CHAPTER 1: JOURNALISM AS CARTOGRAPHY

> The worlds we inhabit are largely cultural rather than natural
> and as such are subject to a wide variety of cartographies.
> (King 1996, 41)

There are many ways to think about journalists and the role their work plays in contemporary society. They have been said to form the fourth estate of government, serving democracy by representing citizens as watchdogs over our political power-brokers. They have been called historians on the run, documenting and assessing the people, events, thoughts, and institutions of our time. They have been described as gate-keepers, sifting through the constellation of possible newsworthy stories occurring each day and providing us with a digest of what is considered most relevant, interesting, and important. They have been described as meaning-makers, defining rather than simply describing the news events and newsmakers they cover. More critically, they have been described as the manufacturers of consent, indoctrinating their audience members into the belief system of society's most powerful people and institutions.

Each of these perspectives has merit, but this book takes another tack. It considers journalism as a spatial practice and posits journalists as cartographers, as map-makers, as symbolic workers who forge geographies of news. Through every aspect of their work, that is, journalists describe and define their community – whatever form that community may take – and situate that community within the larger world. Through words, images and sounds, journalists sketch out the boundaries of community, define its core values, record the debates over shifting values, identify the key components of its political, economic and cultural infrastructure, describe its constituents, position community with respect to neighbouring communities, highlight other constituencies with which this community has important political, economic, historical, and cultural ties, and relegate to the margins great swaths of the rest of the world. This map-making produces centres and margins, places and peoples within our purview and, of course, other places and peoples beyond our imagination, or beyond our caring. These inclusions and exclusions occur on a number of scales, both within and beyond the immediate community – not everything, not everyone, makes it on the news map.

The maps I am talking about are mental maps, cartographies of the imagination, cobbled together from the myriad stories and images news audiences are exposed to over time, from whatever news sources they rely upon. These stories and images are depictions – that is, representations – of people, places, events, and institutions, presented on local, regional, national, and/or global scale. They situate the news events and newsmakers they describe and position listeners, readers, and viewers with respect to those events. Such maps can also be thought of as word maps, textual cartographies (see Krotz 2018; Tally 2014) or "langscapes" (see McGregor

1985), imaginings of peoples and places produced through the combination of journalism's stories and images. Mental maps, geographers Peter GOULD and Rodney WHITE (1986) explain, are formed from "[t]he perception that people have of places, and the mental images that are formed from filtered information flows" (30). These maps, they maintain, can influence personal decisions (e.g., about where to live or where to travel), they can shape public policy decisions (e.g., about foreign aid allotments or regional economic development), they can guide military strategy (e.g., evaluating threats or where and how to intervene in a conflict), and they can affect economic decisions (e.g., investment decisions or locating industrial activity) (137–147).

Figure 1.1 Mental Maps (Jessica Andel 2020)
News coverage provides information about who we are and where we are, as well as situating us
with respect to other peoples and places.

Communication theorist John HARTLEY has described journalism as "the most important textual system in the world" (2008, 312) given its daily assertion of objective truths, its production of audiences as publics, and its symbiotic relationship with society's central political, economic, and social institutions. Journalism does more than merely describe or report on current events; it is a constructive practice, a constitutive practice, contributing to the formation of communities, publics, and audiences. These aggregations do not simply precede the media through which they

are represented, but media, in fact, play an important role in their constitution and in their validation. Psychologist and communication scholar Jaap VAN GINNEKEN refers to this as "the creation of the world in the news" (1998, 19). Sociologist Herbert GANS argues that journalists "help impose unity on what is otherwise a congeries of individuals and groups acting inside a set of geographical and political boundaries" (2004, 298).

The news media play a significant role in constituting notions of community, establishing boundaries, membership criteria and values, situating their audiences within society at large. Communication scholar James CAREY perceives journalism as "worldmaking" and his theory of communication is rooted in the idea that "a medium implies and constitutes a world" (cited in ROSEN 1997, 196). He writes: "We first produce the world by symbolic work and then take up residence in the world we have produced" (CAREY 1989, 30). The news, thus, has a "positioning effect" on readers. Moving beyond the "transmission view of communication," CAREY proposes a "ritual view of communication" in which communication is "directed not toward the extension of messages in space but toward the maintenance of society in time; not the act of imparting information but the representation of shared beliefs" (15–18). Journalism, as a particular form of communication, is ritualistic in its repeated assertions of a common culture, a shared history, and prevailing social values to an imagined target audience. Following CAREY, journalism scholars Robert GUTSCHE and Kristy HESS (2018) argue:

> News media have always performed an important role in legitimating social, cultural, and religious rituals and milestones, such as the appearance of birth, death, and marriage columns … or determining who in a given social context will be remembered for their contribution to civic and social life in the "news" pages under obituaries – paid or otherwise (490).

