meetings with the president of the school and a certain number of deans. There are other deans who are always available to talk to us. The idea is this is an administration that supports us and if they're irritated by a story that we cover, by
110 and large we will still be able to get them on the phone the very next week for another story. So that's a positive.

KL: That already answered some of my questions I wanted to ask. Do you work together with a journalism department there?

GR: That's a good question. Tufts does not have a journalism department per se. Tufts
115 has a communication and media studies program, which is obviously much more broad than simply journalism, but it does accomplish journalism. That's an interdisciplinary program that does not offer a major, it offers a minor. You're familiar with how that works in the United States?

KL: Mhm.

120 GR: So I'm a history major and if I'd wanted to I could've taken a minor which means just taking five classes in communications and media studies. So long story short there is no department really for us to work with. There is not a journalism faculty that is six professors, ten professors that have each their specialized type of journalism that they study and that they are experts in. There's not that sort of thing, we don't work
 125 with a department, we're completely on our own and in some ways that hurts, in some ways that helps. A way in that it would hurt is that a lot of the time people who come in do not know how to write news articles very well and they do not know how to write arts articles very well. They don't understand that if you're writing news, they need to structure it a certain way. When you're writing arts, a simple recitation about what
 130 happened in the movie that you're reviewing doesn't work and you know. Sacrificing a summary for a few points of analysis is actually extremely necessary. So if we had a journalism department and if we had people who've gone through a year or something of journalistic writing class, every time that you signed up for us or most of the time, then we'd probably be better off in terms of writing. There are other things as well,
 135 like business of journalism and how to layout a great news page that we don't have any formal training in by and large. Well, there are certain classes and a few people might have taken them because they are in the communications and media studies program but those classes aren't that great for the most part. And the number of people who've taken them is very small. So the fact that we don't collaborate with any
 140 department is harmful in this way. But I think of it as a restriction to the independence of a newspaper to be tied to an adviser or a group of faculty within the school. So in that way I'm glad to see that we don't have any obligation or any ties to a journalism department.

KL: You mentioned you're financially independent and you get all your revenue from
 145 advertising or loans. The other interviews I did or the persons I talked to told me a lot about financial problems they're having recently. Is it the same here?

GR: Oh we have problems, we definitely have problems. We're in debt, for the most part because of the recession. We were doing very well actually before the recession. To
 back up, I would say that we are very lucky as a newspaper to have a captive audience
 150 of thousands of students and faculty members every day who read the print copy and many many subscribers who read the online version every day. Those people aren't going away because it's a free newspaper that people pick up at certain times in their days that aren't going away as the internet pops up. You still have to go to class, for now. You still have to go to the lunch room to eat. These are things that people do and
 155 on their way they pick up the Daily and they read the headlines or they skip to their

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favorite section or they go straight to the crossword for whatever reason. Whatever they are doing, they are picking up the Daily. And that's not going away. So the fact that in the United States journalism is receding and papers are not figuring it out how to continue to get people to buy them. That's not a problem that we're afflicted with. Our problem is that our advertisers are too poor and struggling too much right now to advertise with us because the recession has just hit them hard. People are eating out less. I mean you look at consumer spending numbers and it's incredible the amount people are tightening their wallets. And for us that's been a struggle. But hopefully, we're just looking at it from the perspective of we're riding out the storm. We're just bracing for a hard semester, hopefully no more than that, maybe two hard semesters. We're spending a little bit less than we normally would but we're accepting the fact that we maybe climb a little bit deeper into debt before we climb out of it. And then we're hoping that as soon as the recession ends things will start to pick up.

KL: Okay, to come back to another thing you mentioned, you mentioned that you have meetings with the president every year.

GR: That's right, every semester.

KL: Every semester. What are these meetings about? Do you get feedback on the paper?

GR: We ask him about feedback for the paper. He usually says he likes it. He usually constrains his critiques to about one or two topics. But the main reason for the meeting is so that we can interview him. It's one meeting per semester. We usually meet for about an hour. He's an extremely busy guy. So getting that hour is very valuable for us. He also makes himself available via e-mail. So we can interview him via e-mail pretty much at any point. We save our correspondences with him for the most important things. In terms of in person interviews, that happens once a semester and it's basically an hour of us asking him to discuss some of the biggest issues and things that we want to report on. Because the conversation takes turns that we might not have expected, it also generates a lot of article ideas. And he tells us "Oh, there's another thing that I wanted to mention to you guys, there's this and that program." And if we decide that that's an interesting thing to write about and not just him promoting something that's not that interesting, then we write about it. He gives us some feedback, for instance he didn't like an article last time, or one of the last few times that we met with him. And he let us understand why he didn't and we said "Okay, we understand that. Here's our take on it." And then we came to some sort of

190 common understanding. But that was maybe five minutes out of the meeting. Most of the meeting that we have with him is just to get an interview.

KL: That sounds interesting, what was this article about, that he didn't like? Was it about him?

GR: Yeah, the one that I can remember best... He usually has one or two things
 195 where he says "I think you really could have covered this differently. Or you could have covered this more." Actually in one meeting that we had with him in one semester he told us that he couldn't let us know who the commencement speaker would be. Commencement is our graduation ceremony. So he couldn't tell us who the speaker would be because it wasn't public knowledge yet and there hadn't been confirmation
 200 from outside yet. Next day, finally we get confirmation on the speaker and she is sort of a journalist, but not really. Not that the speaker should be a journalist, because most speakers are politicians, philanthropists or something like that. She was Meredith Vieira. She was an alumni, she had graduated from Tufts. And that was the big thing. She is on NBC 1 think during "Good morning America", no, "The Today Show" or
 205 something like that. One of these magazine shows that's really not as much news as it is fluff. And he told us in the meeting, before he told us who it was, he told us "We're very excited about who we've chosen and if it works out we're gonna be very happy." And then he said: "Look, if it were up to me and I suggested this and nobody is receptive to it, but if it were up to me I would do away with celebrity speakers at the
 210 graduation ceremony. Get rid of it all together. And I'd have one of our best professors, who the students could chose, give an address on maybe something academic, maybe an inspirational speech, maybe something tying the two together, but somebody that you only really see at Tufts. Somebody who has real significance to Tufts students. Somebody who means our home, you know. And I think the idea of getting a celebrity
 215 speaker at commencement, he said it's overrated and it becomes a competition to see who you can get for commencement. Can you get the biggest name possible, can you find the greatest sounding person, the most important sounding person..." And he said that doesn't really translate into the best speaker. He said in fact maybe a professor who is committed to the university and doesn't have a gazillion speaking
 220 engagements would create a more unique and tailored speech and it might be an even more rewarding experience. So the very next day when we found out who the speaker was going to be we published an article saying "Meredith Vieira is coming to Tufts." And in the sidebar we wrote "The president would do away with celebrity speakers if he could." And it was all true and it was all related and it had all been said to us
 225 within 48 hours. So we felt it was justified to print that. But he was irritated that we

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had put it in the paper in such a way that it implied that the president was displeased specifically with Meredith Vieira. To us, we didn't write it that way. We understand why he was upset, I suppose. He said "Now I have to go apologize to Meredith Vieira because it sounds like I slighted her." To us, we said "You were talking about this
230 clearly because she's another celebrity speaker. So we can't avoid the correlation. This is just the most appropriate time for us to publish what you said to us about your thoughts. And if they overlap and if they are relevant to each other, these two articles, we can't help it. It's just the truth." He brought that up at the next meeting I think but we came to a common understanding, why we had done what we had done and
235 why he objected.

KL: So, a totally different question: In your eyes how important is the Tufts Daily to the students on campus?

GR: I think the Tufts Daily is very important to the students. I mean having some sort of a newspaper would be important but having one every day is probably a point
240 of pride for some. It's definitely a point of pride for us at the Daily. But I think it's a point of pride for some people. More importantly it becomes a part of a lot of people's daily lives. I know that on other schools, when the newspaper comes out and if it's a good newspaper, if it comes out once a week or twice a week, the day it comes out people wanna run and grab it, people wanna see it. People are very curious about
245 what's going on in their small world. If it's very specific to their school, more than likely it will have something that interests them. So to me the Tufts Daily means something to our students because it provides a very personalized form of news and form of writing. It's fun to read, columnists talk about anything from the party scene to sports in Boston to the national celebrity scene, I don't know, anything. It's just
250 fun to see that production, especially if it manifests itself in a way that provides service every single day.

KL: Do you also get feedback on your newspaper from the students? Or maybe also suggestions for articles or something?

GR: Yeah, right, absolutely, all the time. Especially in conversations with my friends
255 I like to hear them say "Why did the Daily do this? Why did the Daily do that?" We also get a lot of updates; we have opinion pieces written by the students in pretty much every paper that we put out. A great way for us to get feedback that's just come up recently is the comments on online articles. So that has really helped us actually. I

look at the comments on online articles and some of them are crazy but some of them
260 actually make good points.

KL: I think you mentioned some of this before: How great is the willingness for students to work for the Tufts Daily?

GR: Well, the will is there. I mean, people are interested. The question is whether they are ready to commit as much time as we need them to, because it's a daily and
265 we're so small. And every once in a while there's a position that's hard to fill. It's hard to find anyone who wants to do that, executive position, every single day. You know every single day there is class we need to put out a paper, so usually five days a week. But no, I think by and large there's plenty of willingness to do it. But again it comes from just a few, maybe a hundred people who work for the daily, maybe two hundred.
270 And that's not so many when you think that we're putting out a paper that's 20 pages long every day.

KL: Do you pay your staff?

GR: We don't get to pay our staff. We're too small; our advertising base is too small. We would love to be able to do that, but we just don't get enough advertisers. And
275 it's also to maintain our independence from the school.

KL: So it's all just volunteers who do it to put it on their resume?

GR: To get the experience, to have fun and to put it on their resume, that's right.

KL: But that's great.

GR: Yeah.

280 KL: Okay. From your point of view, how important is the Tufts Daily to the region around the campus? Is it available off campus?

GR: Is it available off campus? It is not. We've thought about that. We wondered whether people would read it off campus. They probably would, if we had the opportunity to put it off campus. It's a thought that I might consider this semester, because
285 we now have the paper delivered all the way to the campus by the publisher at no cost. And then we pick up that paper and we pay people to distribute it. Students get paid

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to distribute the paper to different parts of the campus. And they could take it to a few places around Medford and Somerville, they could. It's not available off campus. There are I think online readers who are from the region. We get some comments from
290 people like that. But I can't really say how much of an impact it's making in the rest of the community because it's not really obvious to me. So maybe that means not much.

KL: Okay, how do you consider the possibilities especially for your newspaper to criticize the university or to make critical comments on faculty members, the administration?

GR: Oh, we're very capable of doing so. It's possible for us to do so. We're allowed to
295 do so. The question is whether we are able to find the people to criticize the university. The university isn't shutting anyone up, at least not openly. They're not saying don't talk to the Daily. Well, they may. Certain administrators may. But the university is not saying the Daily can't interview people. It may try to keep things quiet on its
300 own front, but it's not restricting how we do our job. Once in a while you get an interview with a professor who opens up to you or a faculty member or a staff member who opens up to you. I did a story on how the university is moving towards focusing more on research than on teaching. And it was really an article about the departure of one professor who had won the professor of the year award and who was very popular
305 among students, had actually helped build up an entire program on community health. Because he was so popular and such a great teacher that people started taking his class in huge numbers. But he left because the university refused to find him a position after he didn't get tenure. The reason he didn't get tenure and the reason they didn't value him very much in his eyes was that he hadn't done hardly any research. After he
310 opened up to us we put out a really good article criticizing, well not criticizing, just explaining the fact that the university makes a lot of decisions now with the hopes of promoting research of the faculty members, often at the cost of promoting teaching. So when somebody talks to us we have the ability to put that thing in print. But it's just a matter of who's gonna talk.

KL: So is this also a problem that you've experienced during your time at the newspaper
315 that you're not able to get the information you need?

GR: Yeah, absolutely. There is always that problem in journalism. There was that problem with Woodward and Bernstein in Watergate. We don't have the sources, we don't have the sources. And then they would get the thought that something was
320 happening in there, the editor would send them back and he would be furious because

it would be a good story and he would think that they hadn't done enough research. But it was that no one was talking to them. This problem always happens. I can't really thing of an example here, but I know there are plenty.

KL: I think this maybe already answers my next question, it would have been: Where
325 do you see the limits of critical journalism for a student-run newspaper?

GR: That's it.

KL: How do you react upon these problems? Do you have any means to react?

GR: I can push the reporters. I was the news executive before I was editor in chief. And I would often push my reporters to go, get more, get more, don't be afraid to
330 ask these questions. Because people are afraid of asking if it's about their peers and something their peers have done wrong, they are afraid to ask other students. They are afraid of getting people mad at them and they are afraid of pushing the professors too hard. Because it's a tough thing to do to force someone to say something that might be uncomfortable to say for them, that might harm their career. So the best I
335 can do is to push them to ask those questions. Beyond that there's not much.

KL: How do you consider the double-role of the writers especially as students and journalists at the same time? Do you think this might entail problems for them?

GR: Yeah, it does. Everyone has conflicts of interest. It's very interesting to see people try to report on certain clubs because they are members of those clubs. And then
340 there's also the problem that you can't really interview a teacher and you won't wanna publish something about a teacher if it's negative if you're in that teachers class. The overlaps are obvious. It's rare that they actually come up and present problems though.

KL: Okay, the next question might be a little bit different for Tufts because you don't actually have a journalism department, but: To which degree do you see the Daily as
345 some kind of institution for journalism education?

GR: I think it's actually a very interesting question for us, because I often think of the Daily as serving that purpose at little to no cost for the university. We were handing out newspapers yesterday at the matriculation ceremony, where all the freshmen came in. That's what this newspaper that you're holding in your hand is from. And we got
350 kicked out of the area because they didn't want us to hand out the papers where all the

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freshmen might go to the ceremony and then they would stop paying attention to the ceremony because they would be reading the paper, I suppose. They didn't say why, but they told us "Get out of here." Often we go underappreciated, because the Daily provides at very little cost to the university a place for over 100, close to 200 people
355 to develop some sort of writing skills, or business skills if that's their department, or artistic skills if that's their department. And it's a benefit for them to get practical training in all these things. Which I can't be bemoaning too much the fact that the university doesn't quite appreciate it. Because that's the role of an extracurricular organization. But we definitely do the university a service. First of all people wouldn't
360 come to the school if it didn't have a newspaper. A lot of people wouldn't come to the school if it doesn't have a student newspaper. And secondly the skills that people learn working for the paper are enormous I think.

KL: How many hours of work do you put in per week?

GR: Personally? Probably about 60.

365 KL: Wow. And a writer, or an editor?

GR: It depends. A writer can do as few as five. Probably not much fewer than five, but about five could be the minimum, maybe four. Unless you're just writing one article a month. If you're just a contributing writer and you don't ever write. Probably to write an article takes four or five hours. For an editor... when I was news editor it
370 was almost as much time as I'm putting in now. Arts executive in the office would be, let's see, 20 hours a week in the office for an arts editor. Then there's the time at home, there's the time at meetings, there's the time assigning articles. So it's a good deal of time commitment for everyone. That's the arts exec, the arts editors, they can get by with three hours twice a week, so it's six hours in the office and then a few
375 hours writing one article a week, so that would be eleven hours and then assigning some articles to the editors. About 15 hours a week for an arts editor.

KL: But that so many people put in so many hours, it seems like an impossible thing to do for me to juggle this with the academics.

GR: Right, it's hard and it's especially hard to do another thing. If you decide to do
380 the Daily and school, that's fine. If you decide to do the Daily and school and be in a relationship with someone, that's pretty hard but it's doable, a lot of people do it. If you decide to do the Daily and school and a relationship and be in another club, doing

charity work on the weekends, then you don't have a lot of time. But not many people do another club in addition to the Daily, I don't think. I think the majority of the
 385 people at the Daily make this their number one priority by far.

KL: Okay, the last question would be: How many people are on your staff and what's your circulation?

GR: The circulation is, unless I'm getting the numbers wrong, I believe it's 4,000 in print and sometimes up to a 20,000 online every day. Clicks. So I don't know how
 390 that translates into number of viewers. Our staff, you can count the number of people, it should be on page 14. It's on the left there; you can count the number of people. Usually it's between sixty and eighty. Somewhere around there. Maybe sixty and ninety. But that doesn't count the writers. Mostly the writers are the ones who get left out. Writers, photographers are the people who aren't counted there.

395 KL: So normally it's close to a hundred or over a hundred?

GR: All the people who help the paper? Yes, over a hundred, definitely over a hundred. At the beginning of the year, right now, it's a little under a hundred probably because we don't have the writers. The recruitment starts again every year. Then people best become editors at the end of the fall semester. So going to the spring semester, in
 400 January, we're a little bit depleted because we've made our best writers to editors, then a lot of our editors have gone abroad. Because second semester of junior year, a lot of people go abroad. So then when they come back from abroad, if they were editors they often come back in the fall. But if they were just writers who didn't get to become editors after fall semester or were abroad after fall semester, often they just
 405 kind of fade out and do something else. So at the beginning of fall semester we're short, by the middle of fall semester we're the strongest.

KL: That's interesting because that's just the other way round of what some other editors told me. They have problems fitting everybody in the room at the beginning of the semester because so many people want to contribute and then like you said they
 410 fade away when finals come nearer and...

GR: That's another problem, that's definitely the truth, in terms of writers, that's another problem. But we're usually able to sustain at least a good enough staff to have some writers contributing in addition to the editors during the fall semester. Then in the spring it becomes a problem.

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415 KL: Okay, so that was it already. Thank you very much.

GR: Thank you.

9.3.3 Juliette Mullin

KL: So, you're the editor in chief of the Daily Pennsylvanian here. Maybe let's start with what is your job exactly. Maybe you can tell me a little bit about what you do, what you like about it, what you don't like about it. . .

JM: So my official title at the DP is "Executive Editor and President". And I think the concept of editor in chief, which people normally envision, is more a combination of my position and the position I had last year, which is "Managing Editor", which is second in command at the paper. But really the "Managing Editor" is the person who goes through at the very end of the night, stays until the very end, waits until we get the call back from the printer, does all the final editing on the stories. I will only second-edit stories this year if it's really really really important. But otherwise I'm not really looking at content. I'm dealing with other things. As Executive Editor and President, pretty much everybody at the company reports to me. So all the members of our professional staff report to me and the business manager reports to me, the managing editor reports to me, the "34th Street" editor in chief reports to me, our web-team reports to me, the ad page editor reports to me. So I basically spend most of my time making sure all of those things are going well. I spend a lot of my time with the editorial page editor. I edit the editorial page every day. I spend time with the managing editor. I rank the paper every day, so deciding what goes on the front page, what goes on page two, page three, page four and give feedback on what stories should look like throughout the night. However very rarely I'm gonna go in and edit a story throughout the night, I just tell people what I'd like to see in it. And I might check in on the design or check in on photos and give a bit of advice. But I'm not really telling them what to do. I leave that to the managing editor. That's really her job throughout the night. Having been managing editor I like to respect their freedom and to respect their ability to manage that part of the paper without the executive editor constantly looking over their shoulder. So on the business side I'm really checking in to make sure everything's running smoothly and wherever I see problems I'm either making the business manager deal with them or dealing with them myself. That might entail pushing the finance staff to get the financial statements out on time, because

we've been behind on financial statements, as most companies do. But it's really just pushing the business staff to stay on track. And then this year for example we saw that there might be a flaw in the way we sell advertising at the DP. So we had a series
450 of like million hour meetings to determine what the problem is in advertising. And I really started to push to restructure that department. So going into the fall we've restructured and strengthened and grown the advertising department, to try to combat the state of the economy. And the with "34th Street" I'm really just checking to make sure they don't get sued, checking to make sure they're doing very well. And generally
455 they tend to function very well. So very rarely does an executive editor need to step in and say "I think the quality of the paper is bad". I'm really just stepping in to say "You can't run this, I'm sorry. It's too likely to get sued or it's too offensive or whatever". And then on the website-side, I directly oversee the website. So I'm pushing them to complete the projects on time and I'm approving of every little detail of the website.
460 But as executive editor I essentially have the freedom to do or not do what I choose to do or not do. Which can be very dangerous in that position if you're someone who is not extremely motivated. The DP is 125 years. I'm the first person in the 125 years of the DP to have been managing editor before being executive editor. Usually managing editor is something you do in your senior year at Penn. Which gives me some kind of a
465 unique perspective on how to do things. So this semester I've been able to change a lot around the DP. And things that I just took on as projects... I created a committee to redesign the paper, which I chaired. So I made all the decisions in the paper redesign. I used to be the senior design editor in the DP, so that was something I felt qualified to do. So we redesigned the paper. That's an example of something that you can or
470 can't do, like you can choose to do it or you could just leave the paper as it is. And you cannot go that extra stop and do more as an executive editor... You can really come into the office at noon, check in with the business staff, go to a couple of classes, come back, rank the paper, make sure you like what's going into the paper and then leave by nine if you really want to. But my hours look more like noon to two in the
475 morning, because I'm sticking around and working on side projects, working on public relations stuff, working on our blogs, working on all those kinds of things to try and push the company forward. Because when I worked as managing editor, you get really caught up into the day-to-day. And in the course of the year there where all these things and I was like "I would love to do this, I would love to do this, I would love to
480 do this". And now that I'm executive editor I finally get to do them and that's been really fantastic. But at the end of the day a lot of the credits for the actual products we're creating doesn't go to me. It goes to the people who work nightly to put out the issue, who are editing it, who are creating the content. I always think the hardest job

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at the paper can be being a reporter. Because they are the ones that are making the
485 calls between classes or stepping out of class to take calls from their sources. That for
me sometimes can be the worst job at the paper. The best job in some ways but also
the hardest. That was a really long overview on what I do.

KL: Yes, but it's interesting, that's what I'm interested in. You mentioned something
before that I found very interesting. You said that you have to make sure that for
490 example "34th Street" doesn't get sued. Have there ever been any problems where
they were in danger to get sued or something?

JM: The DP as a company, we get threatened to be sued a fair amount. That's fairly
normal for a publication. If you run a story about someone who's done something bad
that's public, we may end up in a situation where they are unhappy that we decided
495 to run that story. And they are going to call and get mad and say "I'm gonna call my
lawyer and try to sue you". Very very very rarely does the lawyer actually contact us
with a law suit ever. That's a very very big rarity for us. But it has happened a few
times in the DP as a company's history, that someone's come very close trying to sue
us or has actually tried to. Just a handful of times. We never run things that are false,
500 that's never what gets us in trouble. So we run... well, this has never actually been an
issue for us but this is always a fear of ours that it will be one day. We run something
called "Freshmen Superlative" every year in 34th Street. Freshmen superlatives are
photos from Facebook that freshmen have left open and accessible to everyone. So we
go in and we pull just like ridiculous photos of freshmen's Facebook. And the big tag
505 at the top is like "Let this be a lesson, close your Facebook. It's a publicly accessible
thing. You're gonna be applying for jobs and these photos will never go away. Close
your Facebook." We don't run incriminating photos but we run photos like making
stupid faces or doing kind of stupid looking things. And we don't run their names
or anything. But it's always that fear that one of these days someone's gonna call us
510 and be like "I can't believe you used that photo" even though they don't realize that
they've given up a lot of their copyright when they put it online. So it's just like this
whole thing where even though we know there's very little chance that they'd actually
be successful and sue us ever. If they threaten to do so, we've got to call our lawyers.
And all of a sudden you're talking for 600 or 700 dollars an hour. That's not a place
515 you wanna be, even if you're not guilty, even if it's just gonna be two hours with your
lawyer. But we have the huge fortune that Lee Levine, who is a former DP managing
editor, is one of the foremost First Amendment rights lawyers of the country. He owns
a law firm that represents the New York Times, the AP and CBS news. So you know
he's not small business and he always has time for us if there's a problem. So we

520 have great representation if we need it and we seldom need representation for anything serious. But whenever someone threatens to sue you then you have to call your lawyer and that's a cost. So I try to avoid even be in a situation where someone will threaten. Does that makes sense?

KL: Yeah.

525 JM: Like it's really not necessarily that we ever made an error. A while back we got sued where someone actually filed a law suit. He was crazy, like had mental issues crazy. And somehow it made it pass first round in legal proceedings and it went all the way to court but it got thrown out like five minutes once it got to court. But however it costs us thousands of dollars to get ourselves there and to defend to this like ridiculous
530 charge. But the problem is people like to sue media outlets. And in a way I can understand that, in a way it's really frustrating because a lot of times I feel personally like they're suing us because they're upset with themselves for something they have done. And they've done this act, they know they've done it, it's been publicly filed, they've gone to jail for it. And now they're suing us for writing about it. And I'm
535 like "Well, I don't really know what to say. You stole money from old ladies on the street and we put that in the newspaper. You know, there's not much that I can say to that."

KL: Okay, in your point of view what's the major purpose or the major role of the Daily Pennsylvanian here on campus?

