Chapter Seven

Coping with the agoraphobic media professional: a typology of journalistic practices reinforcing democracy and participation

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Introduction

This chapter offers a prescriptive typology of journalistic practices reinforcing democracy and participation [1] that wants to provide the broadest answer possible to the following question: how can mainstream media, active within non-fiction, stimulate active citizenship and work in a democracy-supporting way? The starting point for this question, (and thus for this chapter), validates active citizenship and a well-developed democracy, from a formal-democratic point of view as well as from a perspective that focuses on democratic practices and cultures; from a (narrow) approach of the political system, as well as from a (broad) perspective of the political as a dimension that entails the social. Moreover, this starting point brackets (at least initially) the specific democratic developments of specific states, as it is contented that in all European states (albeit in sometimes very different ways) the media system's democratic role still need to grow and to be expanded.

After a quick and superficial reading, it appears to be quite easy to generate a number of singular answers to this question. However, its basic concepts, citizenship, and democracy cannot be easily defined in a singular way, since they encapsulate very different – sometimes even contradictory – meanings. The media's role in this myriad of meanings and significations, thus, also becomes problematic to be univocally described, and we now need to find a way to deal with the lack of a homogenous theory regarding the role of the media, the media professional [2] and the citizen within democracy.

The main explanation for this significatory complexity and dispersed answers to this simple question can be found in the theoretical and ideological positions that structure the models that claim to answer the question. They are all based on specific worldviews that have different ways of dealing with Western basic values such as freedom, equality, and justice. However, this does not imply that all models carry an equal weight and their impact on the social is evenly balanced. Some of these models have indeed managed to conquer a dominant position in the theories and practices related to the media and democracy. At the

same time, Sayyid and Zac's (1998: 262) words need to be kept in mind: 'Hegemony is always possible but can never be total'. Their words remind us that there are attempts – alternative media models and journalistic reform projects – that try to break with these hegemonic articulations of the media/democracy relationship.

Given the diversity and richness of these models, the traditional approach to simply list and compare them can quickly be abandoned. In stead, both the dominant and the alternative models are re-analyzed and scrutinized in relation to the democratic and participatory tools they have to offer. This also implies that the general truth claims, ethical values, or practical relevance of the separate theoretical frameworks is not under discussion; their ideological load is (temporarily) bracketed. The premise of this article is that the democratic and participatory practices that are promoted by these different models are complementary (and sometimes overlapping) and can be grouped into one overarching typology. The models that theorize – all in their own way – the media/democracy relationship will be used as building block for this typology.

Normative theory, journalistic reform, and democracy

It is no coincidence that in the Western media studies literature the theories on the (democratic) role of the media within society can be found under the denominator of 'normative theories'. The often quoted American starting point here is the book *Four Theories of the Press* written by Siebert, Peterson, and Schramm (1956), based on the work of the Hutchins commission (1947) that even today contains quite a few positions that remain surprisingly contemporary. In this book, the authors describe four theories regarding the (written) press, of which two models [3] are especially relevant in this context: the liberal (or libertarian) model and the model of social responsibility.

The liberal model focuses strongly on information, but this media function is complemented by their role as a watchdog in order to control the authorities and by the need to create an independent forum for debate, a so-called market place of ideas. In the social responsibility model, these functions are further completed by stressing the importance of correct representations of social groups [4] and of providing a 'truthful, comprehensive and intelligent account' of 'the day's events in a context which gives them meaning' (Hutchins, 1947 quoted by Siebert *et al*., 1956: 87). As the *Four Theories of the Press* was considered to be too reductive [5], McQuail (1994) added two more models: the development model and the participatory–democratic model [6]. Both models focus on the participatory role of the mass media. They support the right to communicate, defining communication as a two-way process, based on dialogue and interaction. This is combined with an emphasis on the democratization of communication, facilitating non-professionals' access and participation in the content as well as in the content-producing media organizations.

Five basic components that provide the foundations for the media/democracy relationship can be deduced from these normative theories [7]. These five basic functions are:

- The informative function
- The control function
- The representative function
- The forum function
- The participatory function.

Inspired by the research of Drijvers and his colleagues (2002) and driven by the need to avoid a too functionalist approach, this list of five media functions is reworked in four clusters that will structure the typology. First, the strictly informative cluster groups the informative and control function, as both functions focus on the production of information, be it critical or not. Second, as the difference between the representation of communities and subgroups on the one hand and the representation of the political on the other is vital in this context, the representative function is divided into two clusters, one regarding the representation of the social, focussing on a community and its subgroups. A second cluster deals with the representation of the political. Both clusters contain elements of the forum function. These forums create spaces for self-representation (as individuals, but inevitably also as members of societal subgroups) and contain a diversity of discourses (cluster 2). As the forum function also relates (indirectly) to creating 'market places of ideas' and/or 'public spheres', this function is also related to the representation of the political as such (cluster 3). But the strongest link is between the forum function and the participatory function, as these forums are (at least) aimed at enhancing audience participation. Given the importance of media access, interaction, and participation, these aspects are grouped in the fourth participatory cluster (cluster 4).