In a similar vein, but with an emphasis on the language of news texts, linguistics scholar Roger FOWLER (2007, 4) writes: "News is a representation of the world in language; because language is a semiotic code, it imposes a structure of values, social and economic in origin, on whatever is represented; and so inevitably news, like every discourse, constructively patterns that of which it speaks." Discourse, explains geographer Derek GREGORY (1994, 11), refers to "all the ways in which we communicate with one another, to that vast network of signs, symbols, and practices through which we make our world(s) meaningful to ourselves and to others."

This is all to say that the world, and the communities that constitute that world, are constructed for us, in part through mediated forms of communication. The focus for political scientist and historian Benedict ANDERSON (1989) is the mediation of nation. He describes 18th-century newspapers and novels as agents of nation-building and nationalism at a time when these concepts were relatively new, defining the nation as "an imagined political community" (15). He depicts the novel and the newspaper as new forms of imagining, which produced in people a sense of "nation-ness." If novels created a "sociological landscape" through the depiction of simultaneous events tying together a population of imagined characters (35–36), newspapers presented stories whose sharing of the news cycle – their "calendrical coincidence" – and whose juxtaposition on the newspaper page created connections among them (37–38).

Hartley (1992, 1996), too, maintains that publics are created by institutions and discourses, arguing that "the media are simultaneously creative and participatory. They create a picture of the public, but it goes live, as it were, only when people participate in its creation, not least by turning themselves into the audience" (1992, 4). Audiences, thereby, are "discursive productions" (1996, 67). The news, Hartley argues, is organized around strategies of inclusion and exclusion from *our* community, creating domains of Wedom and Theydom, based not only on citizenship, but on gender, race, class, ethnicity, etc. (1992, 207).

This book, then, adopts the position that journalists are much more than detached bystanders, but are instead actively engaged in depicting and interpreting the subjects of their stories. The emphasis here is on the resultant cartographies produced by news coverage. In the words of Gutsche and Hess (2019), journalists are "much more than conduits of information. They are the place-makers of the digital age" (109).

Changes in communication technology can, of course, play a role in how we imagine the world and our place in it. If in earlier times such changes allowed people to imagine life beyond their own physical circulation, (see Anderson 1989; Marvin 1988; Kern 2000), Carey recognized very early that the Internet "should be understood as the first instance of a global communication system," displacing a national system that came into existence in the late 19th century with the development of, initially, telegraphy and railroad transportation, and later national magazines, newspapers, radio, and television (Carey 1998, 28). In recent decades, we have witnessed the emergence of what he terms a "new media ecology," which "transforms the structural relations among older media such [as] print and broadcast and integrates them to a new center around the defining technologies of computer and satellite" (34). Carey insists that this new media ecology requires a cultural dimension to complement its global infrastructure, by which he means an imagining and an articulation of community and its various interactions on a global scale, enabled, but not automatically produced, by communications or transportation technologies alone. In other words, produced discursively.

This production of the world, this place-making, is governed in part, of course, by the business plans and marketing strategies of news organizations working within available distribution networks. News organizations, that is, target specific markets, markets with geographic and/or demographic parameters, and they develop a news package that they expect will appeal to the people constituting that market. That news package will present a particular rendering of the world, produced specifically for its imagined audience. A local community newspaper, for example, whose market is a village of a few thousand people living in close proximity, will produce and situate its readers in a very different world than a national TV newscast, whose market consists of millions of people scattered across a large territory. The community newspaper's world comprises very local institutions and events, and its stories are populated by people with whom readers may have regular direct contact. The national TV newscast operates on an entirely different scale; its reports concern regional, national, and international affairs, and its newsmakers are far more remote from the viewers.