540 JM: I think we serve as a watchdog. Our primary role is to make sure the papers are functioning the way they're supposed to function. Because if we're not the one who's calling things out, really there is no one else that's gonna call them out. You know the Philadelphia Inquirer has only a marginal interest in the University of Pennsylvania in so much as they think it's gonna sell these papers. But they're not cover for three
545 months a budget problem at Penn. They're not gonna do that. Whereas here at the DP when budget problems lead to shutting down like half of the university museum, that is something we just like go for a month. And the school ended up into a lot of trouble because of making that decision. Because at that time they were increasing funding for the business school, they were increasing funding to other schools and then
550 they just locked off a wing of the museum. So that's the kind of coverage that no one else would run and no one else is gonna call the university out on. And that doesn't even really need undercover reporting, that's just some saying "hey hey hey, that's the problem here, this isn't right". And you know, student government can try to do

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it, but their forum's really limited. And without being able to write about it in the
555 DP, Penn's student government has very very limited ability to have students hear
them. I go to the Penn student government meetings every now and then, because
I know a lot of the people, sometimes I'm interested in the issues and there are like
maybe ten people outside of the actual student government body. That's not getting
people to hear your message. The only way people are going to hear messages of real
560 importance I think at Penn is through the student newspaper. And you know about
10,000 copies of your paper are getting picked up every day. That's a lot of people
listening to what our columnist have to say or to what our news reporters are reporting
on. That I think is our most important job. But our second most important job in
my opinion is enlightening as to what's going on around them, both at Penn but also
565 in the city. The students at Penn do some pretty amazing things. Penn is one of the
biggest community serving schools of the country, in terms of the amount of funding
we put into community service and the amount of students who do it. And I love
covering that, I always push us to cover more of that. At the same time, you know,
Philadelphia has more issues than most cities in this country. Well, not all, obviously,
570 there's some pretty bad cities in this country. But we have high rates of crime, high
rates of disease, high rates of STD, a lot of run-down parts of the city. We have this
really really wealthy enclaves where we have wealthy things and all of a sudden we
have really poor parts of the city. That's something Penn students should know about,
because Penn is after the catholic church the second biggest land owner and employer
575 in this city. That's big. And that means that I think Penn has a responsibility to this
city. So our job is to enlighten students to issues going on in the city. If the state
hasn't passed a budget yesterday for Philadelphia and Pennsylvania, on Monday no
one would've been there to collect trash. And students have no idea about this; they're
not reading the Inquirer every day. So that's also part of your job.

580 KL: You mentioned something before, what was it... ah, about the closing of a wing
of the Penn museum. How did the administration react upon your coverage of this
topic? Have there been any problems?

JM: Obviously covering those kinds of things are a little tricky for us as students,
because we're covering the people that determine our futures. In many ways. But to
585 be honest with you for me personally my time at the DP is gonna be more determining
of my future than my time at Penn probably. My job experience as executive editor is
gonna be what gets me a job, not my degree in Political Communication, necessarily.
But it's tough for people because they're determining your future. It's tough with
Amy Gutmann, because when we ask her questions about this kind of things you can

590 see her getting upset and mad with you for asking that. But it's still our job to ask
 them. What happens in situation like that with the museum is you start to see the [...]

within the administration. And there are some situations in which the administration
 manages to hold really strong and no one is talking. What happened in that case is
 essentially all of the researchers wanted to talk. All of them, all the ones that were

595 laid off wanted to talk. All off the record because they were hoping to still manage
 to find jobs somewhere at Penn after they were fired or after they were laid off. But
 they all wanted to talk. So our first article was essentially us talking to all of these
 researchers, us talking to the head of the museum who was willing to tell us a fair

amount and us talking to the school. And then when we talked to the school, they

600 were feeding us a lot of PR. And sometimes you just run the PR because when you
 run the PR right next to what all of these researches have to say about shutting down
 the museum, like your point speaks for itself. Like when you see the university saying
 like "We had to make this steps, we had to do this bla bla bla" and then you run a

paragraph on like where other spending is going on school. You ask them to comment

605 on that, they say they give you no comment. You say that they gave you no comment.
 It's kind of how you roll. Am I likely to get an angry call from someone in the morning?
 Yeah. But my part... because I know all the spokespeople of Penn very well and they
 are the people that call me in the morning, or the chiefs of staff like the President
 and the Vice-President and all the people that call me in the morning. And my top

610 line is "Listen, Tony, was there anything wrong in the article? Did we say anything
 wrong?" And they'd be like "Well, no, but I still feel like you misrepresented Penn."
 And then I'm like "We ran what you gave us, Tony. We told you what we had and we
 ran what you gave us. We made no secret about what this article was going to be like

and we gave you every opportunity to defend yourself and you choose not to." And

615 this is awkward, it's very awkward. But I found that adults tend to respect you more
 if you stand your ground. And like, legally I'm adult, but I mean like administrators
 and faculty members at Penn will respect you as an actual reporter if you stand your
 ground and you show them like "If you show me why I'm wrong, I will run why I'm

wrong. If you can't show me why I'm wrong, then I'm running what I think is right."
 620 I've been editor here for a year and a half now, because I was managing and now I'm
 exec, so I know a lot of them really well. And they all know that I take the truth very
 seriously and if we ever make a mistake when it comes to the truth I will do everything
 to correct it. But you have to show me that I'm wrong. At the end of the day none

of the administrators can do anything to you. They're not gonna go and kick me out

625 of Penn. They can't do that, they would get in so much trouble. I would write like
 nine columns in the DP about Penn's horrible people and that would be that. The

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national trouble the school would be in for trying to fire the editor of a newspaper for writing a story would be unreal. Their coverage would be so bad for so many weeks that it would not be worth it for them. So in some ways we're protected but in some ways, you don't really want the president of the university to be mad at you. But sometimes you just got to deal with it and if they see that you stand your ground, they just tend to respect you. They treat you just like the regular reporters. I see it, they treat us the same way they treat the Philadelphia Inquirer, exactly the same level of professionalism, of responsiveness. If anything we have more access than the Inquirer because we cover them more often and we know them better.

KL: That's interesting because the other editors I've been talking to were telling me a lot about problems they had concerning accessibility of administrators, that they don't really want to talk to them. So is it different here?

JM: Ahm, no. I'm kind of surprised to hear that. I mean I don't know which papers you were talking to, but I have the huge benefit that I sit on 125 years of history and the DP has become such an institution at Penn and such an important one of that, that they kind of have to talk to us. They can't really get away with not talking to us. And when they don't talk to us, we say it. We don't beat around the bushes when it comes to that. I remember this one article where the legal council of the university to get back to us. We only gave her a day to get back to us; I mean maybe we could have given her more time. But we run stories on a day to day basis, so that was how much time we had to give her. So she didn't get back to us and we wrote "wouldn't respond calls for comment". And I had nine upset calls that morning waking me up in bed being like "What do you mean the council didn't return calls for comment?" The president's office called me upset that the legal council didn't talk to us. And that's amazing because it means that I have a lot of power when I say "I need you to respond to me today, I need your comment today". They don't want to be in the situation where I run it in the paper and write that they didn't comment. Because it makes them look really bad. And many many many times have things in the DP blown up to a national level. And the biggest example has always been the "water buffalo incident". Which happened a couple of decades ago. With Sheldon Hackney being president of the university. And we had a speech code at Penn. And this group of black sorority girls were being initiated or partying or I don't even know, in between a lot of the college houses on a college green area. And a lot of people were studying in the buildings around and they also did yelling out racist things and telling them to shut out. So one guy yells "shut up you water buffalo" really loud from his window. So he's jewish and apparently water buffalo is not an insult in jewish, it just means

someone that speaks a lot. But to the administration water buffalo was a pejorative
 term to someone of African descent. Which is funny because water buffalos come from
 665 Asia, but whatever. So the administration kind of made that decision and decided
 to prosecute this kid for that language because he was the only one who admitted
 saying what he said. So the university prosecuted this kid and at the DP we started
 covering it. Like covering covering it, because we thought it was ridiculous this kid was
 being prosecuted for calling someone a water buffalo. And on the editorial page we
 670 ran a series of comments that blew up to the national level, like just infuriated many
 members of the black community when we said essentially that people need to get
 over their political correctness, like people shouldn't be arrested for saying something
 racist, even if he did, which he didn't, bla bla bla. And it lead to the theft of the
 entire run of DP one morning. So the black community at Penn stole the entire run of
 675 DP one morning, which was 14,000 papers. And it made national news, because our
 school president was up for head of the National Endowment for the Humanities, he
 was gonna leave Penn. And this put a huge question mark on that. And we have a
 lot of really prominent alumni at the New York Times, at the Washington Post and
 all those papers picked it up and it just became a big big big thing, where like every
 680 word that Penn said to the DP was being published on a national level. And so I think
 that the university understands that most of the time our coverage stays isolated to
 campus but sometimes it gets blown up and they don't want to look bad when that
 happens. So they really care what we write about them. And of course now in the
 age of internet usually what we write about them usually gets picked up by CBS news
 685 and runs on their site. It definitely gets picked up by University Wire and runs on
 their site, so it's not isolated to Penn and people in higher education will see it. And
 if it's really really big some big national paper will pick it up. But that's a 125 years
 of history and learning that got us there. If you don't have that I think it's really hard
 to get there. I attended an editors conference a while back and a lot of the editors ran
 690 papers just like I do, big daily papers that had been around for a while but a lot of
 them were running small monthly papers that have been around for three years. And
 they were like "It's impossible, the school won't listen to us, the school won't talk to
 us, there is nothing we can do." And I was like "Honestly, all I can tell you is you
 gonna need time. It took the DP 125 years to be respected by the administration.
 695 You're probably not gonna get it in three years and that really sucks for you, but just
 keep going at it and in fifty years you might get there." And it's great, because I did
 nothing to get us here, I'm just chilling out. But I'm glad I work here. It makes my
 life a lot easier than if I were working at a paper where I needed to fight for respect.
 We don't have that problem, thank god. With no doing of my own, we don't have that

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700 problem. But also one of the big things we do every year to make sure we stay on good
terms with the administration is I personally meet with the head administrators. So
there will be like six meetings at the beginning of each semester. And one of the top
things that I tell them is if it's off the record it's off the record, I won't run it. Which
is something that I think they need to hear from the top editor of every paper every
705 time they come in. Because our reporter doesn't make the decision if something stays
on or off the record, the editor does. And the final person to make that call is the
executive editor of the paper. So I meet with them and the managing editor will come
and the reporters will come, with all the reporters that are relevant and the editors
that are relevant and one of the first things we tell them is if it's off the record it's
710 off the record, I won't run it. And we want to have franc conversations off the record
with people, because sometimes the executive vice president of the school thinks that
the president is doing something wrong. Well, that's kind of rare actually. But things,
you know, something's happening that shouldn't be happening. And he'll tell us that
off the record, he'll give us stories off the record. The administration will leak things
715 to us, how controlled those leaks are, how many of those leaks are, I don't know. But
a lot of times we get stories about other parts of the school from within other parts
of the school. And that's all about building good relationships and making sure the
reporters are trustworthy and not running things that are off the record because that
gets people into a lot of trouble. Once you run something off the record, you've lost the
720 trust of that person for ten years and there's nothing you can do to get it back. Well it
doesn't suck as much for you if you're at the end of your board term, but it sucks for
the editor six years from now who doesn't understand why the executive vice president
won't talk to the DP. That are things that we do personally to make sure that we can
get good access and get good stories from them. But it's a lot of its history and the
725 school knowing that what we write does matter from them.

KL: Okay, my next question would be... I think you mentioned some of this before...
What are the challenges you have to face as an executive editor?

JM: My biggest challenge personally is time. Because I'm here from noon to two every
day, noon to two AM. And I go to classes when I wake up every morning. And at
730 some point I do my homework, I'm still not really sure when. And that's obviously
my personal biggest challenge. The biggest challenge of being executive editor of a
student newspaper is that at the end of the day we are a voluntary organization. We
have about a core of about 15 people who put in about 40 hours a week. And it can
be hard to get those people to do what you want them to do when the threat of firing
735 them isn't a real threat most of the time. Because most of the time it will be difficult

for you to find someone to fill that job. Or finding someone to fill that job is more hassle than it's worth, because they're gonna not know what to do on their first few days, you're gonna have to retrain them bla bla bla. So even though we have a staff of 300, this core of 15 people, it can get really hard to get them do what you need them
 740 to do because they volunteer. They're making a really really small amount of money every month. They don't care. That money, they could do without very easily. And they know that we need them as much as they need us. So that can be the hardest part.

KL: So, you do pay your editors?

745 JM: We pay our editors, depending on... Well I get paid most at the Daily Pennsylvanian and I get 300 dollars a month. So that works out to less than a dollar an hour.

KL: Okay.

JM: So not really, no. Mostly the point is to feed them at night since they're stuck
 750 here they have to order in. They have money to do that.

KL: I also wanted to ask, you already mentioned it, how great is the willingness of students to work here? Is it easy to find new staff? You said for the core people it's difficult to get people who are really committed...

JM: It can depend year to year. Like this year I designed and launched a huge marketing
 755 campaign for the fall, bigger than any the DP has ever done. We gave out free coffee on the walk in the morning, we raffled off an iPod, we were handing out newspapers all over campus in the first week bla bla bla. And we did huge recruitment efforts. And we had about 200 people come to our recruitment meeting for editorial and about 60 for business. Our staff is about 250. So we had about 260 people interested in
 760 joining our staff. So that's big. But at the same time right now I don't have a huge group of people interested in being editors for the next year. Last year it was hugely competitive. What was the 124th board of editors, there were four people interested to be running for executive editor, we had three people interested in being managing, most of the positions were contested. The year before that most of the positions were
 765 uncontested. And what matters more than anything else is how well the board before you has done. Not how well they put out a paper, because generally it's always fine. It's how happy they seem, how friendly were they with each other? Did they all seem

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miserable for being there until 2 in the morning every day? And the less fun the board seems, the less people want to do that the year after that. It's pretty much that simple.

770 And sometimes there is not much you can do to control the fun-level around here. And that's part of my job to make sure people have fun and are more relaxed. But sometimes you end up with staffers who fundamentally can't handle the hours that they do here. And the only way they are able to handle it is by being mildly depressed and negative while they work here. And that's really unfortunate because when that
775 happens it's really hard to fill the jobs. But it depends from year to year. There are years when you're begging people to do the jobs. And that's really unfortunate because at the end of the day the DP is one of the best college papers in the country and to have to beg someone to be an editor here, it just feels wrong. But that's the way it is. And I know a lot of other papers don't have that same problem with editors, people
780 want to be editors; they are definitely fighting competitive elections. It's not like that here. And part of the reason for that is we do have that core of 15 people that put in many hours. And most of the papers are putting in much less hours than that and it's more people. So it'll be like 30 people putting in 20 hours. We don't do it that way because part of what makes us a good paper is really strong continuity from day to day.
785 Our campus news editor covers everything in campus news. There's no other editor that's overseeing that. So she knows the sources, she knows the stories, she knows the writers. And that's why I like our staff to be strong. Whereas a lot of other papers have like three campus editors that rotate from day to day and there is less continuity in that section, less strength, I think. So it's a trade off, we have some issues, that's
790 the result, but at the same time it makes the paper stronger. So I would say every other year we probably have to beg people to fill positions, which is unfortunate, but it happens.

KL: Okay, what also interests me is how is the connection between the newspaper and the university? Are you working together with any journalism school here?

795 JM: No, the DP's perspective on independence is total independence. So we don't partner with the university in any way. There is no journalism school at Penn, there is a communications school, we don't partner with them at all. The only professional advice we get is from our alumni, not from the school. And we have an alumni association created for that specific purpose.

800 KL: You mentioned before you have meetings with the administrators, with the president every semester. What are these meetings about?

JM: Some of them are on, some of them are off the record, it depends on the meeting. If it's new editors, it's about meeting the new editors if they haven't met them yet. We generally discuss everything that we can foresee coming up over the course of the semester and what we might need to know in terms of context for those things. So
805 when we sit down with the executive vice president, that's a combination of an on and off the record meeting. What we might ask them off the record is like "Greg, should we be prepared for a huge loss in Penn's endowment for the next year?" And they'd be like "Well, Juliette, I can tell you that we don't have the numbers and there's not
810 much I can say about that but I can tell you that I'm not feeling super optimistic." And he'll say that off the record or he'll say "I'm feeling rather optimistic," if he thinks we're gonna do okay. And Penn has done a superb way compared to other institutions. We've lost a lot less money than other people. But he'll or other administrators when we're off the record can be really honest with me about what to expect this year. And
815 that's really nice because it means that when we see news come in, we can compare it to what expectations were. And we can call Greg and be like "Why have things turned around?" or "So can you go on the record now with this one?" When we do this meetings it's also that we do like an initial interview with the president, so the president's put on the record and we're not gonna get anything like "I foresee bad
820 things in the future but don't put it in the paper right now." We're just gonna get what she wants us to know this year essentially. Which is fine, it creates good will and it means we get some time with the president, so if we ever have to meet with her one on one she knows who we are. But they're most effective when they're off the record, essentially, because then we actually get interesting information and we get to learn a
825 little bit about each other and we give them interesting information that we've learned. So it's more of a give and take.

KL: How do you finance the newspaper? You mentioned before part of it is subscriptions to the Weekly Pennsylvanian. And is the rest all advertisement?

JM: So we have four products at the DP. We have the Daily Pennsylvanian, the Weekly
830 Pennsylvanian, we have 34th Street, we also have the Summer Pennsylvanian, which is a weekly version of the paper that runs during the summer only. And the DP advertising staff sells ads for the Summer, the 34th Street and the Daily Pennsylvanian. The Weekly Pennsylvanian has no ads, that's entirely subscription-based. So we make money of subscriptions, we make money of ads in the three publications, we also have
835 a decently large stock portfolio and depending on the year we make money off of the investments there. This year we clearly lost money off of the investments there, but over the years the total of our investments is definitely positive, the game has been

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positive. So still, despite having lost money, it's still definitely worth it. But essentially it's advertising and subscriptions to the Weekly. We have a handful of subscriptions to the Daily that we mail out every day. And then we have financial portfolios that get us the money, that's it.

KL: You mentioned subscriptions to the Daily. Is it also available off campus or do you mail it off campus? Or can you pick it up off campus?

JM: Our boxes extend to 42nd Street and go all the way to 33rd Street I think. So you can't get it downtown, but you can get it outside of the campus area, just like a radius essentially. But anything past that, you're gonna be choosing to read the Inquirer over the DP anyway.

KL: So the people who subscribe are only students? Who subscribe to the Daily?

JM: Well, I mean on campus it's free for students. People who subscribe and get it off campus are trustees of the school, they like reading what we have to say every day. A couple of them are alumni, who like to know how we're doing and seeing us every day. But our readership is really diverse. We get read by students obviously, our primary core readership. The administration are also consistent readers, I know that they read us first thing in the morning. The reason why I know that is if they have an issue they call me first thing in the morning. But there is a stable readership, I know the mayor's office reads us, because when there is ever a problem I get a call straight away from them. I know that our state representative reads us, because we made a tiny error once about him in the paper and he caught it in seconds. I know that when it gets big enough, the state legislator can read us. Governor Rendell's office will probably know that we editorialize against something that he has done, because he's a Penn alumni, he's fairly interested. So people know. The people who read us very consistently though are students, administrators and city government. We got quite a bit of readership from West Philadelphia residents. Because in a lot of ways we cover West Philadelphia more than any other publication. That's our primary core of readership. A little readership from Drexel, but they have their own weekly newspaper.

KL: Okay, something totally different: How do you consider the possibilities of the Daily Pennsylvanian to criticize the university?

JM: What do you mean?

KL: For example... when you run like stories that don't make them look good...

870 JM: Honestly, we never had a problem with that. As always we're getting our facts right, they will try to withhold things from us. But like I said, they really treat us like a regular publication in that regard. And the best example from while I've been here is we had a Meningitis outbreak at Penn. And that's near and dear in my heart because I had Meningitis as a baby and was in hospital for days and almost died. So
875 like Meningitis is something that I take very seriously. And four kids got Meningitis at Penn, which is huge for Meningitis. They are usually like four people in a state that get Meningitis, and four of the got it at Penn. And the school gave out prophylactic treatment at Penn to everyone. So everyone at Penn was invited to come and take antibiotics. And if you had any symptoms of Meningitis you got tested for Meningitis,
880 which is a very painful spinal tap. Well, right after that whole incident happened we suddenly got all of those students coming to us and telling us about going to the hospital with like a headache, having them think they had Meningitis and receiving these spinal taps. Now these spinal taps were very poorly performed. So one student came to us and said "The university performed a spinal tap a week ago and I still have
885 spinal fluid pouring out of my back, like from this hole." One girl had to go to physical therapy because they've hit a nerve and she could no longer use her legs properly. It was just a series of like terrible things that have happened. And what sucks with that is that there's doctor-patient-confidentiality, meant the hospital couldn't respond. So we ran this article about all of the things that had happened to them and to the best
890 that we could we tried to defend the hospital and why the hospital might have done these things. But at the end of the day we couldn't defend bad spinal taps. And the university couldn't say anything either. So we had a big fat "The university cannot comment due to patient-doctor-confidentiality laws." That's probably the closest we've ever got to potentially getting into a huge fight with the school. Because they were
895 in a bad position and I recognize that but they couldn't do anything. They couldn't do anything to fight that bad public relation issue. But never ever ever ever ever have I ever been treated like a student in that situation. Never has anyone made a threat about my enrollment at Penn and to the best of my knowledge that never happened to any of my reporters or any of my editors. Never has anyone implied that by doing this
900 I was gonna hurt my future at Penn, never. Because I think they know the DP well enough to know that they have tried and they ended up in more trouble than they were in at the beginning. But more importantly they respect the DP as a legitimate news organization that does its best to be faithful to the university. And a lot of teachers... like one story that we wrote years ago and they didn't like, they still remember it and

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905 they still don't like us because of it. There's nothing I can do about that. But they
still respect that we don't run press releases and you might as well give us the real
news, because if you don't we'll find it anyway. We run so far as to literally stake out
the house of the former dean of admissions to try to get a story. So they know we're
not little kids that will run a press release if you send it to us. And they don't treat
910 us that way, which is nice.

KL: That's also part of the answer to my next question: How do you consider the
double role of yourself and of the writers as students and journalists at the same time?

JM: Something that can be hard is that most of us work here because we love Penn.
Like really really love Penn in a way that sometimes I feel really corny describing. But
915 I love everything from the campus, the atmosphere of the campus, I love my teachers,
I love Amy Gutmann, I think she is a fantastic president, I really do. And when we
have to cover things that are negative toward Amy Gutmann, it sucks, because I think
she does a fabulous job. But at the same time I think it's my job to report if she does
things wrong. We're all fans of this school. We're all cheering for the school. In the
920 sports section we all want Penn to win every game. But that's not what we get to
write a lot of the time. And that can be hard for us. It can be hard knowing that
something we're doing makes our school look bad. Or something we're reporting on
is something that makes our school look bad, because we don't want our school to
look bad. But nevertheless it's a job we take really seriously, sometimes too seriously
925 probably. Everyone takes himself too seriously these days. But if there's something
wrong we cover it. It's just there's this part of it like "Damn it Penn, really? Why?"
And it's especially hard in sports because whenever Penn doesn't win we just want
to write a whole article being like "Penn played really well," even if Penn didn't play
really well, you know. And we don't get to write that most of the time. A lot of the
930 time we have to be like "Penn kind of sucked last night." And that's sucks, I don't
like running these stories at all. I really like it when Penn wins, because we get to run
happy stories.

KL: Okay, so we already arrived at the last question, which is: To which degree do you
see your newspaper as an institution for journalism education?

935 JM: Well since Penn doesn't have a journalism school... so if you want a career in
journalism I firmly believe the number one way at Penn is to come and work at the
DP. And there's a lot of reasons for that. One is we train you, two is you will learn
what it feels like to report. And you learn it the way every other reporter learns it. If

you are a crime reporter you will have to call up the Philadelphia police department.

940 And you'll be treated like a piece of dirt for even asking the questions that you ask. The same way the Philadelphia Inquirer reporters are treated like a piece of dirt for wanting to know progress on the case. Police officers don't want talking to the press. I understand that. I don't expect them to like talking to the press. And I remember we had one reporter. She covered politics for her first semester. So when you come

945 in politics people fall over their feet to get you to cover them. They're like "Come to my press conference, let me tell you about what the candidate's doing, let me tell you let me tell you let me tell you, I will give you all the access you want bla bla bla." This was interesting in the presidential elections because we had a lot of access to the campaigns, especially the Clinton campaign. I mean we got to meet Senator Clinton

950 and we had a lot of access and that was fantastic. But she covered crime the semester after that and after a few weeks she was like "people are so mean to me." And I'm like "yeah..." And she was like "This really makes me evaluate whether I want to be a reporter." And I'm like "That's good, that's what the DP should do. The DP should show you how hard it can be, how much you have to push. Because if you want to do

955 well in journalism these days, you don't have to kind of like it. You have to think it's your calling, because it's a hard hard hard business right now. So if you want to go into journalism, you should feel like it's the number one thing you can do with your life. You don't want to do anything else. Bla bla bla." I think the DP really shows people whether or not they are really up for it. A lot of people came to the DP thinking they

960 want to be journalists. And after reporting for a year being like "I'm so glad I did this because I would be miserable as a journalist." So that's the second thing. The third thing is purely in terms of writing and photography. If you want a job in writing or photography, you need to have a very very very big portfolio of printed written work and printed photography. No journalism school gives you that. You need clips. Like

965 every job you apply for in journalism will ask you for ten of your best stories that were published. And if you don't have ten good stories that were published, then you're screwed, you can't apply. So that's a big thing that we get people. And the last thing is our fabulous alumni association. Our alumni they work everywhere and they are the editors of everything. The political editor of the New York Times is a DP alumni. A

970 hiring editor at the Boston Globe is a Penn alumni. The chief financial reporters at both the New York Times and the Washington Post are Penn alumni, DP alumni. So that's a hugely valuable network of people to ask about jobs for, to seek advice from and they help you get jobs in the same way as if you're in a fraternity for your whole life. If you're gonna apply for a job and the guy is part of that fraternity, you're more

975 likely to get that job. The thing is these people know that if you've been working for

the DP, you were probably putting in 40 hours a week, working your ass off and if you were able to stay and if you weren't fired before the end of the year, you're probably pretty good at what you do. So a lot of them a likely to take DPers because they trust the DPers in what they're doing. So that's hugely valuable too. For all of those
980 reasons I think that this is a perfect training ground for a reporter. I don't believe in journalism schools. I applied to journalism schools and it came down when I was to choose between my schools at the very end, I was choosing between Medill, which is the journalism school at Northwestern and widely regarded to be the best one in the country and Penn. And I ended up choosing Penn, because after a while of looking at
985 what journalism schools did... Journalism school doesn't teach you to be a journalist. Journalism teaches you to be a journalist, that's it. That's the only thing that teaches you to be a journalist. And Penn had one of the best college papers in the country, so I just had to come here. I don't believe in journalism schools, I really don't. I know a lot of people do and I respect that, and I know a lot of people get great educations there,
990 but almost every hiring editor I've ever talked to has said they don't really believe in journalism schools either. And they are the ones that matter, they are the ones that are gonna give you a job or not. So yeah, I think we're a great training ground for future reporters and I know a lot of people that have graduated and gone to be reporters from the DP. Probably less than before, but that's because it's a really scary
995 financial time right now in journalism.