Despite the importance of these normative theories, media functions, and the resulting clusters, more input for this typology is required as the normative models (for obvious reasons) remain rather generalist in their approach. This additional input can be found in a number of journalistic reform projects [8] that all offer specific toolkits for media reform. These models will play a supportive role in this text, although they will be – whenever necessary – slightly adapted for usage in a European context.

A first group of reform projects is development and emancipatory journalism, peace journalism, and public or civil/c journalism. Crucial to these projects is their resistance against a too absolute interpretation of the principle of neutrality. In the tradition of development and emancipatory journalism – which should mainly be situated in developing countries – it is explicitly stated that neutrality

does not apply when universalized [9] values such as peace, democracy, human rights, equality (gender and racial), progress (social), and national liberation, are at stake. Peace journalism puts the emphasis on avoiding conflict-oriented journalism and on the importance of structural and solution-oriented approaches, building on the universalized value of peace. And quite similarly vice versa the two previous reform projects, the US-based public journalism tradition pleads for reviving the public debate and for centralizing democracy as a universalized value. At the same time, advocates of public journalism plead for a tighter link between community and journalism – the so-called 'community connectedness' (Rosen, 1994: 371). This connectedness runs counter to the detachment that is said to be contained in the concept of impartiality. Their critique on impartiality and the 'detachment from the community' that lies behind it does not imply that any other form of objectivity should be rejected. In the words of Merritt (1995: 116), journalists still have to keep their 'neutrality on specifics'. Media have to respect the social pluralism and promote it in order to establish and preserve the democratic achievements. The area of tension between involvement and neutrality, and the new interpretation that the concept of neutrality consequently receives, is captured by Manca (1989: 170–171) and his concept of 'pluralist objectivity'.

A second group of journalistic reform projects combines new journalism and human-interest journalism. These traditions plead for the centralizing of subjectivity (instead of objectivity). Especially in new journalism – developed in the United States during the 1960s – the undermining of the principle of objectivity is an explicit goal. This also applies to the subjectivity of the journalist, who now participates in the events: '[the new journalists] developed the habit of staying with the people they were writing about for days at a time, weeks in same cases' (Wolfe, 1973: 38). The literary techniques used in new journalism are in many cases functional towards the outlining of the personality (or put otherwise: the exposing of the identity) of the 'characters' that appear in the pieces. Human-interest journalism will, in part, build on new journalism by putting the accent on soft news and on authenticity, and by resisting the neutrality, impersonality, and factuality of 'traditional' journalism. The additional emphasis on the 'personal lives, joys, tragedies, and varied activities of other people, particularly those in high places or in familiar settings' (Graber, 1994: 212) will also lead to a shift towards the private sphere, a process that Van Zoonen (1997) describes as intimization [10]. Third, the narrative aspects of the news are also stressed in the tradition of human interest (news)*: Schudson (1978) refers in this regard to 'story journalism'. The emphasis on narration turns the media professional more into a storyteller than an 'authorized truthteller' (McNair, 1998: 65). Though widely used, human-interest journalism still remains distinct from (and contested by) 'traditional' journalism, as for instance Meijer (2001: 193) puts it: 'the conventional view

[highlights] rationality, conflict, and content rather than emotionality, dialogue and impact'.

Four clusters of the typology

As mentioned before, the structure of this typology of democratic and participatory journalistic practices is based on the discussion on normative theory, which resulted in four clusters: a strictly informative cluster, a cluster on the representation of the social as a community with her constitutive subgroups, a cluster regarding the representation of the political, and a participatory cluster. Within each cluster, different dimensions are defined. When elaborating these specific dimensions, inspiration was mainly found in the practices promoted by the different journalistic reform projects. Although the structure of this typology, with its four clusters and twelve dimensions, is partially inspired by the analysis of a journalists' survey (Drijvers *et al*., 2002), it of course remains only one of many possible forms of systematizing this complex reality.