The digitalization of the news media, of course, has disrupted conventional business models in a number of ways, including the destabilization of advertising and audience markets. Significant advertising dollars have migrated away from legacy news organizations to social media sites like Google and Facebook, and to specialized online classified advertising services like Craigslist and Kijiji (see Jackson 2018; Wechsler 2019). At the same time, audience access to news has increased exponentially (see News Media Canada 2019); even though the legacy news organizations were quick to move online, they entered a mediaspace where they found themselves competing for audience attention with every other news provider world-wide, many of whom were granting free access to their sites, thus threatening legacy organizations' subscription bases (see Heinrich 2011). Compounding these issues is the circulation of news and commentary about public affairs by individuals, groups, social media sites, non-governmental organizations, political parties, even mischievous governments, further fragmenting advertising and audience markets (see Gutsche and Hess 2019, 90–93; Hess and Gutsche 2018, 492; Fard and Meshkani 2015, 5–7; Dahlgren 2013; Anderson 2013). The struggle to forge viable advertising and audience markets, and thereby monetize news production, is ongoing.

But the "worldmaking" Carey describes is also governed discursively, and that is the principal concern here. Despite the disruptions noted above, digitalization has not rendered geography completely irrelevant. If there are centrifugal forces at play, such as easy access to international news media and social media sites drawing our attention farther afield, there remain centripetal forces focusing our attention more locally. News stories are typically localized in the sense that news media seek to address specific and relatively proximate audiences. If the most common instance of this is the adoption of a local angle to a story, news coverage can also be seen as exclusive to familiar audiences in its use of acronyms, in its use of colloquial language, by assuming background or contextual information is unnecessary to its audience, etc. Further, given that commercial news organizations need to monetize their content, they can extend their geographical reach only as far as they can extend their geographical audience and advertising markets (see Gasher 2003). As Gutsche and Hess (2019) note:

> While information published via an online platform may now be accessible from "anywhere" and "anytime," most news zones generated by traditional mainstream news providers do tend to overlay or align with political boundaries (boroughs and municipalities) and with natural ones (rivers and oceans) (54–55).

Many news organizations, for example, continue to carry a place name (95), and there is some evidence that geographic markets remain resilient (see Gutsche and Hess 2018; Althaus et al. 2009; Mersey 2009; Gasher and Klein 2008).

News is defined, after all, by the pertinence of stories to an implied or imagined audience, and news judgment is the very subjective exercise of selecting, from a galaxy of potential news topics, which of them warrant coverage, how much coverage and, most importantly for our purposes, what kind of coverage: how these news items are defined and presented as important and relevant to that idealized audience. What we think of as the news is a compilation of information-rich stories

that its producers assert is what should matter most to 'us' at any given time. In addressing a particular 'us,' then, the news plays a constitutive role in defining, depicting, and demarcating that 'us,' that community, and in plotting the community's place in the world.

I use the word community here because it has no single or precise meaning, because it is an elastic term that can signify not only a physical locale of varied and imprecise dimensions, but can refer as well to peoples whose association is not necessarily territorially based, such as the black community, the LGBTQ community or the arts community, as well as communities brought together by shared interest, such as business, sports, international affairs or technology (see Williams 1989, 75–76). These are the various kinds of communities that media serve, and help construct, assuming some kind of bond that brings its audience members together and, at the same time, reinforcing that bond through their coverage.

This book seeks to convince the reader of two things. First, that journalists can be seen as practising a unique form of cartography, that they provide for us each day a particular rendering of the world, that they situate us within that world, that news texts, individually and cumulatively, are closely analogous to maps and can be read as such. News stories, that is, and the actors and institutions populating those stories, are placed, they are situated and connected, and the actions the stories describe occupy a particular setting. Those actions may be confined to a specific, finite locale, or they could occur over a larger scale, linking several discrete populations and places. Like maps, news stories provide a depiction of people, places, and the events that connect them.

Second, the book argues that the ways in which journalists draw their maps matter very much, given the importance of our interconnections in an increasingly globalized or cosmopolitan world, and given that our experience of that world is highly mediated and largely experienced second-hand. The sociologist John B. Thompson describes this as our "mediated worldliness" (1995, 34). News organizations, of course, are not the only communications media engaged in mapping and defining communities; they are part of a larger mediascape and a larger discursive field engaged in this same process. We learn about people and places as well through books (fiction and non-fiction), movies (features and documentaries), TV and radio programs of every kind, advertisements, music, as well as through Web sites, blogs, podcasts, and social media (see Mains *et al.* 2015; Adams 2009; Couldry and McCarthy 2004b; Gasher 2002a). But the factuality of news stories, and the urgency and consequence inherent to their definition as news, grant these media forms a particularly significant role in describing the world.