KL: Okay. So that's it already. Thank you very much.

JM: Great.

9.3.4 Matt Westmoreland

KL: So, Matt, you're the editor in chief of the Daily Princetonian. Maybe we could
1000 start by you telling me something about what is your job in general, what you like about it, what you don't like about it?

MW: Sure. Let me talk a little about the history of the newspaper at first. It was founded as the Princetonian in 1876. And we published every two weeks. And then in 1892 it became the Daily Princetonian and for a time it actually came out six days
1005 a week. So they published on Saturdays. They were crazier than we are today. And then we cut back and so we publish five days a week, every day during the school

year. The staff is about 150 people strong and it's broken into ten departments: news, sports, Street, which is our arts and entertainment section that comes out once a week, opinion, business, web, layout, photo, copy, and multimedia. And so each of those
1010 departments has an editor or two editors in charge of it and all of them report back to me. The editor in chief is elected by people who've been on staff for at least a semester in December of every year. And then that person is it from February 1st until February 1st. So, what do I love about my job and what are the problems? I joined the Prince because I had been editor of my newspaper in high school. So I've
1015 always had an interest and passion for student journalism. And I have always thought and hoped that the newspaper is the one place on any campus, high school or college, where students both have a voice and express what concerns they have, what opinions they have on the given issues of the day. And also that it can be an institution that both informs people of what's going on in their world and then serves as a place to
1020 offer dialog and debate among the people in the community. My favorite part of being in this job is getting to work with a collection of really dedicated staffers who put the newspaper before anything else, including sleeping, their friends, their schoolwork and their classes. To be able to work at a product that we put out more than 135 times a year and say that this is contributing to life and our community in a way that nothing
1025 else is that we could be doing. The toughest part of the job is probably recognizing that we can always be doing what we're doing better, and being frustrated with limitations to get there, personal, you know, how good of an editor you can be, because of the experience that you have or the abilities that you have, and realizing that on the one hand putting out a product every day is something to be proud of and on the other
1030 hand looking at this product every day and realizing that a dozen of the things could have been done differently to make it even better. And so striving on a daily basis to make the product tomorrow better than today's, which is better than yesterday's, and seeing the progression as it gets better, but always realizing that you're never as good as you can be. So you can never reach your goal, but you can always try to get closer
1035 to it.

KL: Okay, I think you may have answered this question already a little bit: In your point of view, what's the major purpose or the major role of the Daily Princetonian on campus?

MW: It is to inform the student body, faculty, staff, administrators and community
1040 members about what's happening in their community and to offer a place for members of that community to discuss whether they agree with what's happening, what changes

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they would make and to serve as a forum for people to voice their opinions on the issues of the day.

KL: What are the challenges you have to face as an editor in chief?

1045 MW: Making sure that we send the paper to the printer every day by deadline, which
is at midnight. So it's waking up at 9.30 or 10 o'clock in the morning and realizing that
14 hours from then a whole cycle will have taken place, where a story has been assigned
and then researched and reported on it, written and edited and it's been floating to
a page, it's gonna be sent off to the printer and loaded online to a new issue of the
1050 website that's gonna be uploaded for the next day. I mentioned earlier that there are ten
departments. And I think the biggest challenge is making sure that all ten departments
are both marching in the same direction and also communicating with one another to
make sure that there is a unity to the package that we're presenting to the public,
making sure that when the news department is working on five stories for Wednesday's
1055 paper, that the photography department is talking to the news department about what
photos they're gonna need. And the news department is talking to the multimedia
department about what online components might make a story even better. And there
are just so many things that we can do online that we haven't been able to do in print.
And making sure that we're always providing that next layer of information for all
1060 readers that isn't available in print. And sometimes making sure that we're putting
out a great product and we're serious about what we're doing, but also recognizing
that the Prince is a volunteer organization and that people don't have an incentive to
put in the kind of hours that we need them to put in if they're not having fun. And
so it's this balance of making sure that we put out a publication that's respected and
1065 informative and accurate and is trusted with making sure that people on the staff are
having a good time and getting something out of it themselves.

KL: You just mentioned it's voluntary work. Do your writers get some kind of credit?

MW: Writers get no salary and no academic credit. The Prince is entirely independent
from the university. It's the only college newspaper in the country that has never
1070 been at some point subsidized by the university, which is cool. So we are independent
through and through. When you join the staff, you spend two and a half years in some
sort of capacity. Whether it's writing stories, designing pages, copy editing stories,
taking photos. And then at the beginning of your junior year, the editor in chief after
being elected selects his board of editors. They are gonna serve with him on the various
1075 positions. The Prince is a nonprofit organization. And the way it works is that the

business staff makes as much money as possible and pays for all our expenses, printing and rent, phone lines, and the car for delivery, all of that. And then at the end how much money is left is split among the editors. So writers never get paid, but if you stay with the organization long enough, you're likely to become an editor. And at
 1080 the end of a good economic year, there'll be a pretty significant amount of money left. At the end of this year there'll be no money left. It's looking like we won't have any money. So the people who are editors right now are doing this out of a sheer loyalty to the organization and passion for journalism because they're not getting any monetary benefit out of it.

1085 KL: So you're completely financed by advertisement?

MW: Mhm. For the most part. It's somewhat between 550.000 and 600.000 dollar budget every year. Eighty-five, ninety percent of that comes from print advertising. And then the other ten, fifteen percent is subscriptions from people who are either
 1090 on campus and want to subscribe to the newspaper and we deliver it straight to their office door, or people off campus who live in New York. Parents or alumni or students studying abroad can all subscribe to the paper. And it comes to them for a fee all the semester. And a very small portion of the budget comes from web-ads. You know, newspapers across the country have dealt with a declining print-ad revenue. We've all been trying to come up with ways to increase the amount of web-ad revenue that we
 1095 have. And we've all been doing it more slowly than we need to. But one of the things that's been stable for both the prints and college newspapers in general is that the people who advertise in newspapers for the most part have been there even as national newspapers have seen a decline. Our biggest advertiser for the last ten years has been the university in the sense that the university gives money to the departments. So
 1100 every day the science department is running an ad about a lecture that some professor is gonna be giving. And the economics department is running an ad about a new course that they're gonna be offering this year. And the English department is running and ad about a conference that they're gonna be hosting. And the history department is running an ad about places where seniors can get their theses bound. We're not
 1105 financed by the university in the sense that they give us a check, but we are financed by the university in the sense that the university gives the departments money and those departments all buy ads. And that has been a stable source of revenue for a long time. The second has been recruiting ads. For the last decades or so, a lot of Princeton students have gone into the banking and finance work. And so Bridgewater
 1110 and Lehman Brothers and Merrill Lynch and Goldman Sachs have all spent lots of money in September and October recruiting seniors who are gonna be applying for

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jobs that fall to work there after graduation. So we have always been able to depend on Bridgewater buying a significant number of full page cover ads in the early fall months, as they try to find people who are interested to work there after graduation.

1115 And so this year the challenge has been: There aren't half as many investment banks today as there were on September 14th 2008. And certainly none of them will be recruiting, because they're all trying to stay afloat. And so when Lehman Brothers made up a significant portion of your ad revenue and Lehman Brothers isn't even existing anymore, what do you do? And when campus advertising was making up
1120 sixty-five percent of your total revenue and the university is faced with 180 million dollars of budget cuts over the next two years and departments are being told "We don't have any money to spend on anything besides paying people's salaries." How do you make sure that you have enough ads to put out a paper on a daily basis? And that's a conversation that the business manager and I had many times over the last
1125 two or three weeks, as we see the extent of which business are not getting ready to start recruiting again, and business that are selling things don't have any money to spend on college newspaper advertisements. And the departments that always advertised with the Prince don't have any money either. So it's kind of like: Who's gonna buy ads this year? I don't know. But, we'll see.

1130 KL: Okay, a totally different question: How is the connection between the newspaper and the university? How close are you working together?

MW: Yeah. Like I said the Daily Princetonian has been independent from Princeton University ever since 1876. I think I need to clarify something I said earlier. We became a newspaper in 1876 and we became a daily newspaper in 1892, not 1896. We
1135 have always been housed on campus. But we have always paid rent to the university. So right now we're in 48 University Place, which is a four-story red brick structure right next to the university store and between two dormitory buildings. And every month we pay rent for the two and a half floors that we occupy. So from the business point that's how it works. And as I said we've depended a lot on advertisement from
1140 the university, just as they depend on people reading the Prince to know what events are going on and what courses are being offered and all that. From the editorial side the relationship between the university and the Prince I think is pretty strong. The Prince has an endowment of about a million dollars that is there, if we ever get kicked out of the building to find a space somewhere nearby. And if we ever don't have any
1145 ads to help us keep putting out the paper every day. We've never had to use it, but it's there. There have been times in the past when the relationship has been strained either by coverage that the administration thought was unfair, of different events at

the university. Or we have a joke issue every January that has built up quite a bit of displeasure among some administrators. But by and large I think right now that the editors of the Prince respect the communications staff and the administration and the university and I think that there is also respect on the part of the communications office, the administration towards the Prince. So I'm in regular contact with the chief, the university spokes person and I talk on a fairly regular basis with the president and the executive vice president and the other vice presidents and high deans and I think that they all recognize that the Prince provides valuable service to the university community. And they may not always agree with what we choose to cover and how we cover it. And there have been times where I've gotten angry e-mails from administrators who were displeased with something they have read in that day's paper. But I think that it's good that there are times when people write us saying that they have something wrong with what we printed because it means that we're doing a good job, if we're hearing that from all different sections of the community. And it means that the prince is relevant enough to people's lives. Because when they feel passionate about something, they do something about it. Which means they're reading the paper and they take it seriously, which I think is great.

KL: How do you react upon this problems, for example when somebody doesn't like your joke issue or any other coverage of something?

MW: Well, I haven't published my joke issue yet. But two years ago, the paper published in the joke issue a pretended column from a student who had been rejected from the university and they sued Princeton based on racial bias against the Asian applicant. And so we wrote a column that was from the point of view of that Asian student. And a lot of people thought it was funny. Ironically the column was written primarily by Asian students on staff. But a lot of people in the community, administrators, members of the Asian community and others thought that the column was pretty bad taste and were pretty upset about it. Likewise there was a story in that same issue about how one of the most outspoken conservative professors on campus was caught with a gay prostitute. Totally made up. Funny to some people, pretty appalling to the professor. And there was a photo on that front page, where we have superimposed the president's face on the photo of Britney Spears getting out of the car without wearing any underwear. And that was pretty upsetting to the president too. And so in those instances it's kind of a question of where did you go too far in the joke issue. I got three e-mails that come to mind this spring. One was when we decided to announce that... The biggest prize that the university gives out every year is the Pine prize. And it's to the best overall senior. And every year there are two winners.

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And this year the Prince learned the names of the winners the night before they were
1185 gonna be publicly announced. And so we published an article about it. And I got an
e-mail of the dean of the college who couldn't believe that for the first time ever the
Prince had published the names of the winners before they were announced. And she
said none of your predecessors would ever have done that. And I wrote back and I
told her that I respected her opinion, but the Prince's job is not to publish information
1190 when it's convenient to the administration, but to publish information that we think
is interesting and relevant to people's lives when we learn it. And we learnt it a day
early and I think if any of my predecessors would have learnt the information a day
early, they would have published it too. I got another e-mail in late April from the
university spokesperson who took issue with the negativity that she thought was in all
1195 of the articles that day. There were six articles, news articles, in the paper and she
wrote an e-mail saying that she had a problem with five of them. And I wrote back and
I told her that all five of those stories were things that had happened over the last day
or two. They were straight news. They weren't even stories that the Prince had gone
out of its way to cover, like, you know, excessive drinking on campus or secret societies
1200 that promote drinking or whether or not females feel pressured to do things with male
students when they're younger. These were all things that had happened over the last
day or two and we were simply reporting straight news. And I told her that we weren't
gonna stop reporting straight news if it was negative, just like we don't favor stories
that are negative, we don't favor stories that are positive. We report what we think
1205 is interesting and relevant to people's lives. And the third e-mail was about a story...
there is a tradition at Princeton, called Newman's day, where you drink 24 beers in 24
hours. And a pretty sizeable percentage of the student body does it. And we wrote
a story about it on April 24th. And the story quoted three anonymous students and
was perceived by a number of people as being promoting excessive drinking. I didn't
1210 intend for the article to promote that claim. But I understood the concerns that he
was outlining in his e-mail. And I wrote him back and I told him that I agreed that
the article could have been much stronger. So when I think that the administrators
are right, that an article is bad, I tell them that I agree it was bad. And we can only
do our best in the future to make sure that we don't repeat those mistakes. And when
1215 I think their criticisms are unfounded, I tell them that too.

KL: Okay, just to make sure, because it's on my list: Are you working together with
any journalism department or do you have a faculty adviser?

MW: No. There is no journalism school at Princeton. There is a smaller journalism
program where visiting professors come in and teach journalism courses and from time

1220 to time we will have those professors come and meet with staffers to talk about whatever area or field they specialize in. But we've never had an editorial adviser, and adult, telling us what to do. And we've never had professor who are regularly around to help us out. It's a very much student run organization.

KL: Okay. In your eyes, how important do you think is your student newspaper to the
1225 students on campus?

MW: Incredibly important. I think that it is so important for all citizens, and that includes students, to be aware of what's going on in their surrounding environment. One of the things we say at the Prince is we don't report national or international news. Our columnists don't write about national or international news. I've always been of
1230 the opinion that the New York Times covers national events a lot better than we do and the New York Times columnists cover national events a lot better than we do. And if we don't cover what's happening in our community, then there is no other outlet that does. And I think it's a responsibility to have a quality newspaper that is a paper of reference. So that in 50 years people will know what happened on September 14th 2009
1235 and when they wanna know, this is where they are gonna turn to. And if they want to be an active participant in the society in which you live, you have to be an informed citizen. And I think that the Prince at Princeton and college newspapers in general provide a function at their schools that really isn't comparable to anything, including student government. I mean, if you think about it. You elect your student government
1240 officers and if they have a significant budget, they can use it to have study breaks and to buy DVDs and open up a DVD shop. Or they can hire bands to come and play at school events. But there aren't very many things that a student government can do without the approval of or participation by the administration. And I think that while the newspaper can't form policy that it certainly has power for example on its
1245 opinion pages advocating what it believes is the best interest of the students. And then reporting in the news pages and sports and street pages on what's happening in the community, so the people know what's going on.

KL: Do you get some feedback from the students on articles or on the newspaper in general?

1250 MW: Mhm. Like the feedback that I get from people from the university who are upset with something that we're doing, I know that the Prince continues to be relevant on campus both by the numbers of papers that I see people walking around with, by the number of hits to our website that we can track, by the discussions I overhear and take

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part in about articles that were in that day's paper or the previous day's paper and by
1255 knowing that even if people find fault with the newspaper, everybody on campus has an
opinion of the newspaper, which to me means that it is just as relevant an institution
as it has been. I think that the decline of organized media in general is something that
the Prince is not immune to. I think in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, newspapers like
the New York Times, the Washington Post and the Daily Princetonian probably had
1260 even more of an impact on their community than they do now. But I think that one of
the things we have to be mindful of is that as the world changes and as media changes,
we have to change with it too. Which is why four years ago the Daily Princetonian was
black and white, it was tabloid, you had to pay for it, and the website was ten years
old. And in the last four years my predecessors have made it color broadsheet, made
1265 it free, and redesigned the website. And I think that those are all important steps in
making sure that the Prince remains relevant on campus. And the next phase of that
is going to be making sure that our presence on the web continues to grow and adapt
to the world as it changes online. That audio-slideshows and blogs and podcasts are
all important opportunities to present information to people that weren't available ten
1270 years ago. And I think that if newspapers wanna have any hope of continuing to be
meaningful to the society they gonna have to learn to grow their online presence and
I think that we've done a pretty good job so far.

KL: Concerning your writers, how great is the willingness of the students to work with
the Princetonian? Is it hard to find new writers?

1275 MW: Hmm, when you think about it... Harvard, Princeton, and Yale are the three
colleges that are often compared to one another. And I think that if you look at the
Prince as compared to the other two, the Crimson and the Yale Daily News both have
a much longer track record of sending people into journalism. That is to say there was
a time when almost all of the Princetonian's copy editors went into journalism. And
1280 now, even if half of them did, you know seven editors in a year going into journalism,
there's more students than the Prince has sent into the field in seven years. And so
Princeton is not a school known for attracting journalists. And I think the Prince is not
known first and foremost as an institution that attracts journalists. I think that a lot
of them are people like myself, who have a passion for newspapers, have a passion for
1285 journalism and wanna take part in that at the collegian level, but don't ever consider
doing that as an occupation. And the other thing is that Princeton is a lot smaller than
Harvard and Yale and some of the other Ivy League schools. We've got fewer than 5000
students and there are so many different things on campus, that when you're catering
for a student body that's not particularly interested in journalism, you have to find

1290 new ways to try and find people to be part of the organization. And I think it's kind
of like a circle. If you have a great quality, people wanna work for you. And the more
people who work in the organization, the better your quality is gonna be. So it's kind
of like how do you keep that cycle going. Over the last few years, if you go back to
2004, the editors in 2004 did a great job of recruiting freshmen. And that meant that
1295 we had a really strong leadership three years later, when those people became editors.
The people in 2005 did a little less of a better job of that, which meant that last year's
class wasn't quite as strong as the year before. The class of 2007 recruited my year
and I think that we are maybe not as strong as two or three years ago, but stronger
than last year. So it's like I said earlier, to recruit people on campus you really have
1300 to show that you're coming to work for a respected and trusted organization that is
relevant to people's lives and that you're having fun. And those are tough goals to
fulfill when you're trying to put out a newspaper every day. But it's one that I think
the Prince has been able to do relatively well in the past, but that we could be doing
so much better, like everything, in the future.

1305 KL: How do you consider the possibilities of the Princetonian to criticize the university
or the administration?

MW: I think that there are two ways to view critical information in the newspaper.
I think one is on the opinion pages, where I think it's entirely appropriate for the
editorial board, which is composed of a number of people from all different parts of
1310 the university life, that get together three times a week to say "I think this policy
is wrong and we're gonna say so". Likewise for staff columnists or guest columnists,
they are totally free to make critical claims of the university. And on a fairly regular
basis someone from the university will respond and either write a letter to the editor or
write a guest column. The second way I think is through news stories, which absolutely
1315 cannot be opinionated one way or the other.

[interruption]

So, on the one hand you've got the opinion pages, where I think criticizing the uni-
versity or crediting the university for doing something positive, which also happens
occasionally, are both things you can find. On the news side I think it's important
1320 to report on how students, administrators, faculty, other members of the community
are reacting to various announcements coming from the university. But I think it's
important to make sure that the stories are written in an unbiased manor. And that
we provide an opportunity for the university to respond when accusations are being

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1325 leveled against them, and for students to respond to whatever new programs, new initiatives and new policies are coming down from officials at the top.

KL: Where do you see the limit for critical journalism for a college newspaper?

MW: I don't have any intention of limiting someone's criticism if they can backup their claims with irrefutable evidence and statistics. We had a columnist in the paper who wanted to write a story that said that... If you look at the number of people who applied to the university who request financial aid, the number is like 86 percent, I don't remember the exact figure. Somewhere in the high 70s or lower 80s. Whereas the number of students who actually have financial aid is 55 or 56 percent. So is the university not accepting students because they would need financial aid? And that is an appropriate claim to make if that columnist would have been able to backup this assertion with evidence. And after looking through the numbers that he found, this led me to believe that that wasn't a fair accusation to make. If he had been able to provide me with credible evidence showing that the university is turning away 30 percent of its applicants because they don't wanna have to pay more financial aid, then that's a serious problem. But I wasn't comfortable enough and the other editors weren't comfortable enough with the numbers that he was presenting to make that argument. And I think it's important for editors to never be afraid to call out a problem when they see it, but to recognize that the reputation of the paper is always at stake when you make those kinds of claims, and that it's really important for the stories and columns that you publish to be as accurate as possible. Because the rock foundation of the newspaper is trust from its readers. If a paper doesn't have trust, then there is very little progress to keep going. If people aren't gonna believe what they read and if they're not gonna respect the institution producing the paper every day. So I think respect and trust are two really important qualities that the use of a newspaper, from professional papers all down to college and high school papers, need to be mindful of when making critical claims you need to make sure that you've got facts to back it up.

KL: I already talked to some other editors in chief and they were telling me a lot about the problem of accessibility of some administrators when it comes to...

MW: Who else have you been talking to?

KL: So far I've been talking to the Yale Daily News, the University of Massachusetts newspaper, University of Connecticut, one that wanted to remain anonymous and Tufts University.

MW: Interesting. Did you talk to Tom Kaplan at the Yale Daily News?

KL: Yes.

MW: How was he?

1360 KL: Very interesting, I just talked to him last week.

MW: He's had quite a story on his hands with the disappearance of the medical school student. Yeah, that's interesting. But, sorry, you were just asking a question.

KL: Yes, they were telling me a lot about the problem of accessibility of for example administrators when it comes to critical topics. Did you experience the same in your
1365 time at the newspaper or is it different at Princeton?

MW: I have found that President Tilghman, who is Princeton's president, has always been incredible accessible to Prince reporters. I have talked to her dozens of times for my own stories and I have over the last seven months assigned and edited stories where she has talked to dozens of reporters dozens of times. She has been great at responding
1370 to people's requests, at sitting down in her office when she can and if she's out of town responding by phone or via e-mail. Even when it comes to sensitive topics or areas where people have been critical to the university, she is very open and honest and candid about discussing issues surrounding those topics. And the same has been true for other high ranking officials at the university, the executive vice president, the vice
1375 president and secretary. The provost and the dean of the faculty prefer to communicate by e-mail. As a reporter you always wanna sit down with someone, and if you can't sit down with him you want to talk to him on the phone and if you can't talk to him on the phone you want to talk to him via e-mail. And so the highest officers of the institution have always been open to talking to the newspaper. There's a next level, and I think
1380 that the second tier of administrators has been somewhat more reluctant to talk to us. Not necessarily about critical topics, but I think it comes from a long history of the Prince misquoting people and people feeling like they've been misquoted, which is really just as important as if you actually misquote someone, almost, because it goes back to that level of trust. And if the administrators don't trust you, then they are
1385 certainly not going to talk to you, because they worry that you're gonna misconstrue their words or literally print something opposite of what they believe. So there are a number of professors who I talked to and who I've heard about who won't talk to the Prince, because they've either been misquoted in the past or they don't wanna be

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misquoted because they've heard horror stories from their colleagues. I think that's
1390 also true for a handful of administrators at the university. There is a communications
spokeswoman who I talk to several times a week. I think she would prefer it if the
Prince always got its information from her. And I would prefer it if we never got our
information from her. If the dining services is doing something new, I wanna talk to
the director of dining services. If there is a new director of public safety, I wanna talk
1395 to the director of public safety. If Princeton is getting rid of early decision, I wanna
talk to the dean of admission. And I think that the spokesperson has tried to... she
calls herself a facilitator, "I wanna facilitate your conversation with x person" or "Let
me talk to x person, give me your questions, I'll talk to x person and give you the
response." I understand that that's her job, that she's there to protect the university
1400 and its reputation. And my job is to print the truth and we best get the truth by
speaking directly to the people who are making the decisions. So it's kind of a struggle
of us wanting to talk to everybody but the communications spokesperson and that
person wanting us only to talk to them, so they can unify the message that's getting
out of the administration. But it's funny. I read a lot of different newspapers, college
1405 newspapers, and I see us quoting the spokesperson a lot more frequently than the Yale
Daily News quotes their... I don't even know who the Yale University spokesperson
is, because I don't see their names so infrequently. But at the same time I've had
conversations with other newspaper editors who just can't get the president to return
their phone calls or their e-mails. Or they e-mail the president and the president's
1410 secretary responds. And that's never happened to me or any of my writers.

KL: How do you consider the double-role of your writers and of yourself as students
and journalists at the same time? Do you think this might entail problems?