Cluster 1: Information and control

The democratic importance of information is emphasized in most theoretical models. The liberal model touches the heart of this argumentation, affirming that independent media – by putting information at people's disposition – enable citizens to formally and informally control the state (or in other words, the political system). The media's watchdog function follows naturally from this line of argument: any dysfunction of the state (and by extension: of the market) should be tracked down and brought to public attention by the media. Offering critical information is, therefore, considered an important democratic media task.

One should however keep in mind that information is not a neutral concept. On a first level the, problems of the selection and distribution of information and the related processes of societal surveillance has been part of academic scrutiny for decades. Only the question of whose information will be offered illustrates the difficulties hidden behind the notion of information. Furthermore, it is epistemologically impossible to map out the exact boundaries between 'factual' information and the representations information contains. Factuality builds on representational regimes that are unavoidable in their presence, varied in their nature, and at the same time targeted by hegemonic projects. A specific problem here is that these informational flows sometimes provide us with representations that we can only describe as stereotypical. A classic example is that of the information given on the African continent, which is strongly associated with conflict and underdevelopment (and with 'hunger' in particular; see Boschman *et al*., 1996).

Despite the importance of these nuances, the distinction between information and representation remains crucial for analytical purposes, as some of the potentially democracy enhancing practices are well embedded

within this strictly informative cluster. In this first cluster, five dimensions are included, which all (potentially) enable citizens (individually or collectively) to participate (more and better) in a democratic society. Within all five dimensions, the truthfulness of the information is considered a necessary condition. These aspects are:

Dimension 1: comprehensible and accessible information
Dimension 2: information oriented on social (inter)action
Dimension 3: positive information
Dimension 4: structural information
Dimension 5: critical information (the control and watchdog function)

The first dimension formulates the necessary condition for all democratic communication, namely its comprehensibility and accessibility, in order to prevent mechanisms of exclusion. The three following dimensions are (each in their own way) related to the empowerment of the audience. Information oriented on social (inter)action (dimension 2) makes it possible to – as affirmed by Alex Puissant (2000: 28) in his comments on the instruments of Public journalism – 'systematically inform people about all the occasions they are given to participate in discussions and civil activities [considered relevant]'. This kind of information also pays attention to initiatives from within civil society, aimed at complementing the information on the political system.

Positive information (dimension 3) also contains such an action-oriented component by for instance giving 'large and small examples of people who had made some difference' (Merritt, 1995: 89). The underlying reason is that an overload of negative information risks creating paralyzing effects. Consequently, such an overload would not motivate or stimulate citizens' active engagement. Structural information (dimension 4) allows audiences to contextualize news events and to see them as part of long-term evolutions and social phenomena. Although structural information is often seen in contrast to personalized information, an underestimation of the socio-political value of private and/or individual experiences should be avoided. This structural information dimension is related to the fifth dimension, which focuses on critical information, which – as has been said before – reveals dysfunctions within the functioning of the state and the market.

These five dimensions of the strictly informative cluster find themselves in a complex field of tension towards each other. The dimensions (and the entire typology) should, therefore, be seen as a scale. The plea for more comprehensible information, for instance, is not a retreat into simplicities and is not aimed at (completely) undermining the expert's status. In the same way, the plea for more communication that stimulates social (inter)action should not be interpreted as a legitimization for narrowing down (or dumbing-down) the information on the

political system. Finally, the plea for an increase in positive news should not be used as an excuse to (further) cut down on more critical journalism. This typology of journalistic practices aimed at reinforcing democracy and participation structurally incorporates the permanent need for balancing the more traditional practices with some of the alternatives introduced here.

Cluster 2: The representation of the social: community/ies and constituting social subgroups

The concept of representation has also obtained a prominent place in different normative models, emphasizing the need to avoid misrepresentations and stereotyping. Building on this need for fair – sometimes also called 'correct' – representations of more traditional social groups like immigrants and women [11], a broader approach is introduced here. This broadened approach considers the audience as a conglomerate of all kinds of subgroups, small- and large-scale communities, criss-crossed by differences related to class, ethnicity and gender. This diversity also includes (representations of) 'ordinary people' [12], seen here as active citizens capable of participating in the public debate. 'Ordinary people' are often shown and given the floor in order to access their authentic experiences. In this fashion, these experiences gain public relevance, thus granting them (possible) political relevance (Livingstone and Lunt, 1996: 102). The importance of respectfully representing the citizenry within the public sphere should however not remain limited to accessing individual affects. Representing citizenship includes the creation of imaginaries of citizens organizing themselves in order to rationally and emotionally defend their (collective) interests and developing a series of public activities from within civil society. It is this complex combination of individuals and collectivities, organizations, and societal categories that shapes the nation as an 'imagined community' (Anderson, 1983) or as a political community. Finally, the importance of self-representation cannot go unmentioned in the discussion of the second cluster. Emphasizing the importance of access and participation (see later in cluster 4) of for instance marginalized and misrepresented groups, often via so-called community media, enables these groups to control their own representations, and be present in (one of) the public sphere(s).