My hope is that this book will encourage the general reader to think carefully about the particular depictions of the world – and our own immediate communities – with which journalists provide us, how those depictions shape our imagining of the world and our place in it, and therefore affect the ways in which we think and act. I hope that this book will encourage journalists to reflect upon the cartographic aspects of their important work and consider the implications for the people and places they depict, to ponder the differences they draw between the material world and the news world their stories construct. Finally, I hope researchers in the fields

of journalism studies, media studies, communication, cultural geography, and sociology take up the ideas presented here and push this inquiry further, and in new directions.

My interest in the geography of news coincides with my interest in journalism. My first newspaper job was as a part-time "district correspondent" for the Cobourg *Star* in south-central Ontario in the early 1970s. I was a high school student living in Hastings, then a village of 900 people which was very much a rural satellite of the city of Peterborough, 40 kilometres to the north-west. A number of Hastings residents commuted to Peterborough to work for General Electric or Outboard Marine, many would do their major shopping there, the Peterborough *Examiner* and CHEX-TV were our main daily news sources, and Peterborough was where teenagers like me went to buy records and see movies on weekends. For us, it was the big city, the planet around which our tiny satellite orbited.

Hastings did not then have its own newspaper, and received no regular news coverage by any paper, radio or television station, including those in Peterborough. Local news was exchanged orally – at the post office, the grocery store, the legion, the arena, the hotel beer parlour, and at the coffee counters of a couple of local restaurants. The managing editor of the twice-weekly Cobourg newspaper saw an opportunity to expand the *Star*'s reach to include Hastings as part of its coverage of the whole of Northumberland County. This made sense in terms of political geography; Cobourg, a town of 10,000 people located 45 kilometres to the south-west of Hastings, was the county seat, squeezed between Highway 401 and Lake Ontario at the county's southern extreme. Hastings was tucked into the north-east corner of the county, and was part of the same federal and provincial ridings as Cobourg.

My job was to provide the *Star* with regular news reports on all subjects from Hastings, which, in theory, would attract Hastings readers to the newspaper and would, over time, encourage in Hastings a closer identification with Northumberland County and draw its people into Cobourg's orbit. My job, quite clearly, was to help re-map, expand, and reconfigure the news geography of the Cobourg *Star* and, by extension, reorient somewhat the geographical imaginations of the people of Hastings. *The Star* dutifully carried a page of Hastings news twice a week, began delivering the paper to a couple of local convenience stores, and gradually drew more and more attention from community leaders in Hastings – newsmakers who belonged to municipal council, the chamber of commerce, service organizations – and, of course, readers who had never before seen themselves or their community in the news.[1]

A few years later, while working as the sports editor of a community weekly called the Delta *Optimist* in Delta, British Columbia, my job was to *confine* the

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1   This re-mapping continues to the present day. In 2009, the corporate ownership group Sun Media merged the *Cobourg Daily Star*, *Port Hope Evening Guide*, and *Colborne Chronicle* into a single daily called *Northumberland Today*. Postmedia acquired the Sun Media newspapers in 2015, and in November, 2017, as part of an exchange of 37 community newspapers between the Postmedia and Torstar newspaper companies, *Northumberland Today* was closed (see KRASHINSKY ROBERTSON 2017). The principal local news source in the region today is the weekly *Northumberland News*, published by the Metroland Durham Region Media Group (www.northumberlandnews.com).

news geography of the paper. Delta is a municipality due south of Vancouver which consists of three distinct communities: Ladner, Tsawwassen, and North Delta. The three communities form an isosceles triangle with Ladner and Tsawwassen at its western base, and North Delta much further to the east and separated by Burns Bog. Even though the *Optimist*'s masthead claimed the paper served all three communities, its subscription and advertising base was in Ladner and Tsawwassen, and most of its news coverage was concentrated on those two communities. North Delta wasn't completely ignored, because it was a constituent part of Delta as a political unit, but it was only marginally newsworthy to the *Optimist*, given its business strategy.

For me, this meant focusing on the teams and athletes from Ladner and Tsawwassen – the local angle – and restricting North Delta to occasional and passing reference. Maintaining this boundary was complicated for both me and the paper's readers, mostly because the publisher refused to admit there was a boundary; while he wouldn't court North Delta readers and advertisers, he didn't want to antagonize them either. Adding to the confusion was his inconsistency; an exceptional performance by a team or an athlete from North Delta would prompt him, and therefore the paper, to embrace those athletes as 'ours,' even if only temporarily. The 'community' served by this community newspaper was given a very particular rendering each week in the pages of the newspaper.