MW: Definitely. I think that back in the 50s and 60s Prince reporters were a lot more
likely to go into journalism. We had a number of people going into journalism during
1415 the 50s and 60s. And they would say that they got their degree from the Larry DuPraz
School of Journalism. Larry DuPraz was our publication manager back in the day when
we printed the paper in our building. And those people got into Princeton and they
were being journalists when they left Princeton and it was lot more meaningful to
spend their time in the newsroom than it was in the classroom. Today you have very
1420 few students... you know, Tom Kaplan is gonna be a journalist, he's gonna be a great
journalist. And Tom has devoted, it seems like every ounce of what he's got to the
Yale Daily News. And I don't know how he's doing his classes, but he sure is giving it
all at the paper. Whereas none of the editors on my board are gonna be willing to go
into journalism next year. So it's kind of like how do you balance a full time job at a

1425 newspaper with being a full time student. I remember freshman year. I got a call from
my editor on a Thursday morning that there's an emergency press conference. And I
went and I covered the event and I wrote the story Thursday night and on Friday I
went to the Spanish test after having not gone to Spanish class on Thursday and not
studied for the test. And I failed the test. And you know it didn't scar me for life. But
1430 it was the first of many times where I have chosen the Prince over my coursework. So
I think it's tough to find a balance for people who are gonna be editor in chief, who
are gonna be managing editors, who are gonna be department editors, to figure out
not only how do you balance work at the Prince to make it as strong an institution
as it can be. How do you make as good grades as you can, how do you maintain your
1435 friendships as well as you can? How do you have a social life? There are so many
different goals that people have to balance in college. And I think, for a writer it's
possible to write a story at the Prince once every two weeks. And every other week,
that's not a huge time commitment. If you're an editor and you're spending 65 hours
a week in the newsroom it's a lot harder to do all of those things and to do them all
1440 well.

KL: Some of the other editors were telling me that it can be weird when you're a
student and you're interviewing for example a professor and you're in his class. Did
you also make this experience or do you don't send writers to interview the professors
that...

1445 MW: There are basic ground rules for reporters in terms of what kind of events they
can cover: You don't interview your friends; you don't interview your professors. I
was president of the chapel quire. And when the chapel quire went to Spain, I would
not have been an appropriate person to write the story. I would not have been an
appropriate person to interview for the story, because of my affiliation with both of
1450 the organizations. In the sports department you don't write stories about baseball if
you're on the baseball team or if your roommate's on the baseball team. In the Street
section you don't write the review for a show if you have friends who are in this show.
So I think it's important if a reporter is assigned a story to make sure that they are
completely impartial for all of the various factors and participants in the story that they
1455 write. We have a large enough staff. For example last year one of our reporters ran for
borough council in Princeton. So who on campus can cover Mendy's borough council
run that doesn't know Mendy? Because we didn't wanna appear to be favoring the
candidacy. So we found a freshmen who had never met Mendy, so that freshmen was
able to write the story about the candidacy and to write the story about the campaign

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1460 and Mendy's loss without ever having to compromise his journalistic integrity because he'd never met Mendy.

KL: Okay, you mentioned before that Princeton is not a school that attracts journalists. So to which degree do you see the Princetonian as an institution for journalism education?

1465 MW: I think it's a great institution for journalism education. I have very fond memories of becoming a journalist at the Prince, of remembering that I thought my editors knew everything and they were so smart and the way that journalism makes you think and always be skeptical about what you hear and what you read and what you see and to always pursue the real story in everything, both when you're writing for a newspaper
1470 and in life. Those are skills that I think are really important and that you can build on as part of the newspaper staff. So especially as an institution that doesn't even have a journalism school or really a significant journalism program, the Prince is really the place to go on campus if you wanna have any affiliation with journalism whatsoever. And I think that's a responsibility that we take seriously.

1475 KL: Okay, the very last question: What's your circulation?

MW: We print 2,000 copies of the paper every day and we deliver them all over campus to the six dining halls, to the distribution boxes all over campus, to the students union, to on campus subscribers. Like the president's office gets papers, the vice president's office gets papers, the dean of the college gets papers. And then we mail out the print
1480 version of the paper to our on campus subscribers. The website during the school year on an average day gets about 6,600 unique visitors to the site every day. And that translates into about 30,000 web hits. So Princeton is a smaller campus than a lot of the other large newspapers and colleges, but I think I saw an article somewhere or a statistic that the Prince was the eleventh most read college newspaper. And considering
1485 that there are only 4800 students at Princeton, it's pretty impressive to me. When you think about huge schools like Ohio State and the University of Southern California and Harvard and University of Texas and University of Florida, that all have student bodies that are huge, much much larger than ours. But we still have a pretty significant portion of our community and the outside world who read the paper, sometimes in print,
1490 but mostly online.

KL: Okay, that was it already, thank you very much.

9.3.5 Melissa Repko

KL: Okay, well, you're the editor in chief of the Columbia daily newspaper. Maybe you could just tell me a little bit about your job and what you like about it, what you don't like about it.

MR: Sure. So as editor in chief, I kind of oversee the daily production, making sure the paper comes out every day. So that means overseeing the managing board which consists of all different section editors, from news to our weekly magazine which comes out about arts and feature on Thursdays. And to make sure people are on tasks and that whenever there are staff problems to deal with that. And on the flip side also to make sure that the business component keeps turning, that we bring in advertising dollars, that we're staying within the budget, that we're being careful about the way we spend our money and then thinking about long term goals like the recruitment of the next year's staff or planning the alumni event which happens every year. So it's kind of juggling of short and long time. What I like? I love journalism, I feel like what we do matters. If I didn't believe that it would be hard for me to stay up until 4.30 in the morning like I did last night. But I feel like we play an essential role on campus and we can educate people about journalism at a younger age, in college, although they are not super young, they are the readers of the future. So that's what I deal with every day. I see value in my daily tasks But at the same time I don't enjoy commanding people. And that's something that's hard to deal with when you're dealing with a staff you don't pay. We don't pay any of our staffers. It's very difficult to get them to stay on task on time. And sometimes people are rude and disrespectful or cause trouble or disagree with your opinion and you have to deal with them. And I just don't enjoy that task. But I have to you know suck it up and tell them that they need to behave and kind of work through our argument. Sometimes I get frustrated when there are like ten different things I have to do that day. And with all the long term goal you feel like you're not accomplishing anything. And yes you have the paper, but there is just always so much more that you could be doing that you can't quite get to do, and juggling school and the paper is kind of like a personal challenge for everyone on the paper, but I always feel like my loyalty is pulled in different ways. That's to my own personal goals, and also thinking of the paper and what's best for the paper. And when you become editor in chief that's okay. But it's like an eternal struggle with that. But ultimately I am still glad that I have this job and I wouldn't have it any other way.

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KL: So, in your point of view what's the major purpose or the major role of the newspaper here on campus?

MR: Well, the role of the newspaper is twofold. It's to educate about the daily happenings, for example how the university's endowment is doing and if there's crime in the neighborhood and things like that, or book reviews that are entertaining. And
1530 hopefully we can be entertaining and informative at the same time. I think that's our role.

KL: What are the challenges you have to face as an editor in chief?

MR: Well, again I think dealing with people is hard. That's definitely the hardest part.
1535 If everyone stayed on task and if everyone would agree all the time, it would be easier. But no company runs perfectly and I also think a big challenge this year has been our financial situation. Because I came into the job half a year ago, or a semester ago I guess, not understanding that we're in really bad financial shape. And then when you look at the numbers when you're in the job, you're "Oh my gosh, this is a lot, this
1540 is going to be a harder year than I thought." And in the meantime you write up all your goals and you write up all the things you'd like to do, not realizing that you're so limited by this budget. And then you find out what your budget is and you realize that it's gonna be a lot more difficult to accomplish this goals. And you're constantly facing people who want more equipment for their section or bookshelves and I totally
1545 understand that you're working with such a constrained budget and it's really hard to communicate that you have to say no. A lot of their requests are totally reasonable, getting new computers, paying the staff, but at this time we're just trying to make sure we're paying the bills. You can't get a whole new set of computers. So you have to be really cautious about that. And that's frustrating too, because the benefit of that
1550 won't be for me, it'll be for five years after me or ten years after me, when they still have the paper and still can afford to do things. So this can be really frustrating.

KL: How is the connection between the newspaper and Columbia University? How close are you working together?

MR: Not very close. But we interview so many people, we interview all the admin-
1555 istrators. We're completely independent, financially and otherwise. But we have a working relationship. But, you know, with all the administrators... We've had our moments. And like there's usually once a week where the public relations person gets a little angry at us about something we printed. But I feel like that's healthy, it means

we're doing well. So, we have regularly scheduled meetings every semester with them.
 1560 Usually mostly with more important people like the president of the university, dean of
 the students, like that. But we consider ourselves completely independent and I really
 try to draw the line as clear as possible to make sure people are not... I don't know
 how to say this, but... You can't be working so closely with somebody, that you can't
 be critical. Because I think that's another one of our roles. There is no one else that
 1565 gets so close to the administration and the way they're running the university than we
 are. The New York Times frankly doesn't care, unless it's about money. That's the
 role of a local college paper. We can report on things that other communities wouldn't
 care about, other groups of people wouldn't care about. But if we can't catch those
 stories, then there is no story. The New York Times won't write about those things
 1570 because no one's requesting that.

KL: You said at least once a week somebody from the PR department is angry at you.
 How do you react upon this? How do you solve these problems?

MR: Well, usually I find out about it through the news editor. We have two news editors
 and they deal with the university more directly. And they schedule the administrator
 1575 meetings more directly too. And I just attend them. I'm on both sides of the paper,
 with opinion and with news. So we call it the "Chinese wall". Some papers call it the
 "separation between church and state". But opinion and news must be kept separate.
 I kind of make sure both of them are doing a good job, both of them are catching their
 stories, but they have to do them independently. You know, it can't be that a reporter
 1580 comes to me like "I just covered this story and he was a real jerk to me. Why don't
 we write an editorial about him?" That's the kind of thing that could happen if we
 didn't have that clear separation. So when I go to the meetings, I listen to them in
 two ways. I'm listening for good editorials, I'm listening for good opinion content and
 I'm listening for good news content. But back to the PR question. When we get a
 1585 call or an e-mail, usually an e-mail, saying "No, I don't think this is fair." It's usually
 not "I don't think this was accurate", it's usually "I don't think this is fair." I usually
 call them back and explain what we did and say "Well we heard from people and
 they gave us information for that story. And if you have any more questions, call us."
 Sometimes they call us, other times they don't. There have been incidents where they
 1590 are so angry they wanna meet with us that day. Which is really frustrating, because
 they don't realize that we have full schedules. So sometimes we go in, talk to them and
 usually we straighten the issue. They understand we're not there to comfort them on
 the back. We cover them and we're used to them getting a little bit angry and their
 egos are bruised temporarily. But they know the next day we might write something

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1595 that may make them look good. And the next day we might write something that makes them look bad. And it's just a give and take. We just cover what it is.

KL: So you're not really working together with any journalism department and you don't have a faculty adviser or something?

MR: No, the only adults we have on the Spectator are our day staffers. They're
1600 technically employees of the corporate board. The corporate board consists of the editor in chief, me, managing editor, chief of staff. She's more the disciplinarian, but also the person who recommends people that are doing good work. And there's Julia, she's the publisher. So the three of us are the corporate board. And as the corporate board we are technically responsible for the day staffers, which are three people: an
1605 accountant who balances our bills, a secretary who basically answers the phone because we're in class during the day and we can't be there. So any inquiries about subscriptions or if they're looking for someone, she takes messages. And then we have an ad manager, because the duration of each managing board is pretty short. It's only a year. And we're the 133rd managing board. So that's a lot of years. And even over ten or
1610 twenty years we've been establishing a lot of advertising customers. So anyway, those people are the only adults on the Spectator and they're employees. They're part-time employees.

KL: Okay. I think you mentioned part of the next question already. I wanted to ask which kind of problems have there been between you and the university?

MR: You know I've been really lucky. During my time as editor in chief, there haven't
1615 been as many controversies. Columbia is known for a lot of controversies ever since the 1968 protests. And there was a recent controversy about President Ahmadinejad's visit. But we've been pretty lucky. This year none of our coverage has gotten us into really hot water. One thing that started with my time as editor in chief was a campus
1620 suicide, which is extremely rare on campus and it was the shocker. And obviously I tried to deal with it. It's a pretty small campus community. People were really upset about it and obviously our coverage was really important because if there's a suicide you kind of have two fears: You can dramatize, like the New York Post, you can be really gory, be really inappropriate. And you can also glorify the person who
1625 died to the point where other depressed or upset students might think of committing suicide. So our coverage about that was very challenging. Because we have just started as managing board and during that time we talked to the administration much more than usual. They gave us suggestions obviously, but we didn't always listen to them.

It was mostly encouraging us to print information about the counseling center and things like that. It was important that we got out valuable information that had to do with the counseling center and other services and important numbers you could call if you need help. During my time at the paper, not as editor in chief but when I was a reporter, we had a rape on campus. It was pretty extreme. It was a very brutal rape. Again another very rare tragedy. And obviously the administration didn't want to have publicity about something like that. But it was really important that we cover something like a rape. And also we used it as a tool to print information about how to prevent being a crime victim, things like that. So that's something that you have to cover. They're always pushing for providing more information which I don't always think is a bad thing. I think having a box on information when there's a crime or a tragedy is a valuable thing for the readers. I can't really think about controversies. I'll try and think about that. If something comes to my head, I'll remember that.

KL: Okay.

MR: Oh I can think of one, here's one. One of them is the ten million dollar project in Upper Manhattan to build a new campus, mostly for graduate students in West Harlem, just a few blocks uptown. Columbia historically has had issues with the neighborhood. Not just racially but also social-economically. Having a university in a neighborhood that's historically not... I mean we're not on the Upper East Side. We're in an area that's much more diverse. And when you're constructing a building in an area like that, there's always gonna be problems, because people are going to be relocated. People's lives have to change, businesses have to change and people have to move. So there's been a lot of tension about that. And there was a restaurant owner and he was telling us that Columbia sued him about being in debt so they could kick him out. So it's not gonna happen tomorrow that everyone's gonna get kicked out. But it sounded like something that we should look into for sure. So when our reporters went there he took out the checks and he showed that he'd paid all the checks to Columbia. It looked legitimate and we were feeling pretty good about it. So we called the university and they always said "We do not discuss negotiations." Whenever they are trying to do a project like this in Manhattan, they won't discuss it. And whenever they are trying to negotiate, they won't discuss that. Well, that's legitimate. But it often leads to errors. Because if they won't comment on it, situations like this happen. Anyway, what happened was we printed a story saying he's in danger of being kicked out, but he paid all the bills and he showed us the bills. Wait, how was it exactly? It happened a while ago. I think, I don't know if he'd shown us the checks at that point, but he was just saying that the university was giving him a hard time. And then we went

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1665 to the university after the story. We had a meeting with one of the executive vice
presidents. And he said “Why did you print that story?” And he was angry. And
it turned out that the executive vice president was wrong and that guy had paid and
there was a problem with communication between the real estate’s department and
the university. But anyway, it turned into a big drama because the university wouldn’t
1670 give us information on the record. So we kind of had to go off the record to discuss
that. And he did have a lot of information to prove it and he was right, but if you
don’t get a comment... Sometimes they don’t wanna give you a comment and that’s
when misunderstandings often happen and that’s when they end up being angry. But
they kind of got themselves in that situation by not talking. So that’s an example of
1675 where the whole PR department not commenting comes back to bite you. Bite us both
actually...

KL: Another question I wanted to ask is how do you finance your newspaper? Is it
completely financed by advertisement?

MR: How do we finance it? Yeah, it’s financed through advertisement and a very
1680 small number of subscriptions. But yeah, it’s all advertisement. We have strong online
advertisement, but it’s mostly of print advertisement actually. That’s where we make
our money. Some people on staff ask “Why don’t we just publish online only?” We
don’t have enough money from online revenue right now. And online revenue is never
going to be as lucrative because they’re too many websites. So you can’t charge for
1685 that like you can charge for print advertisement.

KL: And in your eyes, how important is the newspaper to the students here on campus?

MR: How important is it? I think it’s very important. I hope that it’s very important.
I think it is a conversation starter. If people don’t read it at all... except when there’s
a hot topic on campus. It kind of gets the buzz going and no one knows where that
1690 came from but it was because it’s in our newspaper. So I don’t really care where they
get the information as long as it’s out there and it’s starting circulating. If we can
start the buzz, then I think we’ve succeeded. Even if people don’t necessarily think
that’s a topic at first. One thing that’s really interesting on campus is that we have
a competitor. And our competitor is a blog, like a magazine that turned into a blog.
1695 And they come out daily or more than daily as a blog. They kind of changed their
focus but they do write some news. And they’re more like brief announcements about
free food and a little witty, you know. They’re not as traditional per se as us. We’re
much more like straight news. Even if we’ve an entertaining story, we’re not gonna

write in like a sarcastic tone, unless it's a column. So I think it's important but that is
 1700 a struggle, because we do have someone that we feel like is competing with us. I don't
 know if that's the case on other campuses you visited, where there's been like a new
 technology or a new media as competitor.

KL: Not really. How great is the willingness of people to work for the paper? Is it
 difficult to find new writers or are they coming in large numbers?

1705 MR: They come in large numbers. This is the time of the year where we have like 300
 recruits, it's crazy. And if they'd all stay, it would double the size of the paper. But
 they don't and everyone signs up, they wanna do as much as possible when they get
 to college. In college people sign up for as many activities, but then start really fall
 out of the picture. So the real question is how many do you retain, how many people
 1710 stick around past training and past their first few articles? And I think it's hard at
 college because a lot of people are focused more on their academics and their careers.
 If they're not into journalism which fewer people are these days because of the job
 market, they see maybe less an incentive to stay at the paper, to get involved with the
 paper. But I think we do have a large number of people who really stick it out. Even
 1715 if they just contribute on a less frequent level. It's not hard to find people to write, it's
 harder to find people who are truly committed. But in terms of finding people who
 just write from time to time or take photos from time to time, that's easy. It's the ones
 who really stay with the paper, become editors. They are the ones that are harder to
 track down. But those people are very self selective. They usually come in the paper
 1720 in a way... Like I pretty much knew from the start I wanted to be an editor at some
 point. You kind of have to work your way up and prove that you're really committed.
 But we have a good staff, I'm happy with that.

KL: But you don't pay anyone of the writers?

MR: We don't pay anyone.

1725 KL: And as you're not working together with a journalism department, they're not
 getting credits or something?

MR: No credits. It's all based on, I don't know, just loyalty I guess. And it is a lot of
 fun, it is crazy. And if you take a few steps back, it is crazy to me. People put in so
 much time, they also could use it for schoolwork or other things they do in their lives,

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1730 for no benefit except for the friendships and fun and hopefully the pride of the paper the next day.

KL: From your point of view, how important is the Columbia Spectator in the region around campus? Is it available off campus?

MR: It is. We consider ourselves as the paper of the campus, but also Morningside
1735 Heights and West Harlem. And I'm surprised by how many people follow us either online or in print who are from the neighborhood. And that's always a really important thing to me, because before I was editor in chief I was news editor and covering a lot of politics in the neighborhood and expansion and businesses and things like that. And I think that's so important because a lot of the people in this neighborhood feel like
1740 they're kind of in a vacuum where Columbia is the big cheese and they're kind of stuck in the middle of it all. And those people really value having a local paper that can cover their issues or concerns and I think they do consider us as their local paper, which is a good thing because again we can cover things other papers might not care about. But for the school it's important. And we can also put the university in hot
1745 water if we think they're doing something wrong in the neighborhood. And because they are the big cheese, they constantly need someone to watch. So I do think the local residents see that value because they're really no other watchdog publications in the neighborhood besides us.

KL: You just mentioned watchdog publications. How do you see the possibilities to
1750 criticize the university, especially for your paper?

MR: We're pretty much free to criticize as much as we like. But we need to back it up with facts obviously; we can't just have critical comment about the university. It's not productive and it doesn't achieve anything. Obviously in the opinion section sometimes people write really nasty columns about someone. But in terms of stories,
1755 like news stories, I never really feel limited by the administration. I am not afraid that they'd cut us off, because we're too valuable of a resource for them to get out their message. We can't be always on their side, but we can also be a great tool for them get out word to alumni about a new dean or a new department. So because of that we really have a lot of freedom to deal with critical issues. There's really no situation
1760 I can think of where I felt like they were gonna cut us off.

KL: Okay, that already answered my next question.

MR: Well, I should mention, the university president is a First Amendment scholar. He is very open to speaking frankly with us about situations... like, you know he's the university president. There are so many people under him. So he doesn't always know
 1765 everything. But having someone like that is so helpful because if they love journalism and see the value of the First Amendment, that's pretty much what you need and what you want administrators to understand. It's like you're not trying to attack them, you're trying to get out the word, the reality. It's not always pretty, but you know it is what it is. So it helps that he's a First Amendment scholar, I guess.

1770 KL: Okay. Did you or did the writers ever have any problems while doing research for an article because they're student journalists or don't you think this makes a difference?

MR: Well, yes. I mean I sometimes think how much time I'd have for the Spectator if I weren't a student. But at the same time if they weren't students, they wouldn't come up with really good story ideas. Like a lot of times they're in class or in their dorm
 1775 room, people make suggestions or make a comment and you think "Oh, that might be a story." So the two accompany each other. I know people who use the Spec for something in class, I don't know. They follow the news a lot, so they can bring up the news in class. Or they do some kind of a project that involves the Spectator. One of the managing editors did a paper once, a history paper and read through the Spec
 1780 archives from 1968 and did a paper on that. So a lot of people try to incorporate their Spectator life into their school life. But, yeah it is harder to balance as a student, much harder. And not only you have your academic life, you also wanna have a social life. We're in college, but we're also in New York City and you can't deny there's something to do. So you don't wanna be just doing homework and the Spectator, you also want
 1785 to have a group of friends and a social life. When I'm a reporter over the summer working for other papers I just realize how much easier it is to not be a student when you work for a paper.

KL: Okay. To which degree do you see the Spectator as an institution for journalism education?

1790 MR: Do I see the Spectator as an institution that educates journalists? I do. It's an institution for journalism education. But it's also a student club on many levels. We're a team of people who work together to put out a product every day. And in some ways it's like being on a sports team or like being with the college democrats or being in a religious group of people. We all value what we're working towards together and
 1795 it's not just about educating, it's also about having fun. Because again, we have no

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way to compensate people except for you know bylines and the occasional parties. But really it's all about the fun too. So while you're trying to educate, you have to balance that. We're not making it seem like they're in class, or not making it seem like they have homework. We're encouraging them to take stories that they are interested in. Because otherwise the Spectator would start feeling like a burden and a lot of people would get burnt out quick.

KL: Okay, three small questions, then we're done. How many people are on your staff, approximately?

MR: Approximately I would say 250. But there are less people than that write regularly. I think it's about 200. You can probably count, actually. I think it's a little bit less than that. We have some people who write like twice a week and we have other people who write like a movie review every other month. So it depends on who you count. So it's really hard to measure. And from semester to semester it changes a lot. In fall we have the most people on staff, and the training staff.

KL: How big is your circulation?

MR: Our circulation is 5,000 papers every day. And we have an average of about 9,000 hits on our website. Those are people who are not just looking for something and come across that through Google, but those are people who really read the Spectator. So that's encouraging and you now that's almost twice our print circulation. So people are reading us. About the form I don't really care. So that's our circulation I guess. And we also print 4,000 of our weekly magazines.

KL: And how many hours of work do you put in per week?

MR: That's always a question I don't know how to answer. Well, last night I was there from 8.30 to 4 in the morning. Other nights are from 8 to 2. And then outside of Spec I probably spend three hours a day when I'm not in the office. But I don't know much that adds up to. I don't know, maybe 45, 50 or 60 sometimes. It totally depends on the week. Probably 55, when we have some meetings. I don't know, it's ridiculous, somewhere around that.

KL: Okay, just let me look if I forgot something. No, I think we're done. Thank you very much.

MR: Oh, you're welcome. I hope that was helpful.

KL: Yeah, it was really helpful, thank you.

9.3.6 Michael King

KL: Okay, Michael. You are the editor in chief of the "Collegian" here at UMass. Just
1830 tell me a little bit about your job. What do you like about it, what do you don't like
about it?

MK: Sure. Well, just to clarify: I'm the outgoing editor in chief, so you know, we had
someone hired for starting in the fall. I guess I'm still kind of technically in charge,
but... We don't print in the summer, so there is not much to do. But basically my job
1835 is just to oversee the paper in general. We have three distinct departments, in terms of
the newsroom, the business room, and the graphics department. And so each of those
three units has two separate managers. And they sort of each manage half the staff of
each unit. And so my main job is to manage those managers and to make sure they are
doing their job. And so we have, you know, weekly meetings with those people, and so
1840 we talk about what's going on in the departments and in the paper overall. Another
part of my job is basically to establish the strategic direction of the paper. I'm basically
making decisions about how we want to approach things in terms of, big changes of
how to report news or big changes of how we want to make sure that we make money.
Because financially we've been having some trouble, because we are not supported by
1845 the school at all, financially. All the money we get comes from advertising revenue,
solely. So that's kind of declined overall. Not just for our paper, but for papers around
the country. It's kind of been a national theme. So we've been trying to combat that.
And quite a few business decisions... like the one, I'm gonna show you... you know,
towards the end... this was our last paper [shows issue of the Daily Collegian], actually,
1850 this is our orientation issue. But, you know, we made the choice to put an ad on the
front page and sell that for a premium. That's something we've never done before.
But I felt there is something we had to do something to continue to be profitable. And
stuff like that, you know. Things got kind of bad mid-semester last spring. We had to
lay off a few people, in terms of paying them, including myself. I decided to forego my
1855 pay, because the advertising revenue had declined enough, that I was concerned about
the... you know, concerns about being able to continue with the paper. So basically
stuff like that. You know I'm also kind of, sort of the face of the paper too. If someone

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comes down with a complaint about a story we wrote, I'll talk to that person and stuff like that. Well, that more or less covers the job.

1860 KL: Okay. You already talked about it. I wanted to ask how are you financed or how do you finance your newspaper? Is it really just advertisement?