This cluster includes two specific dimensions, on the one hand, an orientation towards the audience and the community (dimension 6), and on the other hand, the importance of pluriform representations (dimension 7). Media products aiming to reinforce democracy and participation need to focus on their audiences and communities, instead of using a medium-oriented – one could also say self-centred – approach. At the same time, one needs to take the complex, situated, and multi-layered meaning of the term 'audience' into account. The 'audience' is always part of all sorts of intertwined groups, communities, and organizations and cannot be reduced to merely quantitative behavioral data.

Putting these complex and active audiences at the centre of the media attention allows articulating them as directly concerned stakeholders and enables the media to increase their community connectedness.

The seventh dimension starts from the (representation of) specific (misrepresented) groups. Based on the argument of equality, it can be argued that all social groups have to be able to gain access to the media landscape. Likewise, these social groups have the right to feel correctly represented. The mere presence of members of different social subgroups, avoiding what Tuchman (1978) has called their symbolic annihilation, is a first necessary condition. One step further is to focus on their active presence, avoiding that they disappear into the background. Third, it is important to guard against the presence of stereotypes [13]. Smelik and her colleagues (1999: 45) summarize these points by contrasting forms of stereotypical representation (that are to be avoided) with the notion of what they call 'pluriform representation'. Here, members of misrepresented groups are actively present. Moreover, the duality of the oppositions that characterizes stereotypes is deconstructed, thus, enabling a greater diversity of societal representations. Hall (1997: 274) adds to the list of possible strategies the importance of working from within the complexities and ambiguities of representation. He pleads in other words for 'contest[ing stereotypes] from within'.

Cluster 3: Representation of the political

The representation of political and democratic practices *an sich* also plays an important role in this typology. In this context, it is essential to first assess which interpretation is given to the floating signifier [14] 'democracy', as it is often wrongly assumed that 'democracy' is a stable concept with a fixed signification. This way, three essential elements are ignored: the variety of democratic manifestations and variants, the distinction between formal democracy and democratic cultures and practices, and the distinction between the narrow-political system ('politics') and the broad-political dimension of the social (the 'political').

Especially this last distinction is of importance in this context: the political can be defined, following for instance Schumpeter (1976), as the privilege of specific competing elites, while it can also be broadly defined as a dimension of the social. To put this differently, this interpretation deals with the distinction between centralized and decentralized societal decision-making. In the construction of this typology, the emphasis is placed on the more decentralized societal decision-making [15], since this is a necessary condition for active citizenship. Another essential difference is the distinction between consensus and conflict-oriented approaches of the political. Here, it does remain of crucial importance to take both the consensus and the conflict-oriented approaches into account. The rationale for this choice can be found in the radical

contingency of the social that leads to an oscillation between stability and conflict. A mere focus on stability and consensus would foreclose the openness of the social and would imply an almost Hegelian belief in the end of history.

Consensus-oriented models of democracy largely built upon the notion of societal dialogue and deliberation, where collective decision-making takes place based on rational arguments, 'with the participation of all who will be affected by the decision or by their representatives. […] it includes decision making by means of arguments offered by and to participants who are committed to the values of rationality and impartiality' (Elster, 1998: 8). As Glasser and Craft (1998: 213) rightfully remark, this does not necessarily mean that everybody is given the floor, but it does mean that 'everything worth saying gets said'. In contrast, conflict-oriented models focus on political differences and struggles. Although even these approaches still need to be based on a total ('hegemonic') consensus regarding basic democratic values, within the boundaries of this core consensus, a complete lack of consensus on any other theme is perfectly possible and acceptable. In such a pluralist democracy, decision-making takes place on the basis of political struggle and debate. As Mouffe (1994: 109) writes, 'The prime task of democratic politics is not to eliminate passions, nor to relegate them to the private sphere in order to render rational consensus possible, but to mobilize these passions, and give them a democratic outlet'. This position shows some similarities with Edward Said's (1995: 12) broader plea for a 'universal' criterion 'regarding the suffering and the oppression of mankind […] in spite of political party bonds, national background or ingrained loyalty', however without falling back into an essentialist interpretation of the social and the political. It is suggested in this chapter, for this discussion on media and democracy, that this 'universal' criterion holds five universalisable values: democracy, peace, freedom, equality, and justice. Following Mouffe, it remains important to emphasize that the concrete interpretation and articulation of these basic values are embedded in political struggles.