A few years later again, I worked as a sports reporter for *The Columbian*, a small daily covering what the newspaper called "Columbian Country," meaning the eastern suburbs of Vancouver in the Lower Fraser Valley of British Columbia: Burnaby, Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, Port Moody, New Westminster, Surrey, White Rock, and Delta. That was the circulation area, that was the advertising market, and that, therefore, was the focus of coverage for *The Columbian*'s reporters and editors; the newspaper's reportage rarely ventured beyond the boundaries of "Columbian Country." In this case, the newspaper forged a region out of several distinct municipalities which shared a comparable geographical relationship to the Vancouver metropole.

When I left journalism and moved to Montreal in the 1990s, I adopted a very different perspective; I was now part of the news audience to which the district of Villeray, the city of Montreal, and the province of Quebec were described and defined in the news each day. New to the city, the news coverage offered me instruction about who Montrealers were, how they spent their time, what they believed in, what they cared about, and where they fit within Quebec, within Canada, and within the larger world, depictions with which I could compare my own experiences of living and working in the city.

Given the prominence of the identity question, and the distinct depictions of Montreal, Quebec, and Canada offered by the city's four daily newspapers, their role in the formation of my ideas about how the news media participate in the construction of place became apparent. The daily news coverage could be read as an assertion about who 'we' are and where is 'here,' an assertion that was highly contested, often contradictory and certainly complex; the Montreal depicted by the English-language *Gazette* was not the same as that depicted by the French-language

Journal de Montréal, and *La Presse*'s Montreal was different than that of *Le Devoir* (as will be addressed in Chapter 4). If, during the region's deadly ice storm of 1998, the news coverage brought the city and the province together in the face of an indiscriminate natural disaster, the reportage of the 1995 Quebec sovereignty referendum portrayed clear social divides (see SKLAR 1999).

What I mean, then, by the geography of news is the representational space that news organizations construct and in which they situate their community and its people, the vantage point from which they produce their reportage – what GUTSCHE and HESS (2019) call their "news zones," the specific geographic areas in which news organizations focus their coverage.

> The generation of zones is often an initial stage of the journalistic place-making process, and as the zones are almost always socio-spatial, journalists in these zones are dependent on factors such as scale/range, resources, proximity, and distance (54).

This place-making occurs as the resultant news coverage depicts, describes, defines, and positions the news zone, becoming its vantage point, the starting point for its "worldmaking." All news organizations mold their own geographies, identifying the area they intend to serve; most commonly this means a small town, a metropolitan city, a region or a country, even if the boundaries of the news zone are permeable and imprecise and don't align strictly with political boundaries. Other media forms, such as magazines, television programs, and Web sites, often serve markets based on specific interests (e.g., business, sports, travel, the arts) and/or seek an international audience.

Whether or not the boundaries of this coverage area were simple to draw and maintain in some bygone age when communities were more clearly delineated, separated from one another, and largely self-contained, such mapping is a far more complicated prospect in the mobile and inter-connected world of today. Political boundaries do not neatly coincide with economic or cultural boundaries, or even the boundaries of physical geography, and the constituent members of any one political community have ties to any number of other communities constituted by social, economic, cultural, religious, racial, and/or ethnic dimensions. The digitalization of the news media, in turn, means people have access to reportage from news sources the world over. What matters, what is relevant to people – what is, in other words, *newsworthy* – is not confined to their immediate territorial community. This means that news maps are constructed through business plans, marketing campaigns, the editorial judgments of editors and reporters, and, ultimately, the expressed interests of news consumers. In all cases, news stories speak from a perspective of place – of some form – and audiences are situated both within a community and in relation to other communities.[2]

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2   Even special-interest magazines, produced for bird-watchers or runners or gardeners or musicians, reveal place biases through their coverage – the geographical areas they focus on, assumptions about who and where their readers are located, colloquialisms, etc. – and the advertisements they carry. For example, I subscribe to *Bicycling* magazine. The vast majority of its articles pertain to people and places in the United States and most of its advertisers are based in the U.S.

Like all news organizations, the newspapers I worked for had very deliberate, and distinct, strategies for drawing their news maps. This book looks at precisely how those maps are drawn by journalists in the coverage choices made and the language choices deployed, and what this means for how we see our community, our world, and our place in it.

News is presented as a series of stories, and as with all stories, news stories have a setting in a specific time and place, a clearly-identified cast of characters, and a narrative trajectory which pulls these ingredients together. As *news* stories, though, their factuality lends them a certain authority and they have a necessary requirement to make audiences care – i.e., this is important, this is interesting or funny, you should know about this. By extension, the people, places and events that don't make it into the news are, by definition, rendered unimportant, uninteresting, irrelevant, not worth the notice of our community.