MK: Yes. I mean the school... you know, we're independent. Well, we're not completely independent, because, you know, we have offices on campus. So the school basically provides us with the place to make the paper. But we provide 100 % of the
1865 costs to print it and to do everything. So it comes completely from advert, yes.

KL: Wow, that's quite impressive.

MK: Yeah, it's tough. I mean we print five days a week. Every day there is class, every day there is school. So it's the challenge. That's for sure.

KL: And you mentioned it started mid-semester last spring. Why that? What was the
1870 reason? Or is there a specific reason?

MK: [Hesitates.] You know, our ad-sales were inconsistent for the most part of the whole year. And at that point it started to decline enough where I got kind of really concerned that we might not be able to continue beyond this year if we don't make some serious changes, you know, about our cost-structure and about how we spend
1875 money. And so I felt at that point that we really need to make some changes just to protect ourselves. And it turns out that the ad-sell picked up again. And so maybe we didn't necessarily have to make the changes but they certainly helped our bottom-line, helped our balance-sheet, to save money in the end. Well, I miss getting paid for the past couple of weeks, but it's okay.

1880 KL: So, in general, your staff is getting paid?

MK: [Hesitates.] Yes and no. We pay all the managers. We pay myself. We pay all the managers, the managers of the three separate units. We pay the business staff, you know the people that do the accounting, and the books and those kinds of things. And we pay the people who do the ad-sales. They get paid an hourly rate and commission.
1885 And we also pay the people who do the graphical work. They are basically making ads, people who lay out the page, who make the photos look nice and stuff like that, there's a graphic [points at a graphic in an issue of the Daily Collegian]. I'm sure they

did that. The newsroom-staff is not really paid. We pay the desk-editors, because we have four sections in the paper. And we pay every desk-editor. But there is three
 1890 assistants that we don't pay. And we don't pay writers or photographers. That's kind of a strategical choice that was made before I got there, that we couldn't really afford to pay these people. But we also sort of gambled that we still could find competent, qualified people to fill these roles, even without paying them. It's kind of unfortunate that money for the newsroom isn't really there. But you know we're still pretty strong,
 1895 editorially, you know, in my opinion.

KL: That's another question I wanted to ask. How great is the willingness of the students to work for the paper. Do they get credits for class for example or...?

MK: They can, depending on what they do. It's kind of, sort of a little complicated. They can get internship credits for working down there. But those sort of count as
 1900 general credits towards graduation. They wouldn't necessarily count as credit for a specific requirement. Did that make sense? But basically they can't get a credit for journalism class for working down here, because we have no supervision editorially from any professors or anything from the administration. So we can pretty much print what we want. And since we are not being sort of supervised, we can't just give out credits
 1905 for journalism classes. But basically I found that the students who were journalism majors are really passionate about that field and they do; they work very hard to get experience working at the paper. Even if that means working without pay.

KL: Okay. What do you think is the major purpose or the role of the Collegian here on campus?

MK: That's a good question. I would say it's three sort of separate distinct roles. First and foremost it's sort of a vehicle to give students the experience of working on a real newspaper, on a daily newspaper, and sort of give them an experience while they are still in college. When they graduate they can take this, put it on the resume and say "hey I worked there, for this newspaper, I have this experience." So they can go to
 1915 interviews and talk about, you know, what they've done. So student experience I think is the foremost. Second I think is to be a news-source for campus. I mean there's some regional papers, some local papers beyond campus, that sort of report what's going on on campus. But no one does it as in depth as we do. So especially our sports-section [shows sports-section of an issue of the Daily Collegian]. So we cover every kind of
 1920 sports. No one is writing about field-hockey other than us. Different papers will cover basketball, hockey, and football. But we cover all the sports to get the most complete

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coverage of what's going on on campus, even beyond sports, you turn to us. And I think thirdly it's to provide a space for students to articulate their opinions. One of our sections is the editorial and opinion page. [shows page in The Daily Collegian]

1925 In my opinion it's very important for students to have a place to articulate that, to express their opinions. I think this page is a very important part of it.

KL: So it's not just the editors, normal students can write short texts for the opinion page.

MK: Yeah, any UMass student can write for us and be on staff. We recently amended
1930 our charter to say that any Five-Colleges-student... You know about the five colleges?

KL: Mhm.

MK: So any Five-Colleges-student can actually write for us and become an editor. We have actually a student from New Hampshire to be an assistant news editor for this coming year. So basically you just need to fill in an application if there is an opening
1935 and you pretty much get hired on the spot. As long as you write clearly enough and not overly antagonistic, basically you can have that position. And we do print letters to the editor once a week, you know, students who are responding to what we've written in the paper, we print it on this page as well. [...]

KL: So I'll continue with another question. You mentioned that you think the most
1940 important role of your newspaper is to educate journalists. Is that right?

MK: Yeah, absolutely.

KL: Okay. But you don't work together with any journalism department here?

MK: No, not per se. I put together what was called the Collegian Advisory Board. And basically we brought down professors and people of the UMass community come down
1945 to meet once a month and talk about the Collegian's problems and offer input, offer advice. But it's not like we have someone sitting down here and saying "Hey, you guys can't print that". So I mean it's sort of a voluntary feedback, that's the relationship with them.

KL: And in general, how close do you work together with UMass?

1950 MK: That's a good question. It's kind of an interesting position, because we are independent editorially. Actually I thought we're gonna be challenged in that so I put together this legal brief about how we do have legal independence, but that's another story. But so we have that editorial independent and we are financially independent in the sense that all the money we spend is money we earn. But at the same time the
 1955 university does provide us with space to operate and the university does look after our finances in terms of serving as sort of a bank almost. And they're giving some financial advising. And technically we are a registered student organization, so technically we operate at the university but really we are not getting any money besides the space nor are they telling us what to print. Did that sort of make sense?

1960 KL: Yeah.

MK: You know, we are independent in terms of this, but we're not completely independent.

KL: Okay. Have there ever been any problems in the relationship between you and the university?

1965 MK: [Hesitation] Yeah, kind of, yeah, a few. Just to give you some background: I don't know what the situation is in Europe, but basically print journalism is declining in the US, pretty substantially. So basically we're at a point... you know this was well before my time. Like four or five years ago where ad-sales started to decline and the people who were in charge of the paper at that point didn't really have a good
 1970 handling on the Collegian's finances. And so they kept spending and over the course of a couple of years they produced pretty much debt. And basically that debt is held by the student government association on campus. It's basically 110,000 that we owe them. And basically they funded us a few years back to keep operating. And obviously, as my position turns around every year, every year there's someone new at my position,
 1975 and there's a new student leader every year. So every year we sort of have to explain the situation, why we have this debt. They typically come in and say "Why you guys owe us 110,000 dollars? What's this?" So I had some troubles at the beginning, you know, explaining to the student president and to the senate why this debt was open and why it is necessary to continue. And so at that point I was kind of afraid that
 1980 they'd make kind of use that debt, to sort of gain editorial control over the paper. So that's why I wrote that legal brief that luckily I didn't have to use. But I just sort of clarified that position and luckily did agree to they let us do our thing and keep the money open as long as we keep paying them the debt, which we did. But in terms of

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the administration itself, they are pretty supportive. One of the things I did this year,
1985 I wanted to take... I wanted to really work on my news writing and reporting and so I
took one of the lead beats, which was basically – more background – the new chancellor
came in. And he wants to reorganize all the schools and colleges. And this is a big
process, they held meetings with the faculty, and it's still going on, still continuing.
But I thought a lot of his points were not very genuine. And so I interviewing him on
1990 this and trying to... sort of... tactly, you know. Not just call him down. Him and I
[...] in terms of writing a good story. But in no point did they consider shutting us
down or anything or telling us what to print. But other than that I mean we have like
I said a financial adviser who is paid by the university and he is kind of really helpful
with us. He really wants to see us succeed. So basically they are pretty supportive.

1995 KL: You mentioned a legal brief. Tell me a little bit more about this.

MK: Basically I was concerned that the student government association would try to
either tell us what we could and couldn't print and sort of demand some editorial space.
And so basically I did some research, talked to a few professors who were sort of familiar
with the law. And I did some research about legal precedents. I don't know what it
2000 looks like in Europe. But basically here a lot of the law is established by precedents.
The judge makes the decisions. And that sort of decision exists until another judge
changes it. [...] So basically we do in fact legally have independence according to the
law. So it was kind of comforting to have this in my back pocket if I needed this.

KL: Okay. I think you already mentioned a lot of it but I just ask you again. What
2005 problems do you face as editor in chief of the Collegian.

MK: You know in my year it's definitely financial. Trying to make sure the ad manager
motivates the staff enough, to bring in that money. I also spend a lot of time trying
to get creative. We came up with the ad on our front page and that kind of stuff.
I think motivating the staff is an issue, for a lot of reasons. [...] You know in my
2010 mind, you have to put your academics and your student obligations first. But at the
same time we sort of do demand a lot of our students who work for us, even of those
who don't get paid, especially the newsroom. I'd say the newsroom is probably the
most demanding work. [...] And sort of my philosophy... You know, I got to my
job because I was assisting news editor the year before. And so I still wasn't getting
2015 paid then and I felt like I was doing almost the most work for the paper. [...] So I
just made it a priority of mine to sort of be president of the paper, to just be there.
Because I felt like that alone would just motivate people to work hard and help them

stay with the paper more. Did that make sense? Other problems... you know, issues, stories we write, journalism... I mean the people here are basically learning on the
 2020 job. We are not perfect; we have mistakes in the paper all the time. But I don't think it really interferes with our quality of journalism and our editorial message. So I'm just managing that and keeping that to a minimum, to sort of being able to trouble-shoot when it comes up, to minimize the damage. Stuff like that is pretty much what I faced in the past year.

2025 KL: In your eyes how important is the Collegian to the students here on campus?

MK: Good question. I think it's of critical importance to have a daily paper on a university this size. You know I talked about the decline of print journalism in the country, people are reading less. But I don't think that's really the case here on campus, here at UMass, because we only print every day there is class. So we don't print on the
 2030 weekends, we don't print in the summer or during the winter session or spring break. So I mean students are picking us up and taking us to class with them. So it's sort of a different aspect of how the paper is used by its readers, unlike a typical larger newspaper, with home-delivery and stuff, which is declining. But I mean the paper is free to pick up, so students are basically picking it up on their way to class and read
 2035 it and I would argue that people all over the country, not just students, don't really appreciate what quality journalism does, especially for democracy, how critical that is to have success. So I am not sure that, if you'd poll students, that they would really acknowledge how critical this paper was. But I think that they have something on campus that, you know, can criticize the chancellor when, you know, the paper thinks
 2040 he is doing something he shouldn't or being able to [...] the sports teams and sort of, you know, help develop school spirit. So I mean, personally I think it's critical and I think a lot of students probably realize that, there are maybe a lot who sort of wouldn't realize that and sort of maybe take it for granted, that's probably the best way to say that.

2045 KL: Do you think it's also important for people around the campus? Is it available off-campus?

MK: It is and it isn't. The print copies... you know we deliver pretty much everywhere on campus and we have about a dozen off-campus drops that we do. We go to the other five colleges, we do in the center of town, Amherst and you know Northampton
 2050 and that kind of places, in the immediate area we try to deliver the paper copy. But you know our website, dailycollegian.com, which we just redesigned last spring and are

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redesigning it right now, is available on the internet. So in terms of online we do have a good readership in size, you know, in terms of alumni, people who sort of like to feel connected to the campus when they are not physically here.

2055 KL: So you think it also serves the function of, like a regional newspaper?

MK: [Hesitation] I think, I mean we do report on stories not just on campus. We do some stuff with the region. But I don't; I don't think that you can call us a regional newspaper because we are mostly reporting on what's happening on campus. But I think you could say our readership is kind of [...] But this is no news source. They
2060 are looking at us for UMass news. They are reading the Boston Globe, reading the Springfield Republican for the main news. But they are coming to us for, you know, coverage on campus. Did that kind of make sense?

KL: Yeah. Okay, it's so easy with you, you answer all the questions without I even asked them. My next question would have been or would be: How do you consider the
2065 possibilities to criticize the university for the Collegian especially?

MK: Yeah, I mean it's one of our main roles to provide that check for the university. And so we didn't really have a writer who is, basically, who really wanted to cover this beat [the new chancellor], as efficiently as it should be, so I volunteered to take it. And, not to sound too... I thought I did a pretty good job on it. There were basically, say,
2070 ten eleven stories covering this whole process with him, and, sort of, what I thought about his plan and, sort of, that way. So I mean, I think one of our roles is definitely to be critical to the university when it's deserved. You definitely see that on our sports page, if a coach makes a bad decision during a game, then we might write a column about it. Or at the same time when the university deserves praise, then we give them
2075 that too. We sort of find the middle road. Like this column here from our sports columnist, that's basically, you know, positively about the lacrosse coach because he thought he was just a great human being. So you know I think we are critical but we do sort of praise too when appropriate.

KL: Where do you think are the limits of critical journalism for the Collegian or are
2080 there limits here?

MK: Yeah, there certainly are limits. Most of our writers come from journalism majors, but not all of our writers. And so to an extent we kind of rely on the journalism department to sort of teach the foundation of journalism, not really journalism skills,

but sort of ethics and sort of thought. Because basically I feel like you can just learn
 2085 how to write stories by actually doing it, in my opinion. But we kind of rely on them
 in sort of teach them, kind of, ethics and sort of, I guess more on the reporting side of
 it we rely on the school, in sort of teach that to the writers, if that kind of makes sense.
 And so in that sense we rely on the reporters and the editors in sort of to use judgment,
 when writers can be critical. You know like, for example in my story I thought basically
 2090 his plan didn't put too much, put too low emphasis on undergraduate education and
 focused too much on research and grad-level education. And so that was my opinion.
 But since I wasn't running an opinion piece but I was writing a hard-news story, you
 know I had to find someone to basically quote in the paper to say that for me. So
 that's kind of how it has to be in my mind. You should be critical and you have to
 2095 make a point but you have to basically back it up by facts or by interviews, by a quote,
 by quoting somebody. We kind of give our writers a little lead-way in terms of our
 editorial and opinion section that they can write and print whatever they want. But
 definitely they can say what they want but they do need to cite evidence. Did that
 kind of make sense? So basically we can be critical but there has to be a basis for this.

2100 KL: Did you ever face problems in doing research for example or in newsgathering for
 the Collegian? Or did the editors ever have problems?

MK: Yeah, I mean all the time. I guess I can cite my own experience with that. When
 I was working on these stories, basically no one of the professors really wanted to go
 on the record as being critical of the university. So it was kind of a real pain in my
 2105 part to sort of find people who actually say their true opinions and be willing to go on
 the record about it. But in terms of that, in terms of the university stuff, since we're
 a public university, most of the documents and you know stuff that might be relevant
 to a story is public information. So you can access that fairly easily, unlike a private
 university which can, I mean, good luck getting stuff there. You know what I mean?
 2110 Basically, at a public university, like, say, a coach is gonna be fired. Here we can say
 "hey, we need a copy of his contract, it's public record, give it to us." But if we were a
 private university, you know, that would be our business to get that.

KL: Okay, how do you consider the double-role of your editors, as editors, journalists
 and students at the same time? Do you think this might entail problems?

2115 MK: Yeah, it is definitely one of our bigger issues. Just like I said I really think the
 assistant editors are really doing sort of minimizing [...] Because they're not getting
 paid, but they are doing a lot of work, you know, in terms of putting the paper together,

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writing stories and editing stories, doing that kind of stuff. You know, we're demanding, but at the same time I think it's important for students to learn how to balance these things and be able to work here and still be strong, you know, academically. But we have students who haven't been able to do that. Maybe part of because we asked too much of them or maybe part of because they didn't have these time management skills. Like one night, you know we print five days a week and so each day, you know, one manager is in charge of production. [...] So I was night editor once a week and I think it was a Sunday and the assistant news editor was putting the news section together and you know she was new. We were still kind of training her. And she just, you know, she couldn't handle it and sort of almost literally ran out screaming like "Ah, I can't do this, you know I got class at 8 AM tomorrow." and so sometimes that happens when students sort of just can't, maybe don't want to invest time and don't want to risk sacrificing their academics, if that makes sense.

KL: As an editor, how much time do you spend in the newsroom per day or per week?

MK: Are you talking about my role, or the...

KL: Your role and in general the editors...

MK: Okay. I think, I guess, the managing editor - you know I oversee the six managers - and the managing editor is kind of, you know, more or less in charge for the newsroom. So I just of oversee that. But you know we have the four sections, four desk editors, the assistants, and so their job is to write stories that click and to manage the team of writers. And also to put the paper together at least once a week, work the night desk. [...] Editing stories, placing stories on the page, coming up with headlines, cut lines and doing this on the computer. Because we don't have a. We have a graphics department that sort of puts the rough outline in, uses a software to do it. And then we have the desk editors that sort of place the stories. [...] But that's one thing we ask of our editors. So I mean last year when I was doing this job, I was putting in probably 30 hours a week doing that kind of job, easily. So that can be pretty demanding.

KL: Yeah. And the writers? It's less for the writers, I hope?

MK: Yeah, yeah, the writers are tough. It's tough to keep them motivated because we're not paying them. So it's kind of on their own to come down there and write. It's kind of on their own to keep them motivated. [...] We rely on them to see the reason why they are doing this, whether it's because they are trying to get an editor position

2150 or they are just trying to get clips, you know, so they can get a job in writing. So I mean some sections are easier than others. For news, it's hard to find good writers. [...] But with sports it's a little different because we have different sports and different hierarchies of sports. Because everyone wants to cover basketball, everyone wants to cover football and hockey, but no one wants to write about field hockey, right, or lacrosse, women's lacrosse, whatever. And so they established like a beat-system. You have to work your way up to get to that point. And so we say "hey, okay, you want to cover basketball? Well, maybe in two years, but you need to cover these beats first and do a good job on this and work to get up there. But there's really nothing like that in news, because you know the ability to cover the chancellor-story... it doesn't really excite anybody, except me, no one else. No one would see that as something to work up to. [...] So, keeping writers can be tough. So we do kind of look to the journalism departments to sort of nudge their students to come down here and write. Like we are going to class and talk about the paper and talk about, you know, how wonderful it is and how a great experience, and try to recruit people. But the corps of writers we have is probably pretty small, in terms of people who are writing stories regularly. Otherwise we kind of rely on students to sort of just come down and take a story when they have time. So it's tough to motivate and to keep people connected. [...]

KL: So, my last two questions. What's your circulation and how many people are on your staff, approximately?

MK: Okay, circulation is 11,000 in print. Online we're having about 12,000 hits a week, in terms of that. So we do call ourselves largest college daily. And the staff, basically you know you have me, you have the six managers, so you have seven key-people. And the graphics staff has about eight paid people. And the business staff has about six or seven paid people. And the newsroom, the corps of the newsroom-staff, the people whose names appear here in the box there, we have about 40 of those people. And then if you include [...] that's about 20. And if you include everyone who's ever written a story, that's a couple hundred, probably. So I'd say probably 80 or 90 is probably a good number to go with that.

2180 KL: There was one question I had in mind just two seconds ago, I forgot it.

MK: That's okay.

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KL: Ah, circulation. Because I read on the UMass Wikipedia-site that it's 14,000. Did it go down?

2185 MK: Yeah, basically a strategic decision we made the year before I got there, because
of the decline in print revenue, in terms of that. So we basically decided that the best
way to save money would be to print 3,000 less copies a day. That would be the easiest
way to cut costs. And we felt like doing that wouldn't necessarily impede anyone's
ability to get a newspaper. We felt like we still had a pretty strong readership. But
2190 that by cutting it by 3,000 paper copies wouldn't really inhibit that too much, like
basically the cross-savings would be greater than any loss we felt we'd have... And I
think it's worked overall. Certainly no advertiser wants to hear that you print 3,000
less copies. So because of that we haven't really raised our advertising rates in the past
couple of years. It's kind of how that came to be.

KL: Okay. So that was it. Thank you very much; you really helped me a lot.

2195 MK: Sure.

9.3.7 Rachel Smith

KL: So, you're the editor in chief of the Washington Square News here. Maybe we could start by you telling me a little bit what exactly your job is and what you like about it, what you don't like about it.

2200 RS: Well, so we print four days a week and we have an online edition on Friday. So
we publish five days a week. And I steer the editorial content for all those issues and
any special editions we have. I work probably 60 hours a week on a normal week.
Sometimes it's more. So we are here on normal days from about 5.30 at night until the
paper ends. We hope to get out of here at 2 AM, but sometimes it's 3 or 4 or 5. So
2205 I'm here every night and I just help people write their stories. I edit all of the stories
with other editors, but you know, I have the final word on it.

[Interruption]

RS: Sorry. So, yes that's how much I'm here. And I hire everyone. This year we have about 40 people who are paid by stipend who are on staff. That's just our editorial

2210 staff. Then we have about 20 students who sell our ads and who do promotions. So together it's about 60 people. What else can I say? Yeah, that's the basics I think.

KL: Okay, and in your point of view, what's the major purpose or the major role of the Washington Square News on campus?

2215 RS: Well, the main role for us is to deliver news in the community that they can use and that impacts their lives. So we write about everything, any university policy that affects students, anything that's going on on campus that affects students. And it's not just students; it's really the NYU community. So it's students, alumni, parents, administrators, everyone who's touched by the NYU community. And we try to make that the focus of our content. So we steer away from interesting stories that don't
2220 necessarily have to do with NYU. So if we get a really cool story about... I don't know... a parade that's happening. If there are not a lot of students of NYU we try not to do content like that. We are an important news source on campus. We create a dialogue in the NYU community to talk about all sorts of things. Did that answer your question?

2225 KL: Yes. What are the challenges you face as an editor in chief?

RS: Challenges... Well, the time commitment is certainly a challenge. But I love it, so I don't really complain about that too much. But challenges would probably be that we are a teaching newspaper. So we teach people to write the best that they can to become good journalists. So one of the challenges that I find is in teaching people
2230 we don't get great content sometimes. So it's hard to be producing a paper every day when sometimes stories aren't strong. You have to deal with that because you wanna teach people, but you also want good stories. So it's sort of a hard balance to strike. And we have a really high turnover so that's hard, because every semester new editors come in. It's hard to have a long investigative series when you have high turnover.
2235 People burn out. You know, you work here a lot and you get tired. There are all the things that we deal with on a daily basis. I think we deal well with them. We have a lot of talented people on staff who know how to teach, who know how to deal with burnout, who know how to manage things.

KL: Okay. How is the connection between the newspaper and the university? How
2240 close are you working together?

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RS: Oh, we are actually editorially independent from the university. So there have no input into what we write. But we deal with them a lot. The university spokesperson, I don't know what his title is exactly... press office, I guess, we deal with them a lot. For every story that has to do with university policies, or admissions, or staff changes, you know, faculty. That's the thing we go to them for a comment from the university. Sometimes we talk directly to the dean. But more often than not we got to John Beckman who is our spokesperson from the university and we talk to him. So that's one way that we are very close to the university on a daily basis. But we try to be you know close to the university so we can get stories, to know what's going on. But that's really difficult I guess with that turnover to know who to talk to in the university. It's always a challenge. That's another challenge. But in terms of being tied to the university, we're not tied to them at all. They couldn't tell us what to write. We're totally editorially independent. And I should mention that we write editorials, our house editorials that usually speak to the university. They offer recommendations or praise for the university. And sometimes we get dialogue from those, like the university will write us a letter back and we print it and we get feedback from them based on that. It's rare that it affects concrete change, but that's our goal, to be a voice they hopefully listen to from the students.

KL: And you're not working together with any journalism department?

RS: No actually. There is a journalism department in the College of Arts and Science. And our editorial managing board, that's myself and Julia, who is... oh, you can't see her at the moment. She's our business manager. And two professors of the journalism department make up the board who hires the new editor in chief and hires the new managing editor and makes all big decisions about the paper. So they are part of the journalism department, but it's an even number of students to professors, so it's even. But they are from the journalism department. But I believe, I could be wrong with this, but I believe that the paper was founded by students, not by the journalism department. And then we have an academic adviser who has a position at the journalism department. But he just critiques our paper and helps us with any problems we have. He's just a helper, not really like a founder, he doesn't tell us what to do. But a lot of our students are certainly journalism majors, they're part of the journalism department, but we're not connected with them, other than our board which has professors from them.

KL: Have there ever any problems concerning the relationship between the newspaper and the university, the administration?

2275 RS: Problems? Well, no. There is a certain healthy animosity I would say between us
and the press office. The spokespeople at the university think that we are annoying to
them in a certain way, because we print things that they might not necessarily want
us to print. You know, just stories that are not necessarily flattering to the university.
In my tenure here that's never caused so much of a problem that we needed to have
2280 a meeting or rectify in any major way. You know sometimes we make a mistake in a
story, a factual error, and then we print corrections. But other than that we haven't
had a major problem. I'm trying to think of... I can't even think of a story where
they wanted us to not print it or you know.

KL: You mentioned that sometimes you print stories that are not really flattering to
2285 them. How do they react upon this?

RS: They don't like it. We will get e-mails from the press office that say you know
"We thought that the way you slanted this was unfair." But unless there is a factual
error, we never change what we wrote. I mean it doesn't happen that often. Maybe
once every three weeks we get an e-mail that says "We don't like what you wrote."
2290 But they can't do anything about it. And it's not like an openly hostile relationship.
They are sort of generally annoyed with us, but that means we're doing a good job, I
think. If we found something they didn't want us to write. That's obviously news to
the university, that's news they should know. So yeah, there are no other papers that
have a more combative relationship with their university, but generally I think we have
2295 a good relationship. We get stories we want and I think we do a good job and they
respect us even though they might not want us to publish some things we publish. Did
that make sense?

KL: Yes. And how do you finance your newspaper?

RS: Finance? It's totally independent from the university. So we sell our own ads
2300 and the revenue from those ads pays for everything that we have. Our stipends, our
printing costs, our computers, any software we need, anything like that is all from
revenue from ads. I have to say that does not include the building, our space. We are
in NYU property, which in some ways makes us not completely independent from the
university, because they pay our rent essentially. But it also stands that if we pay for
2305 rent we'd not exist, because it's way too expensive. So that's the only thing we don't
pay for. But everything else, anything you see in the office or any service we provide
is paid from the ad revenue.

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KL: You just mentioned stipends. What are those for?

2310 RS: The stipends? Any person, any editorial member who's on the masthead, any editor for any desk, our photo editor, our commune editor, our sports editor and our deputies, as it currently is, they get a stipend. It's very small, but everyone gets you know a couple of hundred dollars for the semester. So it's over a semester. And it's different pay grades. Senior editors get more if they'd been here for longer. We try to give something to everyone so they can be here and not struggle. If they want some
2315 money, they don't have to get a part time job. It's not very much though; it's more like a token. But yeah, that's how it works.

KL: In your eyes, how important is the Washington Square news to the students on campus?

2320 RS: I don't know percentages or anything, but I think a fair amount of people pick it up with some regularity. I think that at NYU especially very few organizations like us, very few on campus groups affect change of the university because there are so many different groups and it's a university that's so spread out and so different. People are pulling in different directions a lot. So one of my goals and one of my wishes is that it did make more of a difference. It's really difficult because we don't have a campus, so
2325 we don't have a lot of sense of community. But some of the articles we publish, we get feedback. People talk about it. If it's something big then we get a reaction. And... what's a good example? Like our housing guide. We do a housing guide every year where we review all the dorms and tell freshmen where they should live and things. And they are off the stands in two seconds. People really read those a lot. But I think
2330 there is room for improvement on that front. I think we could be more integrated in the community. We could be more of a mover and a shaper on campus. But I think we are one of the oldest and longest standing institutions on campus certainly. We've been here for almost 40 years, so it's a long time. Am I answering your question?

2335 KL: Yeah, of course. Another thing that interests me is how great is the willingness of students to work with the paper? Is it easy to find new writers?

RS: Yes, we have two open houses every fall, right next to each other during our welcome week. It's a whole university welcome week. This year we had [RS asks colleague about the exact number] like 150 or 200 prospective people who wanted to work here. And we have meetings every Sunday to pitch out stories and to see who
2340 wants to write. And the first meeting had like 60 people. So we have a lot of interest.

People die off, like they don't come back and they get disinterested because they find other things. But it's not difficult to find people. Especially at a school that has a strong journalism department... There's a lot of journalists here and they definitely wanna write for us. It's competitive. And we rarely have a hard time to fill an editor
 2345 position. There's always at least two or three people who want that position.

KL: Something totally different: From your point of view how important is the Washington Square news around the campus, so for non-students. Is it available off campus?

RS: Well, we actually have a fair readership from Greenwich Village. Residents of the area definitely pick up our paper. We get a lot of letters to the editor from
 2350 Greenwich Village folks and there's a lot of events around campus. There's a big anti-NYU community, like people who don't like NYU because they think it's ruining the neighborhood. And we cover that a fair amount. So I think that residents of Greenwich Village certainly think of our paper as a paper of record for the neighborhood. So yeah, we do have a fair amount of people who read it that are not NYU students. And again,
 2355 I don't know if that counts, but alumni read it a lot. We get a lot of alumni who read online and who get our daily e-delivery, like the newsletter online. I think this paper more than other college newspapers has a big like non-student readership. Just because we're in the city, our newsstands are out in the street. That helps.

KL: Is it possible to subscribe?

2360 RS: No. We used to have subscriptions, but it's free. And we used to mail it to people, who wanted it, but we stopped doing that because we have it online and it's the exact same content and we have an e-delivery and everything, it's too expensive. So no, we don't have subscriptions. But you can pick it up on any newsstand around the area.

KL: And how do you consider the possibilities to criticize the university, especially for
 2365 the Washington Square News?

RS: You mean like do we criticize them?

KL: Yeah.

RS: Well, again our editorials that we write every day, they are called house editorials, they are written by the editorial board. They're fairly critical of the university. I think
 2370 they are probably critical about 70 percent of the time. Not critical, but just sort of

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not 100 percent positive, offering some recommendation to the university of change. So I would say there's not a lot of people who are critical of the university. I think the university is a very well run machine to put out a positive image of themselves. And sometimes because of that the bad things they're doing get sort of lost. And I think
2375 we sort of try to find things that aren't fair to students. So that's really who we are there for: the students. So it comes off as critical to the university, but I don't think that's necessarily a bad thing. So our house editorials are sometimes critical and our news coverage is fair. We try to find things that students mean to know and sometimes that comes off as being critical to the university, because we sometimes print things
2380 that aren't flattering. Yeah, I'd say we're critical sometimes.

KL: Where do you see the limits of critical journalism for a student newspaper?

RS: The limits? Like where should we draw the line?

KL: Or where do you think you can't go any further because you're students or because of other reasons?

2385 RS: Oh I see. It's very difficult sometimes to do investigative pieces on the university because they are such a well oiled machine, like they really know their stuff. They get very close mouthed when we try to dig deeper. I mean that's true for anything. And the bureaucracy makes it really difficult to find things out. I think that a lot of our writers who are not experienced run up against an administrator who says "You can't
2390 do this." And they don't think "Yes I can" and dig deeper. They just sort of see the bureaucracy and stuff there. That's difficult, that's always a challenge. But we still do it, we still work around it. But we always are trying to be fair. We don't like dig up dirt, just like stuff that doesn't matter. We try to find stories that are critical of the university, but that serve a larger purpose for informing students of what they need to
2395 know about the university.

KL: How do you consider the double role of yourself and of the writers and editors here as students and journalists at the same time? Do you think this might entail problems?

RS: No, the only problem is that the people are not the most experienced. We always want the best content, like I said. But sometimes things aren't the best because they
2400 are learning. Are you talking about like conflict of interest?

KL: Yes, also.

RS: It doesn't come up a lot. Being a student here and being a journalist here is helpful. Because you know about the university, so you can cover the university. But yeah I mean there's not too many problems. Sometimes there's problems with students
 2405 being in clubs. Like being with the College Democrats and then covering like student activism. That's a conflict of interest. That sometimes comes up. But other than that, there's not really a problem. But do I understand your question? Do you mean like is it a problem for students being journalists at the same time?

KL: Yeah.

2410 RS: Not really. I wouldn't say so. I guess I don't understand why that would be a problem. Does that make sense?

KL: So you try to avoid for example if somebody is in a club that he reports about the exact same club.

RS: Oh, okay, I thought that's what you meant. We don't allow that. If there's a
 2415 direct conflict of interest, we don't assign stories to those people. So if someone's in the Latino Business Association and they have a fashion show, we don't let them cover the fashion show. That's actually happened. Or someone who's in mock trial. We ran a story about them winning nationals. They won. Or the debate club. They won like the national competition. And one of the guys in the team tried to write the story,
 2420 which is completely not allowed. So things like that come up. We try to avoid that by always telling writers "You can't report on something that you are directly involved in." That's just one of our policies. But it does come up sometimes. Sometimes we think we have a great story and then we realize that the writer is the president of the club that it is about or something and we have to scramble. But it's rare that that
 2425 happens.

KL: Okay, we're almost done. The next question I think you mentioned a little bit of this before by telling me that you see yourself as a teaching newspaper. The next question would be to which degree do you see the newspaper as an institution for journalism education?

2430 RS: Oh, that's a huge part of what we do. That's huge. Right now we're dealing with a ton of freshmen reporters, people who just came to NYU. And their stories are really rough. We have to edit them and help them a lot. But we love it. I mean I sit down with a writer sometimes, if they are doing a good event story. So I sit down

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and help them write it all the way through. I love those moments, that's what we're
2435 here for. Well yeah, we have to get out the paper every day and make a product and
there's certain limitations to teaching. But that's a huge part of what we do. It's
engraved in everything we do. Our layout people, who sit right over there, they train
people in InDesign to lay out the paper and to design graphs and stats boxes and all
that stuff. We sometimes avoid hiring people who already have those skills, so we can
2440 train people and get them through and make them learn something. And we hold like
training sessions. Like one of our senior editors on Sunday is holding a training session
for getting sources for stories. That's always going on, it's constant. And we try to get
our senior people to teach as much as possible. And sometimes it feels like the blind
leading the blind. You know I'm still learning, certainly. I'm a junior, but I don't know
2445 a lot, I'm still learning from my peers and from our adviser. But we try to pass out
what we know. That's huge, it's every day. Every day we teach people things. It's a
huge part of what we do.

KL: Your staff is about 100 persons?

RS: Well, it's 60. I mean, editorial people are 40, but then our contributing writers
2450 and our staff writers... if you include everyone who ever works on the paper it would
exceed 100 people for sure. But the people who are paid plus the business office is
about 60. 60 core staff. That's the final count I guess.

KL: You mentioned you're putting in 60 hours a week or more. And a writer normally,
how many hours does he have to put in?

2455 RS: Oh, not nearly as many. I mean I work much more than anyone else. Our con-
tributing editors they can write as much as they want. If they have a story, they write
the story and that's it. They don't even come in usually. Staff writers have like a
weekly staff shift. They come in like for four hours or something and then they write
one story a week as a minimum. That's like ten hours, maybe. Maximum ten hours
2460 a week. But they're only in the office for four hours a week. And then deputy news
editors come in for about 10, 15 hours a week, maybe. And then they're doing some
planning staff on the side. News editors are here more. They're here probably 20, 30
hours a week. And then some of the senior people are here like all the time. Like I'm
here 60 hours a week. Our managing editor is probably here equally as much. And
2465 then our creative director, our web guy, they're here definitely 40, 50 hours a week,
certainly. Most people only are here for short periods of time, maybe twice a week for

eight hours a week or something like that. But writers, it totally varies. They're not here very often.

KL: My last question, a short one: What's your circulation?

2470 RS: Circulation? Every day we print 7,000 papers. So that's our circulation. Actually it was 10,000 last spring. But because of the budget cuts and the economy we cut it to 7,000 and cut our Friday edition. We used to be printing daily but now we print four days a week and online on Friday. So, yeah, that's our circulation.

KL: So, we're done already. Thank you very much.

2475 RS: Okay, no problem.

9.3.8 Rossilynne Skena

KL: So, you're the editor in chief of the Collegian here. Maybe we could start by you telling me something about your job, what you like about it and what you don't like about it.

2480 RSk: Okay, sure. So I just start out with an introduction, so you just have it on your recorder. My name is Rossilynne Skena. I'm the editor in chief at the Daily Collegian at Penn State. And what the job entails is being a full time newspaper editor and also a full time student. So it's quite a time commitment. My job here at the Collegian is basically the management role. So I deal with personnel issues, I choose our staff
2485 members. So we have a list here of all of our staff for the entire fall. There is about 200 of us now. So I choose who's going to be the different editors, who's gonna be the reporters, what beats they're gonna report on. And then, after I release that list, I make sure that everything is going okay with that beat. So sometimes, you know a particular editor will be having trouble with their reporters. So we'll figure out if
2490 that reporter needs to be moved to a different beat and what kinds of things we can do to make it better. So basically my job is really personnel focused in terms of being in the office. And then I also serve as the spokeswoman for the news division. So if there is ever a time where the Collegian is in the news and I need to comment about it, that will come from me. The Collegian is run by a board of directors, which is
2495 made up of students, faculty and outside directors from the community. And I serve on that board as a representative of the 200 students of the news division. So I come

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to that meetings, they're about once a month. And I talk about things that's going on in the news division, problems we're having, what kind of things we're covering... basically any issues in the news division I bring to our Collegian board of directors.

2500 The supervisory board mostly deals with all the financial kinds of things, but it also deals with like big picture things for the newspaper. So I guess those things go to the board. And in my job as an editor I also serve as part of the Collegian's management team and that means that I work with the top editors and the top people from the business division who get all the advertisements for the paper, and the advisers, the
2505 news adviser, the business adviser, and also the general manager. So when that group gets together, we talk about all different kinds of issues, more kind of internal things. Well, the board of directors is also about internal things, but kind of bigger picture financial stuff. More day to day things go on with the management team. There are a couple of other things I'll tell you, this is quite lengthy. But I serve as the final
2510 say on everything in the news division. If there's a story going in and you know an editor might be having a problem with it and I make the decision on where we're gonna go with that story, whether we're gonna go with a certain piece of information, how we're gonna play the story in the newspaper. However, I do have a group of esteemed editors. And one of these editors is the second in command, he sits next door, he's
2515 the managing editor. And he's the one who reads all the content for the next day's newspaper. So he's in charge of that. I put the editors in those positions because I trust them for those positions. So you know it doesn't mean that I have to look over their shoulders and read every article, because I know that they're gonna be doing it correctly. So in terms of being the final say on all the news division things we produce,
2520 it also means that I have to take responsibility for all this things. So if something gets published that is incorrect, I'm the one who writes the correction. And if something is published that is god forbid libelous then I'm the one who's going to apologize for that. If people have complaints, they bring them to me. If they're upset about something, they bring it to me. And one other thing is I read the opinion's page each day and
2525 make sure that everything on the page is ready to go and serve as the final say and the final responsibility on the editorial content. So that's it in a nutshell.

KL: Okay. In your point of view, what's the major purpose or the major role of the Collegian here on campus?

RSk: Well, for us the Collegian is independent at Penn State. So that means they have
2530 no bearing over what we publish. There is no one who has prior review of articles from the university. So that's really good for us because we're able to investigate, we're able to really peel the layers off of the issues. We're also able to comment on the

university or the borough and say, you know “PennState, you really screwed up here.” Or “PennState, you did a good job.” We don’t have anyone from the administration
 2535 who is there to look over our shoulder. So that’s really good for us. Our role here on campus is informing the student body. We publish about 20,000 newspapers a day. We think that our readership is a lot more than that, because usually someone will pick up our newspaper, set it on a desk and then someone else picks it up and reads it. So we serve the 44,000 students that go here and we make sure that we’re giving
 2540 them all the news that we could find in the day with really strong information, with strong sourcing. And then also we make sure that we’re giving them a forum on the editorial page to talk about issues, where they can write in, where they can say “This is a problem. This was great.” So, we serve both of those roles.

KL: What challenges do you have to face as an editor in chief?

2545 RSk: Well, the first challenge I guess is the challenge of balancing, because I’m a full time student, but I also do this full time. So thankfully for me I figured out that organization is the best way to do that. So you can probably not tell it from my desk, because it’s messy. But usually everything is in its place and I keep my agenda updated with everything that I need to do. Usually it’ll look something like this. I basically
 2550 write everything down. I always have a list that’s going on my mousepad here. One of the challenges is time management, making sure I can do all my classes, also do my work here. But the main thing is they are sort of going hand in hand. I know I’m getting a good education at PennState and I also know I can come here doing the hands on work, actually putting out a newspaper. So that’s one of the challenges.
 2555 Another challenge is probably dealing with angry readers, when people are upset about something and when they call or come into the office and are not happy about the way we did something. I think that’s also difficult, because I hear both sides of it and then stick by our reporters, make sure we’re doing the right thing. So those are probably the two most difficult things I have to deal with.

2560 KL: And another thing that interests me is how is the connection between you and the university? How are you working together?

RSk: Sure. Like I said that we’re independent, so that means we’re totally funded by advertising. So we have a business division. They are in charge of getting the advertising to keep the paper running, just like a professional newspaper does. We
 2565 don’t get paid by the university or anything like that. The university does subscribe to the Collegian. So that means they pay us a fee for the 20,000 newspapers a day

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to give out on campus for free. So they are a subscriber of ours, but they're not you know one and the same with us at all. And basically I compare our relation to if you're a professional newspaper and you're covering a city. It's basically the same thing. The same relationship between a borough government and a professional newspaper is pretty much us with the university and also with our borough council here at State College. The university is a source of ours. The university gives us story ideas sometimes. But in terms of financially or in the business we're totally separate. They're mostly a source I guess. But on the other hand the university having 44,000 students, that's our audience.

KL: So, your're not working together with any journalism department or you don't have a faculty adviser or something?

RSk: We don't work at all with PennStates College of Communications; we're totally separate from them. We do however have an adviser and he is an adjunct professor at the university. He's sort of like a sounding board for us to talk to. He's also somebody to give us advice; you know if we're having trouble. "I'm not sure if this is the right way to put a story, can you give us help?" He'll do that. He doesn't read articles before they go in the paper. He's also really helpful for me in making this staff list and figuring out where people should go in the organization. But like I said there is no connection with the College of Communications. Our program is totally separate. Our news adviser runs a candidate class. Usually we take about 50 people in the fall. And they're people who've never been reporters here before. So our news adviser teaches them a class once a week and they're about things like ethics, libel, finding stories, writing stories, anything you need to know to be a reporter basically. And he teaches those classes for the students. While they're doing the classes, while they're in that program, they're also in the newsroom, they're also with us having their stories edited, working on the staff, finding stories. So they get both the theoretical information from our news adviser's candidate program and then they get the in-office, like real getting your hands dirty kind of work. So that's how we train our people. But like I said it's separate from the College of Communications, they don't influence us or they don't train us at all.

KL: So after this class is finished...

RSk: Oh, right. So after it's finished basically the editors choose who's gonna get into the newspaper. If someone is in our candidate program and they're not doing a good job, we can tell that they're not invested in it, we'll cut that person at that time,

before they really become a full staff member. After the end of the candidate program we decide if this is a person who is really invested, who really likes to be here, who has a lot of potential, we'll take them on as a staff member. They get to submit an application for these positions like everybody else. And then I place them on the staff.

2605 They start out as reporters or photographers or designers, depending on where their interests lie. And from then on they're staff reporters. So it's a semester long training program while they're still not on staff yet. Did that make sense?

KL: Yes. And afterwards, they don't get any credit or something for...

RSk: Oh no. We don't get any university credit. Some of our reporters do get what we

2610 call scholarships. Not everybody though, because we sadly don't have the money for that. But some of our reporters and editors do get scholarships. And that is a check that you'll get for this semesters and it basically helps you out with tuition, helps you out with your books, those kinds of things. But they're really based on merit. So if an editor is working really hard, he or she will be likely to receive a scholarship. If a

2615 reporter writes five stories a semester, they're not gonna get one. So they're really based on merit. And those are through our organization, those aren't through PennState or anything, they're through our funds, here at the Collegian. Like I said they're once a semester, but it's definitely not a paycheck by any means.

KL: Okay, so and the rest is not paid.

2620 RSk: No.

KL: Okay. You mentioned before that the university gives you story ideas for example. How does this work?

RSk: Let me show you. So PennState has a public relations website. And here the public relations officers post things that are going on in the university, like here's a

2625 good example. [...] So they found out something about this student who's a champion kayaker. They post it on their website. Sometimes we take those ideas, if they're something we're interested in. But in terms of giving us story ideas they post things on their public relations site and then we determine if we wanna make them stories in our paper or not.

2630 KL: And are there also meetings with administrators?

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RSk: Oh no. No, nothing like that.

KL: So you're mostly on yourself if you want to write about the university?

RSk: Yeah, absolutely.

KL: In your eyes how important is the Collegian to the students here on campus?

2635 RSk: Oh, I hope that it's important. And I think that it is. And I say that because we get pretty good circulation numbers. We get at least 18,000 people reading our paper every day and that's a good number of the students. And like I said that means number of newspapers taken out of the boxes. But a lot of times they're lying around in the student buildings and people are reading them. Also our website gets quite
2640 good traffic and today we have actually a big story going on. There's a student who's missing. You probably have heard about that.

KL: Yeah, I saw...

RSk: So the student's missing. So for us this is a huge story, you know, we wanna figure out what's going on here. So we wrote an update on our website. Here we're
2645 talking about how they have helicopters out to try to find the student. And students seem to read more on our website anyway, according to our traffic numbers. And this year we've been doing a lot of things with our football coverage. Like here we have a photo gallery with a number of photos from this week's football game. And here we have like a video of our sports reporter talking about the football game. So we really
2650 try to cater to what our students are interested in. We know a lot of our students are interested in football, so we do a lot of that. For this story we know a lot of students are interested in finding out what's happening with this student. So we're playing that on our website. So our role is really catering to what students wanna know. Our reporters are trying to keep out on campus and downtown so they can get the pulse of
2655 what people are thinking, of what they're saying, of what they're talking about. And then you know our goal is to make sure our students are interested in. And I think a way we've been doing it this semester is we've been having a new design on our front page. So we're using a lot of color, using big photographs, getting people interested in it. And it seems like all of our things are working. Students are still picking up
2660 the paper, still using our website, and students are writing on our editorial page. So people are writing letters to the editor, they're getting into a dialogue. So it seems to me like we're doing okay so far.

KL: Okay, that already answered my next question. What I also wanted to know is how great is the willingness of students to work here? Is it difficult to find new writers
 2665 or do they come in large numbers?

RSk: Well, we're lucky. Our candidate program is really really well known. People know if you're going to college here and if you wanna be a journalist, come to the Collegian, be a part of it. That's why I am here. I came here because I knew I wanted to be a part of this program. So we don't have trouble recruiting new people. I think
 2670 this semester we've had more than 100 people try out. So if students wanna try out, they come in, they get a quiz about current events and they also get a set of facts and they write a news story about it. So they're pretending that they're a real reporter, here's the facts, write it up. And we review this and then we determine how many students we wanna interview. So from that about 100 we now went down and we say
 2675 we're gonna interview say 75 students. So we conduct interviews with them and then we determine of those students who is strong enough in the interview, who is strong enough in the test so they can be taken onto the candidate program. So we're really lucky, we almost always have way too many students than we can accept. Which is a good problem, because it means that we're getting the best ones and it means that
 2680 people who're coming here really wanna be here. Oh and then one other thing. The one thing about that is it is a lot of work. So you know some students will try out in the candidate program, they'll be accepted and they'll think "This is really cool, I'm gonna do this." But then they realize "Maybe I don't have the time to do it." So I think that people who work here or people who work in the really busy editing jobs or in the
 2685 really high level reporting jobs are wonderful at time management because they know how to get their schoolwork done, they know how to have a social life and they know how to do their Collegian work. So we don't have trouble getting people. And honestly we don't have trouble keeping people either. I think the one thing that's difficult about keeping people is people will find out this is a really big time commitment or people
 2690 will find out "Journalism is not for me." Which is good because it's better to find that out now than before you take that job, right? So I think there is a little turbulence but we don't really have trouble retaining people or getting them to come here.

KL: And from your point of view how important is the Collegian in the region around the campus? Is it available off campus?

2695 RSk: Well, yes... I start here. So the Collegian is distributed for free on campus. So if you're a student on campus you just pick it up and get it for free. Downtown it's also available. It costs 30 cents so pretty cheap. But you can get it downtown, I'm

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trying to think of where. There's a lot of different like restaurants, coffee shops, they have copies of the paper there for students to purchase. And you know I think it's pretty important downtown too. An example of that is the mayor of State College died a couple of weeks ago. And because of that there's a vacancy in the mayor's spot. Because of that last night we got a call from the borough council president who came to us saying "I got selected, I'm going to run as the mayor for this coming election." So people downtown are interested in it too. So they know if there's someone who might be the mayor, if you wanna people to know, come to the Collegian. You know if you wanna people to know you're gonna be in this slot, come to us. Which I think is pretty notable. Now there is another newspaper, the Centre Daily Times. And this is distributed on campus for free. It also serves people in Centre County. This really goes out to a lot of subscribers off campus. More of the adults, more of a rural areas in Centre County. But we do compete with the Centre Daily Times. If you go there, they'll tell you that we don't compete. But we do. They I know are not happy when we beat them on a story. This kind of serves as a marker for us too. Like we make sure that we have all the things that are going in the newspaper. We look at it every morning and say "Did we miss something?" And if we missed something, well that's a problem, so let's get it right away. You know, like I said they're probably going to tell you that they don't, but I will tell you that a lot of times if we beat them on something, you'll see it in their paper the next day, or you see it put on their website. So I think even from their perspective we're pretty important in the community. Because they know "Well, if we don't have it on our website, maybe someone will just say I'll read the Collegian rather than the CDT."

KL: But that's not a student newspaper, is it?

RSk: No, this is professional. So we like it because we get to compete with the professionals and we especially like it when we beat the professionals at their own jobs. So yeah this is a professional newspaper. It is run probably five, ten miles east of campus. But they do cover campus news; they do cover State College news. So we cover the same areas and we also distribute to a lot of the same readers. A lot of the students pick up our paper. And a lot of our students pick up their paper. But we try our best to cater more to students than they can.

KL: But in general you're not only covering the campus, but also the region around?

RSk: Well, we cover the campus and then we cover downtown State College, which is basically College Avenue and Beaver Avenue. Anything that happens in there, we

wanna have those stories. But we also cover a little bit of the downtown area. But the CDT covers the whole county. So they're covering a lot bigger of a space than we are. So sometimes we look through their paper, let's see [RSk is looking through a newspaper], okay, here is an example. So like they have these photographs here and they have these kids who're in a boy scout troop and they have these people who are at Centre Furnace Mansion which is in State College but not close to us. So they cover more of a broader area and they also cater to, like we won't have something about boy scouts in our paper. Unless like PennState students are working with boy scouts. So our focus is anything that has students in it or anything on campus or anything right downtown. And basically our best marker of that is just the proximity. Oh here's a great example actually. Earlier this month there was a murder and it happened probably like ten, fifteen miles away from our city right now. That's a big deal, something like that happening in our county. But we didn't cover it because it's not close enough, it didn't involve students, pretty far away, you'd have to drive to get there. So we didn't cover it but they had it all over their newspaper. I guess the marker is just the proximity. If it's close to us, we're gonna cover it. If it involves students, we're gonna cover it. If it involves professors, we're probably gonna cover it. But for them it's a little broader. Does that make sense?