All communities, of course, have both external and internal boundary markers of some kind. Journalists do not provide blanket coverage of their community, because not everything that happens within that community could be considered news. Instead they cover certain aspects of that community, what they deem to be the most newsworthy people (political and business leaders, first responders, athletes, artists), places (city hall, courts, schools, businesses, clubs, commercial districts), and events (meetings, press conferences, shows, demonstrations) within that community. Even though journalists like to think that they simply mirror or reflect back their community to news audiences, they in fact, and necessarily, exercise news judgment to highlight those aspects determined to be of most interest and most import to audiences; in other words, their coverage provides a framing of their community, depicting what they consider to be news, ignoring what they deem to be not news. Such frames, media geographer Paul C. Adams (2018) insists, are "intepretations that lead to evaluations" (528). Over time, consistent patterns in journalists' depictions of their community and its relationship to the surrounding world come to give definition to community, to give this place and its people a particular identity, a particular outlook, a particular setting, a particular sense of place. The question to be considered here is how that highlighting works, how journalists pick and choose what is newsworthy, what patterns of inclusion and exclusion their editorial decisions produce, and, most importantly, how this matters.

The boundaries of any news organization's coverage area are shaped by a number of factors, but in ways particular to the community being served and particular to the goals – editorial and economic – of the news organization. It is here that I want to make a distinction between news geographies and markets. While both audience and advertising markets are key factors in shaping coverage areas, the economics of news production and distribution do not explain everything. For one thing, while all news organizations must participate in the economy – i.e., they have expenses and must generate revenues – not all news organizations are commercial, profit-maximizing enterprises. Canada's largest news organization is CBC/Radio-Canada, a crown corporation with a national, public-service mandate. Canada also has news organizations structured as cooperatives (e.g., *The Dominion*, *Vancouver Co-op Radio*), and others funded by non-profit foundations (e.g., *The Walrus*,

rabble.ca). In 2018, Power Corp. converted *La Presse*, one of Canada's largest French-language newspapers, into an independent, non-profit publication. CHEK-TV in Victoria is an independent, employee-owned station. Even the category of commercial news organization is heterogeneous, containing news media that negotiate the tension between commercial enterprise and public service in very different ways (see GASHER et al. 2020, Chapter 9).

Secondly, news coverage extends beyond the immediate territory of the advertising and readership market, including reports about the peoples and places in the world deemed of interest to the audience. Audiences are not interested solely in what occurs within their own communities, but in current events elsewhere as well. How journalists determine the news value of such peoples and places cannot be reduced to a simple commercial formula, but speaks as well to journalists' image of themselves as information-providers representing – and thus interpreting – the needs and interests of the publics they seek to serve.

Understanding how news geographies are constituted is important to understanding the news media as economic structures, but more to the point, it is crucial to understanding how news organizations serve society. Even the most profit-oriented news organization fulfills a sociopolitical function through its production and distribution of the information package we call news, particularly in democratic societies. That is, all news organizations inform us, tell us things about the world we live in and the people we live with, responding not simply to factual questions of who, what, when, and where, but also to interpretive questions of why and how. News organizations don't simply deal in the facts, but deal as well in opinion, analysis, explanation and criticism, sometimes explicit, sometimes more subtle, helping us not only to see our world, but to define it, give it meaning, explain it, understand it. They help us imagine and constitute community, comprehend notions of us and them, right and wrong, good and bad, here and there.

This study of the geography of news is prompted by three contemporary factors which further complicate any news organization's occupation of a defined social space. The first of these is globalization, understood here not simply as an economic phenomenon, but in the fuller sense of the intensified global circulation of people, goods and services, ideas, investment capital, symbols, weather patterns, environmental degradation, and disease that characterizes our epoch. We may dwell in specific places, but the lives we live are more globally inter-connected than in any previous historical period. Globalization has thus dramatically broadened our horizons, expanded the boundaries of our lives and diversified the communities within which we live. Sociologist Ulrich BECK (2008), in fact, argues that the reality of globalization means we need to move beyond our "national outlook" and adopt a "cosmopolitan vision," replacing "the either/or logic with the both/and logic of inclusive differentiation" (4–5).

With that, it can be argued that our news interests, too, have become more extroverted; what matters to us, what is relevant to us, is not confined to our immediate locale. The boundaries of our working and social worlds have expanded, governing where and how we work and who we work for, where we come from, where we travel, who our neighbours are, where our friends and family are, where we shop, what