KL: Yeah. And do you think the Collegian is also read by non students?

RSk: I think we're mostly students. At least the print copy anyways. I know professors do read the paper and I know staff do read the paper too. But for the print version our biggest demographic area is students. However our website, we look at the web traffic information and sometimes it will say literally people all over the world, people everywhere from California to Russia are looking at the internet to see basically what's going on, so pretty much the whole globe. That's what I'm trying to say. But I think a lot of alumni read our online version because they can't get the print copy. So it seems like the majority of our print copy is probably students. Online I don't know, I'm not sure. But I would say online there's definitely a broader audience. I'm guessing alumni, I'm guessing parents, but there's no way for us to really...

KL: Ah, there just came something in my head that you mentioned before. You said the university is a subscriber to your newspaper. So they just sort of subscribe to all the 20,000 copies to distribute it.

RSk: Yes.

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2765 KL: Okay, I wasn't sure if I got it right. Okay, and you mentioned before a large part of your job is dealing with angry readers. So what is this about?

RSk: Okay, what's a good reason? So we wrote an article. There's a student group on campus and they're like a music organization. So they bring in concerts each year. And we wrote in an article that they had received funding from like a university group.
2770 We found out that we actually were wrong on that and that they hadn't received the funding yet. So a lot of times I get in my inbox things from readers and they say "Well you published this article and that's not what we said, so and so and so." So my first job is I have to protect my reporters. So you know I never would say to someone "Oh, I'm so sorry, I'll write a correction on that right away." The first thing I always do is I
2775 go to my reporter and say "What happened? What was the problem here? Was there a miscommunication?" And a lot of times I get like "Well, yeah, I screwed up, we need to fix it." On the other hand a lot of times the reporter gets out their notebook and it says that exact information and reporter got it right and the reader might be angry looking at how they sound in the paper the next day. So it's kind of a balancing act. I
2780 have to figure out whether we do need to run a correction, whether I do need to write something. If it's really really egregious then I do need to write something to clarify what happened. Or if it's something where a reader's upset for no reason. So in this case of the students group and the funding, the reporter said "I did get it wrong." And we ran a correction in today's paper actually. Another example I can think of where
2785 the photographer didn't (he did do the correct thing, but the reader complained and said he didn't. Sorry that I was unclear on this.) do the correct thing was we have a lot of students who have flu like symptoms and may have the swine flu. So the university has this cohort housing which is like these dorm rooms that they have a whole number of beds in and if you're sick you can stay there to be away from your roommate so
2790 you don't get him or her sick. A photographer went to the dorm and spoke with a girl who was in the cohort housing. And he said that she told him that she didn't wanna be in the picture but he could go ahead. She e-mailed the next day when we took a picture of the room without her in it and said "I didn't tell him that. I told him that he couldn't take the picture of my bed." But there was a miscommunication, it didn't
2795 make sense. So I went back to the photographer and said "Tell me what happened." He told me what happened and I have to trust him. He's one of my staff members. Our staff members go through a long process, through this candidate program. We make sure that they understand journalism basically before we take them on staff. So I have to trust him more than I can trust our reader at that point, when he says "No

2800 this is true.” So those are a couple examples. But thankfully I didn’t have anybody screaming at me recently, so that’s nice.

KL: Did something like this also happen with the administration?

RSk: Yeah, actually that does happen. But I think it’s more with editorials. So if we write an editorial that’s critical of the administration, they don’t like it. I’m sure
 2805 we’d prefer we wrote nice things about them every day but sometimes we disagree with what they do. And that’s a part of our job as a watchdog. I’m thinking of an example. I guess I can’t really think of an editorial example. But if we do write an article, administrators will call sometimes and say “You mischaracterized this or this isn’t really how it is.” And again it’s the same process. I look at all the information.
 2810 I get all the information from the person who’s complaining. I get all the information from the reporter. I get all the information from wherever I can find it, look at it all together and figure out did we do a bad job on this story or is someone upset because of how they sound in the newspaper. So sometimes we do get complaints from administrators. But we haven’t had too many so far. So so far so good.

2815 KL: That’s also the topic of my next question. How do you consider the possibilities of a college newspaper or of your college newspaper specifically to criticize the university, the administration?

RSk: Okay, well, we look at it again as if we’re a professional newspaper covering the borough. If we disagree with what the university does, we tell them. We write an
 2820 editorial and we say “PennState you didn’t handle the situation right. Or you need to give us more information.” Whatever the case may be that day. One example where we did that and it seemed to work. I don’t know if it was because of us or just because it happened that way. Again with the swine flu problem over the summer, we didn’t feel like they were giving us adequate information. We didn’t have enough to tell the
 2825 students. And we felt that PennState needed to be more transparent with us about what’s happening with the virus. So we wrote an editorial and we said “Here’s what we want you to do: We don’t want you to tell us every single time someone coughs. But we are saying you need to tell us how you protect yourself, how you make sure that you’re not getting other people sick if you are sick and what to do if you do get
 2830 sick.” So we ran this editorial explaining what we wanted to see and we started seeing it. Again I don’t know if it was because of us or if someone else had the same idea, but it worked. So we definitely don’t treat them any different than we would anybody else.

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KL: Something totally different: The Collegian is also put out during the summer?

2835 RSk: Yes. PennState has a fall semester and a spring semester, as usual. And then in the summer they have two summer sessions. So they're six weeks. We don't publish during the first one. We do publish during the second one. So what that means is our reporters get a six week break throughout the year and I get a six week break which is wonderful. And the rest of the summer we do publish.

2840 KL: Every day?

RSk: Daily, yes, we publish daily during the summer. During the summer there aren't as many students here, so our newspaper is a lot smaller sizewise and also the number of copies we circulate. There's just a lot fewer people here, so 20,000 copies would never get picked up in the middle of July. When it gets back to being September, the
2845 number of pages in the paper increases and the circulation goes back to the usual about 20,000. Plus our staff is back to it's regular about 200 size, rather than the smaller summer staff.

KL: So, coming back to the critical journalism subject: Where do you see the limits of critical journalism for a college newspaper?

2850 RSk: Well, I think it is different for us than it is for other college newspapers. The reason is because we are independent. So for us we don't need to be as worried. I was at a conference last week and there were a lot of newspapers that weren't independent from the universities and I think that for them it's probably a lot more of a concern. If they write something about the administration doing a poor job, whatever it is, it's
2855 a problem for them, because the university runs the newspaper. For us, there are no limits, because with anything we publish on our editorial page we try to be respectful. We try to do it in a professional manner. But in terms of the content, yeah, we publish it and if we think it's an issue, we aren't afraid to talk about it.

KL: Did you or did your writers ever have any problems while doing research because
2860 you're students here?

RSk: Thankfully the Collegian is pretty well respected in the community. So we usually don't face that. That's a tough question. I really can't think of a time when that's been too much of a difficulty. I guess one place where that happens is in the courthouse. Because our reporters are 19 years old and they are standing there with

2865 the reporters from the Centre Daily Times and the reporters from the television station
 who are probably you know 40. And they've been in the news business 20 years longer
 than our reporter has been. I guess that's one issue, but like I said I really think the
 Collegian built itself up as a reputable newspaper since the time we first published,
 it's been hundreds of years. But I think we built ourselves up with enough credibility
 2870 that that doesn't become too much of a problem. And even though, our reporters are
 18, they have a really good training from our news adviser and they have really good
 experience in the newsroom from our editors who teach them: "Yeah, you are 19 or
 18 years old, but you're still a reporter, you're still putting things in the newspaper
 for students. Don't back down." Basically. Usually they don't have that. Thank
 2875 goodness.

KL: How do you consider the double role of the editors and writers and of yourself as a
 student and as a journalist at the same time? Do you think this might entail problems?

RSk: It hasn't. The only problem it really has fostered for us is just the time com-
 mitment. But in terms of any kind of complication with the university, we haven't
 2880 had that. The university understands and I think respects that we're an independent
 newspaper. And honestly I doubt that our administrators even wanna look at articles
 before they go. They have enough work to do. But I think that we had a good respect
 between the administration and us. And they realize the value of having an indepen-
 dent newspaper, the value of knowing that when students work here, they're prepared
 2885 to go out in the real world and write a news article, because of the training they've
 had here. So we've had good luck with that. Like I said the main problem is just the
 time management, figuring out how to balance 15, 18 credits for some of us and also
 doing a pretty much full time job here.

KL: So how many hours of work do you put in here per week?

2890 RSk: So for me, I'm a workaholic, I'm probably strange in this way. But I would prefer
 to be here all the time if I could. I probably work about 40 hours a week. And then
 I have full time classes. I try to never skip a class. I only skip class when I'm sick.
 Some others in the newsroom aren't the same way, some others will say "I just wanna
 do this here and I'm skipping my class." I don't condone that. I have to tell them.
 2895 But yeah for me I do all my classes, I do my work at the Collegian. So it's 40 hours a
 week definitely here. And then with my classes it's how long it takes for me to go to
 each of them and get all the schoolwork done. And I'd say for a managing editor, he's
 second in command. We basically work the same hours. For our editors probably a bit

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fewer hours than that. And then for our reporters it depends. Some of our reporters,
2900 the ones who write crime and court stories, they're in the courthouse a lot, they are in
the newsroom a lot. They're probably full time. But we also have reporters who write
student group stories. And for them, they're not here as much at all. So it's really
part time for them.

KL: So we already arrived at my last question which I think you may have answered
2905 already a little bit: To which degree do you see your newspaper as an institution for
journalism education?

RSk: I think the Collegian is just the best example of student journalism working. You
know I definitely wouldn't sacrifice my College of Communications journalism degree.
That was wonderful training. I got wonderful professors. But you can't really do so
2910 much in the classroom. There is so much you can do there. You can hear about all
the theory, talk about all the case studies you want. But until you're actually in the
newsroom doing it, it's hard to be prepared, I think. I would be frightened going into
this market now without having any in-newsroom journalism experience every single
day. So the College of Communications is wonderful and their degree is absolutely
2915 something I will tack up on my wall and be proud of it for years. But it's this work
in the Collegian too that will definitely remain with me and it's this work that I draw
on when I'm in the newsroom ten years from now hopefully working as an editor,
thinking: "Well, I dealt with this. How did I do this in the past?" I'll know that I have
the institutional knowledge that I'm ready to make those decisions. Both tiers with
2920 PennState and with us here at the Collegian are very important. Does that answer...?

KL: Yes

RSk: Okay.

KL: Okay, that was it already. Thank you very much.

RSk: You're welcome. I hope that I helped you.

2925 9.3.9 Thomas Kaplan

KL: Okay, you are the editor in chief of the Yale Daily News here. Maybe you could just start by telling me a little bit about what's your job, what you like about it, what you don't like about it.

TK: Sure. So my job here is to supervise the managing board of the News, which is
 2930 a group of 29 editors who are responsible for the daily production of the newspaper. And I am a co-president of the Yale Daily News Publishing Company, which is the overall sort of newspaper operation. The other president is the publisher. And my job on a daily basis does not really consist too much of production tasks. So I will receive the op-ed page and the sports page, so I'm involved in the content of those
 2935 pages. But I'm not as directly involved with the production of the rest of the paper. I'm in all the meetings and I proof pages and things like that. But it's our managing editor, the number two editor who is directly sort of responsible for the management of those pages. Much of my job is sort of looking at a longer term scale at the needs of the paper, from recruiting to sort of long term planning, long term projects, those
 2940 sorts of things. A lot of administrative tasks also fall into my realm, so dealing with the administration, dealing with inquiries from the public, from media, dealing with corrections. And then of course any big ethical decision or you know tricky situations like that or just things that come across my desk. In terms of what I like, what I dislike, I mean I absolutely love the job because I love journalism and just love the fact that
 2945 every day there's a new paper, a new set of stories and a new everything. I mean it just never stops and it's just a really exciting thing in that regard. Dislikes: The hours are bad, that's for sure. I'm sure you were seeing that at all the other papers. So it creates a strange existence for a year in terms of your schedule, in terms of attention you can pay to classes and things like that. I mean we finished this paper this morning
 2950 at about 4.30. So that was a really bad night. But still that's also pleasant, we had a good night.

KL: Okay, you just mentioned one part of your job is dealing with the administration. How close are you working together?

TK: So, we're in a pretty good situation here. We're completely independent of the
 2955 university and they put a large part in sort of recognizing that independence. They do not try to meddle in any way with our coverage. So I think there is a very good level of respect from the administration for our independence and our freedom. It

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varies from office to office in terms of the accessibility of the administrators. But we've historically had a very good relationship in recent years with the office of public affairs. And our university president has sort of a unique view of college journalism, I guess, you could say. And he sort of sees it as like it is through the Yale Daily News that he is held accountable in the community. So he talks to us almost every day. And I mean I covered him the year before I became editor and that would be the sort of thing where we would just have a standing time. Like I would call him every night at 9 o'clock and talk for 5 or 10 minutes or longer if there were pressing stories. So we can get him on the cell phone at any moment. I mean I've never talked to another editor at another college paper who's had that kind of relationship with the administration. And it does create some points of concern. You have to be very careful about that. The positive working relationship doesn't become too cozy of a working relationship where you're afraid to write stories that might be critical, because of the fact that you deal so closely with these people. So that's kind of the risk that comes with sources that make themselves so accessible. But on the whole we have a very positive, I think, professional relationship with the administration.

KL: So you're not working together with any journalism department or faculty adviser?

TK: No. No, that's one thing that I think separates us from a lot of places. We do not have a journalism department at Yale and there's no involvement in our paper on behalf of faculty members.

KL: You mentioned accessibility of the administrators and your good relationship with the president. Accessibility was one thing that a lot of other editors mentioned as a problem.

TK: Yeah, it's really fascinating to me, because it's true in a lot of places if you get an interview a year with the president, like that's probably the norm. In some cases you don't even get that. Most places rely entirely on sort of the president releasing a statement on some matter. And actually it's funny because when I covered the president for a year, you have to actually be a little selected. Because the thing is: If you're talking to him every day, he'll comment on anything. So it would become that sort of thing like reporters would like call me and try to get me to ask the president about like for all sorts of different stories. And we probably don't need to ask the university president for comment about like a small change in the meal plans in the dining halls, but he'll comment on it. He'll talk about whatever we ask him. So it's a very unique approach, and a wonderful one. We really value it. And actually I think

you can see the benefit on his end, for sure. He never is blind-sided by anything. If there's any type of sensitive story we're going to ask him about. So he's always able to put... I wouldn't say his spin. But he's always able to add his two cents and say off
 2995 the record if he needs to like "You got this wrong." or "The people you talked to are saying this because they have this grudge or they're trying to do this or that or the other thing." Well, you have to take that with a grain of salt too, I think. You know there is a benefit on his end. I'm trying to think of... One really good example was: I was trying to write sort of an analysis story maybe about a year and a half ago, almost
 3000 two years ago about... Harvard announced a new financial aid policy and then Yale announced a new financial aid policy and I tried to compare the two and say which one was more generous. And based on the publicly available data it sort of appeared that Harvard was much more generous. But when I asked him about this he said "No, let me get you some other numbers and I'll explain why." What we were trying to look
 3005 on was the average amount of financial aid given to each student who gets it. And the key statistic that was not public was the fact that like a smaller percentage of our class is on financial aid. No, I'm sorry, a larger... Which direction did it go? In any way, the numbers didn't work out without this actual statistics. And if you added that in it turned out that they were pretty much even. It was the type of thing where that story
 3010 would have run in the paper, making it look as if we were worse off, whereas he was able to get us the full set of data that normally wouldn't be public and that showed that it actually wasn't as much of a disparity. So in a case like that it was an obvious benefit for him.

KL: That's very interesting. Have there never been any major problems with dealing
 3015 with the administration?

TK: I think there are always little issues every once in a while. I'm trying to think of some good examples. I mean we get pushed-back from them if they think we ran a story that's unfair, they'll complain just like any subject of a story would complain. So there's that. I think that some administrators are more accessible than others. There
 3020 are some departments that, for whatever reason, maybe it's the people in management in those departments or whatever, do not like talking to reporters and like don't want to deal with us. And every once in a while I will have to make a phone call and get the folks of the public affairs office to give them a nudge. Sort of the way things work here is if you're a reporter and you call some Yale department, they're not supposed
 3025 to talk to the press. Every Yale employee, all employees are supposed to refer to the office of public affairs. I mean not professors, but like administrators. But that policy doesn't apply to us. If we call the facilities department and ask for information about

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a building project, like they should talk to us. They shouldn't tell us "You need to contact the Yale spokesman." I mean we've had issues in the past where some of these departments just would rather not talk to us and we have to be like, well, you know "Could you please...?" But aside from that I can't think of anything major... I mean sometimes we write editorials critical of the administration and they're not happy about that. But I think they respect our right to do it.

KL: In your point of view, what's the major purpose or the major role of the Yale Daily News here on campus?

TK: Oh I mean I think we are the primary means of informing the community, for keeping the community informed. We're certainly the primary news source on campus. And I think both in terms of keeping the campus informed, facilitating some discussions on opinion pages about campus events and also serving as something like a watchdog, both in the city and on campus. One thing that's kind of unique about us is we do a lot of coverage of the city in addition to the campus, which I think is not as common or not existent at a lot of college papers. Our city desk is as big as our university news desk. So we put a lot of emphasis there.

KL: So that would also have been a question I wanted to ask later: How important do you think is the newspaper off campus? Is it available off campus?

TK: Well, it's available downtown New Haven. Distribution is pretty much limited to the campus and downtown. In terms of its readership, we write with a Yale affiliate in our minds as our reader. We don't write for the average New Haven resident. There are stories that would appeal to them for sure, but I think we definitely write to a Yale audience. Now one other thing: Our political coverage of the city is very strong. We write probably more about city politics than like the local daily does. So in political circles for instance the newspaper is pretty widely read. And I mean there's a stack of papers delivered to the mayor's office every morning and that sort of thing. So it does have some readership off campus in that regard.

KL: And what are the challenges you have to face as an editor in chief?

TK: Well, it's a long list. I think first and foremost is, you know, at the end of the day we're all volunteers. No one here is paid. This is a very busy place. And people have an awful lot of things they can get involved in on campus. And the ultimate challenge is recruiting and cultivating a staff that is enthusiastic and is happy and wants to work

3060 and wants to be here and wants to put in the long hours that a paper like this need
to come out the next day. So that's kind of the first and foremost task. I think a
large part of it is just you serve as the spokesman for the paper in the community
and the representative of the paper in the community and try to catch those ethically
3065 complicated stories or flawed stories before they appear in print and become a big
disaster. There is a good example, like I said earlier this week. Have you heard of this
whole thing with the Harvard Crimson and this advertisement they printed?

KL: No.

TK: So I guess the Crimson on Monday, I guess it was Monday, printed an advertise-
ment from a group that denies the Holocaust. And Jewish groups on campus got very
3070 upset and the Crimson apologized and said "We meant to reject the ad but it slipped
in and somehow it was printed, anyway." And that's just like a scandal that, you
know, ultimately the buck stops here in sort of preventing those sorts of things from
happening. The sort of ironic thing was the same day that happened to them I actually
caught an advertisement that I thought was objectionable and we pulled it. So that's
3075 the type of thing I have to deal with a lot. The ethical issues, the staff issues. And
I think the last challenge is like charting what the course is for the paper. So we're
doing a lot to invest in our website over the past year and into this fall and try to really
ramp up our abilities and our coverage there. I think that is a big thing.

KL: You just mentioned you are all volunteers, no one here is paid. So it's really all
3080 the students, all the editors...

TK: Yeah...

KL: They're just writing for fun, for putting it on their résumé, without getting credit,
without getting...?

TK: Well, it depends. People get involved for a lot of different reasons. So first of
3085 all we do have a couple of paid employees, like adults who work for us. We've an
office manager and a financial person and like a handyman. But students are not paid.
Although they are reimbursed for expenses and things like that. I think people do it for
a lot of different reasons. Some people do it because they want to be a journalist, that's
my case. Some people do it because it's a fun extracurricular activity. It gives you
3090 the opportunity to be a part of a big organization with a lot of people that produces a
product that you can be proud of. And I think that's something that kind of is what's

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fun about this compared to a lot of like extracurricular clubs you have in college is at the end of the day you produce a product that people are reading and talking about. We're doing a service for the community in that regard. So I think that is obviously
3095 a benefit. But I mean people come here for a lot of different reasons. Some people probably want to put it on their résumé, I think some people are attracted to sort of the history. I mean I think of like extracurricular organizations on campus, we definitely have sort of the greatest history and mystery and sort of cloud and all of that. I mean from this building we have to you know all the things, alumni who served as editors here
3100 to just sort of the unique circumstances of being such a large organization. So I mean we have a staff of 300 students and an endowment that's over a million dollars and an operating budget each year in the high six figures. It's not like most extracurricular activities and I think people are drawn to that.

KL: You just mentioned the building: Do you own this building?

3105 TK: We do. This was built for us in the 30s. And it was renovated in the late 70s or early 80s I believe. Actually it is a bigger building to some extent than we need. We have some sort of unused rooms upstairs. But this is our place.

KL: How great would you think is the willingness of students to work with the paper? Is it easy to find new writers?

3110 TK: Well, it is. The freshman class each year is about 1,200 students. Typically about 300 of them will sign up for the paper. And maybe 100 of them will actually make our staff over the course of the year. Now how many of them stick with it or commit to it to a high extent that sort of depends and that's obviously a lesser number. I think our problem is, to some extent this is a challenge we face, that a lot of positions or a good
3115 number of positions here require a very serious and strenuous commitment. And at the end of the day it's great to have hundreds of people involved and we need hundreds of people involved. But at the end of the day if you don't have that core of a dozen writers who are willing to write every day or every other day, you're going to have problems. And you're not going to have people who gain the experience they need to assume
3120 top positions at the paper. This was kind of a problem in my class year, that we had a fairly small group of writers and not many folks who were really really committed writers. And as a result we didn't have many candidates for management this year. Usually we operate with an editor in chief and two managing editors. We've operated the past year with only one managing editor, which has put a lot of constraints on the

3125 whole operation. Recruitment tends to be fairly easy. Retention and developing staff is the harder part.

KL: Do you get feedback or information for articles from the students? Do they come back to you?

TK: Yeah, when someone writes for our paper we actually edit with them. So you sit
3130 next to the editor and you edit the story together. So that's how the feedback process is built in. And we try to keep an eye on things and get an idea. Morale is always sort of something you try to monitor. I think in a setting where you don't get paid, you work long hours, it can get exhausting, you really do have to pay attention to moral. We do a lot of things from parties to there's free food every night and stuff like that,
3135 just to try to keep people happy and willing to come to work here. Because no matter how much you love journalism, if you don't want to be here, if you don't enjoy being here you're not going to stick with it. That's a big challenge.

KL: A question I still have to ask: How do you finance your newspaper? You just said you're financially independent from the university, so it's...?

3140 TK: Yeah, the bulk of our revenue comes from print advertising. We get some revenue from subscriptions off campus. It's free on campus. We get a small amount revenue from advertising on our website. We also have a few subsidiary publications. We have a magazine and we also publish a college guide. I actually can give you one if you want.

KL: Oh, great, thank you.

3145 TK: I can get you the 2010 one if you want the newest one. But anyway we publish a college guide every year, so we get some royalties from book sales. But the vast majority of revenue comes from our print advertising sales and that pays the bills. I mean we are profitable. I think this fiscal year will be more challenging given the advertising downturn or the economic downturn that leads to a drop in advertising.
3150 But we did post a profit in fiscal 2009 and a healthy one and not many newspapers can say that. And also we have our endowment to draw from for capital projects. You know if this building needs a new roof, that money doesn't need to come from our operating budget, we have our endowment to pay for things like that.

KL: So, the other editors I talked to were telling me a lot of financial problems they
3155 are having. So it doesn't seem to be that bad here?

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TK: No, not really. I don't deal as much with the business staff, because the publisher has his own staff and they take care of that sort of thing. But for what I've heard from them and from conversations with other college papers, I mean they've heard of prominent college papers that have seen advertising decline like 40 or 50 percent. And
3160 we have not been hit that hard. We have been hit a little bit. But it's not catastrophic by any means.

KL: You mentioned there's a risk coming with the close relationship to the administrators. So my next question would be how do you consider the possibility of your college paper to criticize, to do critical journalism concerning the administration?

3165 TK: Well, we're happy to rip into them when we need to and when we see fit. I think we do it pretty regularly in our editorials and we don't really hold back. I mean one difference is maybe... I feel college newspapers often in editorializing are sometimes taking very I don't want to say juvenile but sometimes a fairly oppositional tone. It's a very like overly critical tone in terms of like, "The administration is the enemy and
3170 we are like the protector of the students." And one thing you do get from working with the administration and knowing all these people is: You know they're not out to get us. I feel like a lot of college papers or some at least write editorials with kind of a tone of like "We need to stick it to the man, and the administration isn't in it for us, they don't look out for students." We don't see it as a confrontational relationship.
3175 We disagree sometimes with things the university does and we'll say that. But I feel like there is a mutual respect and we are not going to editorialize saying they don't care about Yale students, because they do. And editorials written with that kind of tone I think are sometimes counterproductive.

KL: You mentioned the watchdog role of your paper before. What does this role look
3180 like for you? How do you consider this role?

TK: I mean I think we're really the only ones writing about Yale to any regular extent. So in that regard a lot of big decisions come from the administrators here. A lot of money changes hands. I mean this is not just a university but sort of a massive corporation with more than 10,000 employees. And in that regard we're the only ones
3185 watching and bringing things to light if they need to be brought to light. So I think that's our role. And it's a wide range of stories both on campus and in the city. And it ranges from a story I did a year ago, looking at health inspections at dining halls and showing that like some dining halls were... Looking at the dining halls and how they did at health inspections is something that students wouldn't know because they're not

3190 going to look up the public records. But it's interesting to know my dining hall's the dirtiest one on campus. So it's stuff like that, sort of a wide range of things. But we are really the only ones who are in a position to do that and to hold decision makers accountable for their decisions.

KL: Where do you see the limits for critical journalism or watchdog journalism for a
3195 college paper, or for the Yale Daily News especially?

TK: See the limits? Well, I think we're limited by the fact that folks here are limited in their experience. Investigative journalism is incredibly difficult and a college paper just naturally is not as well versed in the techniques required to do such reporting. So I think that's sort of a natural limit. As is the fact that things move quickly. I mean
3200 you only serve as an editor for a year. You only serve as a beat reporter for a year. And I think that limits you a little bit, it takes a while to build relationships that you can use to retain information that can help sort of investigative pieces. That's the limit I think.

KL: So have the writers here ever had any problems because they're students they
3205 don't get information?

TK: No, because it's a private university, I mean the university can pretty much do what it wants. They don't need to give us anything. And they actually they do. If we want a certain document, if we want budgetary figures, they usually hand it over. Which is a credit to them recognizing that they should be held accountable. But this
3210 is not a state university. So realistically they're accountable to the board of trustees and that's it. They're not accountable to the tax payers. I mean they are for the tax payer money they get for research, but not otherwise. So that's kind of a limit. I mean other areas... I think the average reporter probably is not as well versed in freedom of information laws as the average reporter at a professional newspaper. And again it's
3215 the time issue. Requests can take long to process that by the time you actually get your stuff you might have graduated. So that kind of defeats the purpose a little bit.

KL: I think you might have mentioned some of this before: How do you consider the double-role of the writers here as students and journalists?

TK: Yeah, it can be difficult. We try to limit sort of exposure... We try to limit
3220 students from sort of exposing themselves both as students and journalists in the same context. So for instance we wouldn't assign a reporter to write a profile of their faculty

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adviser. Or of a professor who they're taking a class with, who's going to give them a grade. Because this is the think where you might say "No, I'm going to be objective." Self-consciously, you can't be I think to some regard. So we look out for situations like
3225 that. But at the same time it's an awfully big university. So you know we don't run into that problem very often.

[interruption]

KL: We're almost done.

TK: No no, take your time.

3230 KL: To which degree do you see the Yale Daily News as an institution for journalism education?

TK: I think that's a great question and is a great focus of ours here. We sort of say the Yale Daily News is the best writing class you can take at Yale. And it is I think. That's a huge part of what we do: teaching new writers, new reporters the ropes. And
3235 it's a big part of the editor in chief's job, doing like workshops for the reporters. So that's part of what I do. And I mean the way we look at things is like we say you can come in as a freshman having never written a news story and we'll teach you and that's what we're going to do.

KL: How many hours do you put in per week approximately?

3240 TK: I would say an average production night goes from 6 PM to probably 2 AM. But I mean you're constantly on call. I get hundreds of e-mails a day. And you're always on e-mail, doing that. So I think if I break it down it's probably an 80 hour a week job, maybe. My best guess. But it's that type of thing, if my blackberry is on, my chances are I'll be doing some sort of work at any given time. So you're never off the clock in
3245 a job like this. Some editors are in their jobs that don't sort of require a 24 hour sort of commitment. But especially with the internet, if something happens in the middle of the night. I get a call, I'll be woken up. That's how it goes.

KL: And for a writer, can he decide how many hours he wants to put in or how does this work here?

3250 TK: It's entirely dependent on them what commitment they want to make. So we have
sort of benchmarks. If you want to be a staff reporter, make the staff, you need to
write ten stories. If you want to be a beat reporter and have your own beat as I did
when I covered the President, you have to commit to writing x number of stories. For
my beat it was three stories a week. But it's flexible. If folks want to do less than that,
3255 then that's their choice. We sort of tailor assignments to their schedule.

KL: And I think you might have mentioned this before, there are about 300 people on
your staff?

TK: That's the rough number we sort of compute. It's difficult because of the fact the
commitment varies so much. So that could include someone who will write an article
3260 once a month and also someone who writes an article every day. So when you include
reporters, photographers, production people, copy editors, multimedia people, editors,
you go down the list, it works out probably about to 300 or so.

KL: What's the circulation of the Yale Daily News?

TK: We are 7,500.

3265 KL: And my last question: At the very beginning you mentioned that you are the one
person on top of the Yale Daily News Publishing Company. And the other one is the
publisher. Who is this?

TK: His name is Jason Chen, he's a fellow undergraduate. I oversee the managing
board, he oversees the business board, which is a smaller group. It's like maybe eight
3270 or ten people and they have some staff. Basically their job is selling advertising, sort of
managing our budgeting. So one part of my job is sort of interacting with our business
side in terms of reporting expenditures. So if we want to send someone on the road
to go to New York, to go somewhere to do reporting, it's always sort of a discussion
with them over what we can afford to do. And then the publication itself is sort of
3275 led by an executive committee. And that consists of three editors on the managing
board and three folks from the business board. So it's me, the managing editor and
the executive editor and then the publisher, the director of finance and the director
of business development. And the six of us sort of serve as the governing unit for the
paper. And we report to the board of directors of the Oldest College Daily Foundation,
3280 which is our parent. And that has its own board of directors. And Jason Chen, the
publisher, and I serve as directors of the foundation as well.

KL: Okay, so that was it already. Thank you very much for answering my questions.

TK: Thanks for coming.

9.3.10 Anonymous editor

3285 KL: Okay, you are the editor in chief of the [college newspaper] here.

AA: Well, I'm managing editor.

KL: Managing editor. Maybe we just start by talking about what's your job exactly, what you like about it, what you don't like about it.

AA: Yeah. The job is basically to oversee the coverage of campus news and [...]. And
3290 I really enjoy of the vast pace aspects of it. It's a lot of fun. When we're doing a good job, it's really a service to the community. And I like that sort of service aspect.

KL: Okay, in your point of view, what's the major purpose or the major role of the [college newspaper] here on campus?

AA: To provide information about what's going on on campus both to people who are
3295 on campus, to our administrators and to hold our administrators to account for what's going on in one of the world's most well known universities.

KL: What are the challenges you have to face in your job?

AA: I don't think that they are different in any other campus newspaper or really any newspaper in general. It's sort of the same set of challenges. You have got to make
3300 sure that everything is accurate and you do your best to do that. I mean, I guess the major challenge is to make sure everything is accurate and to do the best you can to do that.

KL: The other editors I talked to were telling me a lot about financial problems they were having lately. Is it the same here or is the [college daily newspaper] a little bit...

3305 AA: I don't really want to discuss financial things.

KL: Okay. I also wanted to know how is the connection between you and [the university]?

AA: We're fully independent. We're financially independent.

KL: So you're not working together with any journalism department?

3310 AA: No.

KL: And you don't have a faculty adviser?

AA: No.

KL: Okay. So you don't have to run any story by the university?

AA: No.

3315 KL: That's interesting. So you also don't get feedback or something?

AA: If we write something they don't like, they will generally let us know. But the only people we serve are the readers. So if it's correct, we stand by it.

KL: In your eyes how important is your newspaper to the students here on campus?

3320 AA: I think we can always do a better job in terms of accessing our community. But I think we serve an important role. But we can always do better in sort of providing particularly students with the news and information that is most pertinent to them.

KL: Do you get feedback from the students or information for articles, proposals for articles?

3325 AA: Yeah, I mean with any newspaper and its readers it's the same. I think we are assisted to some extent by the fact that we're students as well. So I mean I'm friends with a lot of students who aren't on the paper. You get stories that way. [...]

KL: That would be another question I wanted to ask later: How do you consider the double role of the editors, the writers here as students and journalists? Do you think this might entail problems sometimes?

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3330 AA: No, I think no journalist identifies purely as journalist. We're also identified as citizens of the city we live in, citizen of the country we live in. So that's always something that can cause [...] or something like that. It's one of the things where you have got to see that we're students and we are students and we do our best to write objectively and I think we do a very good job at it.

3335 KL: And is it difficult to find writers to work for the [college daily newspaper]?

AA: No. We're one of the largest student organizations on campus, so...

KL: I think you mentioned some of this before: How important is the newspaper in the region around the campus? Is it available off campus?

3340 AA: Everything is available online. And it's available in the areas around campus. I don't think the print edition is particularly available too far from campus. But online we get a fair number of readers from outside [the city].

KL: So as an independent how do you consider the possibilities to criticize for example the university, the administration?

3345 AA: I think we report objectively and we try to report the truth. It's not a matter of taking a [...], it's a matter of reporting the reality.

KL: So you never had any major problems?

AA: Well, sometimes the truth is not something that's favorable to the people we're covering. So they may not like that. And we're certainly not immune to errors. And if we make errors sometimes, I think it's our duty to correct them as quickly as possible.

3350 KL: In your opinion where are the problems your students or your writers could face while doing their work?

AA: Sorry, what do you mean?

KL: For example while doing research, have there ever been problems because they are students here?

3355 AA: I mean in general the university understands that we are student journalists and during my time here there has not really been a problem with this. There hasn't been

a problem where a student [...]. So it hasn't been an issue for us during my time. I can't really speak about what happened before I was on campus.

KL: Okay. To which degree do you see the [college daily newspaper] especially as an
3360 institution for journalism education?

AA: It's definitely one of our primary responsibilities to teach people the craft of journalism. That's obviously something that we have that professional newspapers don't have as such a primary goal. We do side-by-side editing, where an editor sits down with the writer and goes through, changes things, and explains why. And that's
3365 not something that happens at professional newspapers or at least not the ones that I've observed. And that makes a difference in terms of teaching people how to do good writing and how to report.

KL: That's already my last question. Oh no, there's one more. How many hours of work do you put in per week approximately?

3370 AA: 60 to 70.

KL: And a writer?

AA: It varies a lot. It's hard to even give an hour figure. You can choose your time commitment. You can write a couple of articles a semester, you can write a couple of articles a week. And that's a wide range. I wouldn't want to put an hour figure on
3375 that. But it is sort of up to you to say.

KL: Okay, so that's my last question: How many people are on your staff and what's your circulation?

AA: I don't have those figures. I can look them up and get back to you.

KL: Okay. So we're done already. Thank you so much.

9.4 Category scheme and codebook

Formal categories

- Newspaper
 - 1 Anonymous College Newspaper (Anonymous College)
 - 2 Massachusetts Daily Collegian (University of Massachusetts Amherst)
 - 3 The Daily Campus (University of Connecticut)
 - 4 The Daily Collegian (Pennsylvania State University)
 - 5 The Daily Pennsylvanian (University of Pennsylvania)
 - 6 The Daily Princetonian (Princeton University)
 - 7 The Columbia Spectator (Columbia University)
 - 8 The Tufts Daily (Tufts University)
 - 9 Washington Square News (New York University)
 - 10 Yale Daily News (Yale University)
- Date ddmmyy
- Type of text
 - 1 report

A report is a longer genre of text within a newspaper. It is the most common form of article; it is mostly neutral and presents a broad perspective of an event. Commonly it is illustrated with one or several pictures.
 - 2 short report

A short report is a very short text within a newspaper that only presents a brief outline of an event - without pictures and mostly neutral.

9 Appendices

- 3 comment

A comment is an opinion-based form of article that aims to express a certain opinion or feeling about an event or a person. According to the standards of journalism it has to be signed with the author's name.

- 4 reportage

A reportage is a kind of text that represents the author's perception of a certain event. It is very subjective and expresses the author's feelings and what happened to him during this event. Mostly reportages are used for special kinds of events such as demonstrations, concerts, meetings, etc. An everyday-event won't normally be subject of a reportage.

- 5 apostil

An apostil is a very strong, opinion-based kind of text that strongly reflects the author's opinion in an ironic, sometimes even cynic, but always very critical kind of way.

- 6 editorial

An editorial is always signed as one and is mostly written by the editor in chief of a newspaper. It is placed normally on the front pages of the newspaper - in a very prominent place. It's an opinion-centered kind of text and reflects the opinion of the editor in chief (and so of the whole newspaper).

- 7 caricature

A caricature is not a form of text, but of image. It shows one or several persons or an event in an ironic, humorous kind of way. Sometimes it accompanies another form of article, but it also can stand for itself.

- 8 review

A review is an opinion-centered form of text about a certain event (for example a piece of theater, a film or a concert).

- 9 column

A column is a regular text written by the same person and published weekly, bi-weekly or monthly. Mostly it is labeled as a column.

- 10 letter to the editor

A letter to the editor is a text written by somebody who does not belong to the editorial staff of the newspaper and which generally refers to an article published in a previous issue, expresses an opinion, thoughts or suggestions.

- 11 image with short text

This category describes itself: It is an image (a photo, drawing etc.) with a short text. The text is often only one or two sentences long and therefore cannot be considered as an article.

- 12 other

The category “other” is used to represent texts that are not represented by one of the above mentioned categories.

Content-related categories

- Subject

- Main subject

Main subject is the subject the text is mostly about. It is generally mentioned in the headline or at least at the very beginning of the text.

- * University

- 1 University administration

This means the administration of a university, for example the board of lecturers, the headmasters, deans and other personnel of the administration.

- 2 Faculty

The category “faculty” means all people belonging to the lecturing staff of a university, for example professors, assistants, but also teaching assistants and tutors.

- 3 University sports

“University sports” means everything related to sportive activities, teams and events at a university. This can be matches, competitions,

but also single persons who are presented primarily not as students, but as athletes.

- 4 Students and student life

This is a very broad category that means all articles that primarily treat students – this can be the whole student body of a university, the student body of a certain year or at least a larger group of students at the university in question. “Students” can also mean the student body and groups of students at other universities.

- 5 Student organizations and groups

This category means organizations and student groups founded and lead by students at a university. This can be Greek organizations but also acting or music groups as well as the student newspaper itself.

- 6 Education policy

“Education policy” is not directly related to the university in question but targets a larger field – the policy concerning education and scientific research within the United States or the state in question.

- 7 Organization

The term “organization” means the administrative organization of a university, which includes course offers, student parking, grading time, libraries etc.

- 8 Study conditions

This category targets the conditions under which students can conduct their studies at a certain university. This can mean the number of people in a class, the number of professors at a university or for a specific field of study, other personnel matters etc.

- 9 Financial matters, tuition fees, scholarships, grants

This category means all finance-related matters, such as tuition fees and their financing by the students, scholarships and grants by the university and other institutions and all other financial matters concerning university and education.

- 10 Housing situation (on and off campus)

The category “housing situation” means the housing policy on campus, the accommodation of students in student houses, dorms and other facilities provided by the university itself, but also off-campus housing for students.

- 11 Admission procedure

This means the procedure every prospective student has to undergo to be admitted by the university. This category targets the admission interview as well as the procedure before (writing essays, meeting the admission requirements, recommendations etc.)

- 12 Equipment of the university

This category means the (mostly technical) equipment of the university. This can also mean labs, rooms, libraries, offices, lecture halls, dining facilities, recreational facilities, parking facilities etc.

- 13 Exigences and proficiency level of courses, quality of courses

This targets the level students have to reach to be able to complete a course. This level can be adequate, but also too high or too low for the students. It means the amount of work a student has to complete to finish the course.

- 14 Events

“Events” can be cultural (concerts, readings etc.), but also other events (parties, demonstrations etc.)

- 15 Parents, families, neighbors, environment

This category treats the general environment of a university and of college-students. This can be families but also the neighborhood, companies around the campus etc.

- 16 International affairs

This category covers international relations and international affairs of a university. This can be relations to foreign colleges as well as students from abroad, studying possibilities abroad or exchange programs.

- 17 Science and research

“Science and research” means all articles that treat scientific work at the university, but also on other universities or general research topics.

- 18 Jobs, life after college

This category covers student jobs, jobs for graduated students and the life after graduation in general.

- 19 Miscellaneous

This means all subjects that are university-related, but not represented by one of the above mentioned categories.

- * Other subject (not university-related)

- Minor subject

This category means a subject, that is treated in the article but is not the main subject (see above) of the text.

- * University

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This means the administration of a university, for example the board of lecturers, the headmasters, deans and other personnel of the administration.

- 2 Faculty

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other facilities provided by the university itself, but also off-campus housing for students.

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at the university, but also on other universities or general research topics.

- 18 Jobs, life after college

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- 19 Miscellaneous

This means all subjects that are university-related, but not represented by one of the above mentioned categories.

- * Other subject (not university-related)

- * No minor subject

This category should be chosen if there is no minor subject to be found in an article.

- With image?

- * yes

“Yes” is chosen if the article contains an image. This can be a photo, but also an illustration like a graph, a table or a drawing. Photos of editors and logos of columns or series do not count as image.

- * no

“No” is chosen if there is no image.

- Critical or obsequious journalism

- * critical

Critical means “to find fault or to judge with severity” (Dictionary Reference, 2008). Within this thesis, a text is encoded as critical if it “finds fault or judges with severity”. It is not important what or who is judged, as the purpose of this thesis is to find out whether college newspapers are watchdog or lapdogs not in which areas or topics they act in a critical way. Example 1 “Targeting low-income families is not the right move for the university.” (N.A., 2009, March 8). Example 2 “For concerned students, the proper strategy in such a debate is not to

trust the 'appropriate authorities' to properly weigh interests against values through their own beneficent intelligence. If students don't subscribe to a decision, the proper response is to shout our values from the rooftops. Indeed, facing a college administration that came of academic age in the sixties and seventies, little else but 'radicalism' would suffice to convince such college functionaries that an opinion is indeed deeply held. It may ultimately be that some limited quantity of layoffs is a necessary evil in this economic storm, but at the richest university in the world, the 'radical' and irresponsible thing would be to not make a stink about it." (Kronblith, 2009) Example 3

* obsequious

Obsequious journalism is a form of uncritical reporting that means a not-reflected kind of news coverage with overemphasis on the positive aspects of a subject, a person or an institution. Examples for this kind of court-reporting articles could be: "New York City has everything to offer—historic sports stadiums, Broadway shows, and everything an 18-year-old kid could ever want. Columbia is the only Ivy League school that offers such an incredible landscape." (Puro, 2009, p. 9) A clearer example might be the following: "Given the darkening gloom of international recession, has Penn done enough to justify its staggering base cost of roughly \$ 50,000 a year? Luckily for Penn students, particularly those who rely on the lifeline of financial aid, the answer continues to be yes. [...] As a columnist, I try to approach University policy with a careful eye toward criticism and improvement. That said, it's difficult to find fault in Penn's current actions. Our University has approached the issue of need-based accessibility in close sync with its much more heavily endowed peers. [...] It's impressive that Penn has managed to avoid any larger cost increases despite relying on tuition for a much larger portion of its operating budget. Our university has tackled the worsening economic storm with a keen emphasis on efficiency; belts have tightened, but the net impact on vital undergraduate services has thankfully remained minimal." (Brooking, 2009, March 18)

* neither

This category is chosen if an article can neither be considered as critical, nor as uncritical. This could be the case for very straight fact-based articles without reflecting the opinion of the editor or of third persons.

9.5 Zusammenfassung

Diese Diplomarbeit behandelt amerikanische College-Zeitungen und deren Status und Funktionen für die Campus-Gemeinde. Das Forschungsinteresse beinhaltet neben den Funktionen auch die Verbindung zur jeweiligen Universität, ebenso wie das Selbstverständnis von College-Zeitungen bzw. deren ChefredakteurInnen. Dafür werden der Begriff der Unabhängigkeit und die Kritik- und Kontrollfunktion dieser Medien genauer untersucht. In diesem Zusammenhang ist auch das Konzept des journalistischen “Watchdogs” von Bedeutung. Abschließend sollen die Probleme dieser Medien in Bezug auf die Verbindung zur Universität und in Bezug auf kritische Berichterstattung allgemein erhoben werden, sowie der Status von College-Zeitungen als Ausbildungsstätten für JournalistInnen und als regionale Medien.

Die Untersuchung wurde vor dem theoretischen Hintergrund von Luhmanns Theorie sozialer Systeme sowie der Funktionen der Massenmedien durchgeführt. Weitere wichtige Konzepte waren jenes des journalistischen Watchdogs nach Lance W. Bennett und William Serrin, sowie Ansätze aus der internen Unternehmenskommunikation.

Weiters wurde der historische und rechtliche Hintergrund von US-amerikanischen College-Zeitungen erarbeitet. Dies beinhaltet einen kurzen Überblick über Gesetze im Zusammenhang mit Presse- und Recherchefreiheit sowie die wichtigsten Präzedenzfälle. Außerdem wurde die Geschichte amerikanischer College-Medien sowie die Geschichte der JournalistInnenausbildung in zwei Kapiteln näher betrachtet.

Methodisch wurde ein Methodenmix aus einer quantitativen Inhaltsanalyse und zehn qualitativen ExpertInneninterviews mit ChefredakteurInnen von College-Zeitungen durchgeführt. Die Stichprobe beinhaltete zehn Tageszeitungen an öffentlichen und privaten Universitäten und Colleges in fünf Staaten im Nordosten in den USA.

Die Inhaltsanalyse ergab Daten über das Themenspektrum von College-Zeitungen sowie über den Stellenwert von kritischen Artikeln im Vergleich zur sogenannten “Hofberichterstattung”. Die ExpertInneninterviews behandelten Fragen zur Unabhängigkeit der Zeitungen, deren Status und Selbstbild sowie zu den Problemen, mit denen die studentischen ChefredakteurInnen in ihrem Arbeitsalltag konfrontiert werden, beispielsweise betreffend der Doppelrolle als StudierendeR und JournalistIn. Weiters wurde der Stellenwert der betreffenden Medien als Institutionen für JournalistInnenausbildung sowie als regionale Zeitungen erfragt.

Die Studie brachte als Ergebnis, dass, obwohl nicht alle Zeitungen finanziell und inhaltlich unabhängig von ihrer Universität waren, alle ChefredakteurInnen angaben, nach der höchstmöglichen Unabhängigkeit zu streben. KeineR der Befragten gab an, sich von der Universität kontrolliert oder unter Druck gesetzt zu fühlen. Obwohl nicht alle Zeitungen eine gute Beziehung zur jeweiligen Universität haben, besonders was kritische Themen betrifft, gaben die ChefredakteurInnen an, dass kritische Berichterstattung generell möglich sei. Darüber hinaus wurde festgestellt, dass College-Zeitungen die gleichen Funktionen erfüllen wie professionelle Tageszeitungen. Die einzigen Unterschiede waren das unterschiedliche Themenspektrum (mit einem Schwerpunkt auf Sportberichterstattung, welcher auf die spezielle Zielgruppe zurückzuführen war), sowie der große Stellenwert der Ausbildungsfunktion. College-JournalistInnen verbringen einen Großteil ihrer Arbeitszeit mit der Ausbildung junger ReporterInnen, da sie Ausbildung als eine der wichtigsten Funktionen betrachten. Darüber hinaus erfüllen College-Medien auch die Funktionen interner Unternehmenskommunikation, selbst wenn sie nicht von der Universitätsleitung abhängig sind.

Die Inhaltsanalyse ergab, dass nur ein sehr geringer Prozentsatz (3.6 %) der Artikel in der Stichprobe als "Hofberichterstattung" identifiziert werden konnte, wohingegen etwa ein Fünftel aller Artikel als kritisch codiert wurde. Alle Chefredakteurinnen gaben an, es als ihre Verantwortung zu sehen, kritisch zu berichten, die Universität und ihre Handlungen zu kontrollieren und im besten Interesse der Studierenden zu handeln. Es gebe kein anderes Medium, das sich den Interessen dieser Gemeinschaft annahme und sich für Ereignisse an Universitäten und Colleges in diesem Ausmaß interessiere, weshalb auch die Watchdog-Rolle sehr ernst genommen wird. Gleichzeitig gaben die ExpertInnen an, dass es manchmal schwer sei, kritisch zu berichten, weil man sich der Hochschule eng verbunden fühle und loyal sein müsse. Weitere Hindernisse für kritische Berichterstattung seien laut den ExpertInnen die Unerfahrenheit und Unsicherheit der ReporterInnen, sowie mangelnde Kooperation von Seiten der Universität. An manchen Universitäten sind MitarbeiterInnen dazu angehalten, nicht mit Studierenden-Reportern zu sprechen und sie an die PR-Abteilung zu verweisen. Im Großen und Ganzen allerdings strebten alle ExpertInnen danach, die Watchdog-Funktion ihrer Zeitung bestmöglich zu erfüllen, obwohl dies je nach College unterschiedlich einfach sein dürfte.

Abschließend sei zu sagen, dass College-Zeitungen weder als Watchdog noch als "Lapdog", als Schoßhund der Universität bezeichnet werden können. Viele beschränken sich dadurch selbst, loyal zu ihrer Hochschule sein zu wollen. Jedoch war das Ergebnis deutlich anders, die Zeitungen deutlich kritischer als es nach der Ausarbeitung der Geschichte und der rechtlichen Situation zu erwarten war.

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- Bakkalaureatsstudium der Publizistik- und
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- Diplomstudium der Romanistik – Französisch
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in Boston und New York 08/2009 – 09/2009
- Auslandsaufenthalt im Rahmen des ERASMUS-Programms
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- Studentische Mitarbeiterin der Austrian National
Election Study (AUTNES) seit 12/2009
- Institut für Publizistik- und Kommunikationswissenschaft
Fachtutorin für STEP 1 und STEP 6 seit 03/2009
- Reisenet.com – Mamma Media Internet GmbH & Co KG
Redakteurin 10/2007 – 09/2009