Three dimensions of the typology fall within this cluster. The more general dimension that covers the orientation towards a broad political and decentralized societal decision-making (dimension 8) is complemented by two more specific dimensions: providing an argument-based balance (dimension 9) and the defence of values considered universalized, a dimension that is termed here pluralist neutrality [16] (dimension 10).

Dimension 8 refers to the importance of societal deliberation, dialogue, and debate. Care is taken to avoid the reduction of the political to the political system and of news and information to what Gans (2003: 45) calls 'top-down news'. At the same time, this is a plea for more solution-oriented approaches. But this text cannot be seen as an over-simplified plea for the dialogue/deliberation model and the solution-oriented model, which would again contradict the ambition to

avoid a dichotomization of the typology. I do however plead for a more balanced approach between dialogue/deliberation and debate, between (information regarding) social consensus and social conflict, and between (information about) solutions and problems. In a mediated context, this implies that one represents issues as a conflict only when these issues really do take place within the framework of a (serious) conflict. And even in that situation, sufficient attention should be spent to conflict resolution, effectively representing a diversity of opinions, without generating polarization (a requirement articulated in peace journalism).

The notions of dialogue/deliberation and debate can also be applied to two basic components of the media professional's identity, namely strive for balance (dimension 9) and for neutrality (dimension 10). This again allows the re-articulation of these components in a way that is supportive towards social deliberation, dialogue, and debate. The ninth dimension pleads for a more argument-based balance (in stead of a party- or person-related balance) in journalism. This dimension is strongly tributary to the theoretical reflections on deliberation, where the arguments (and not the persons) take in a central position. Their application implies that the social diversity of discourses and arguments, and the context within which they are situated, are taken into account.

The tenth dimension directs the focus towards the ideological-normative context. Especially in reform projects as public journalism and development journalism, journalistic neutrality is said to be no longer valid in situations where the values considered universalized are under threat. As mentioned before, the universalisable values that can be mentioned in this context are restricted in numbers: democracy (and resistance against dictatorship and tyranny), peace (and resistance against war and violence), freedom (and resistance against human right violations), equality (and resistance against discrimination), and justice (and resistance against oppression and social inequality).

Cluster 4: The participatory role

From a participation-oriented point of view (in the strict sense of the word participation – see Pateman, 1970: 70–71), access of non-professionals to media organizations (and to their media professionals) and participation in the production of media output and in media decision-making is seen as an – often unequally balanced – power process. Not withstanding this inequality, power relations need to be considered in a Foucauldian sense as mobile and multidirectional. In short, no one is ever rendered completely powerless and resistance against unequal power balances always remains a possibility. Power relations are two-way relations, even when the power of one actor seems limited in comparison to that of the other actor [17]. The questions formulated in the

context of mass media-production regarding this power process are relatively simple: who 'can' take what decision and what degree of participation is allowed for? In order to formulate an answer to these questions, a distinction is made between content-related participation and structural participation.

On the one hand, participation can be considered in relation to the produced content (dimension 11), which puts the media product in a central position. Consequently, the following questions become relevant. To which extent can citizens participate in the production process of specific content? What are the power relations between the media professional and the members of 'the audience' within this production process? To which extent (and how) can these citizens be present in the media product itself? When this kind of civil participation becomes visible, it also supports more active representations of citizens and their presence within the public sphere. The British television and web project *Video Nation* illustrates that the obstacles can effectively be reduced when the involved media professionals adopt an open, honest, respectful, process-oriented, and (micro-)participatory attitude, based on a thorough analysis of the power processes and imbalances (Carpentier, 2003).

On the other hand, it is possible to focus more on structural media participation (dimension 12), putting the media organization and its policies at the centre of attention. In this case, the emphasis is placed on the power balances within the decision-making processes of media organizations and on the participation of members of the audience in the programming, policy, and administration [18] of media organizations as such. An example can be found in the French 'Société des lecteurs du Monde' (SDL) that held in 2005 10.43% of the stock shares of the Le Monde SA group [19]. The legitimization for this kind of participation can be found in the rationale that (when decentralizing democracy) the democratic principles also need to be implemented within the different (organized) micro spheres of the social, thus including the different media organizations. This form of participation enables citizens to be active within one of the many micro spheres of the social, where decisions are made that have a real impact on – and are relevant to – citizens' daily lives. At the same time, it needs to be accepted that because of its radicalism, this form of participation is the most difficult to realize.

Four clusters, twelve dimensions, and one typology

When the different dimensions are (finally) brought together into one model, this results in the overview rendered in Table 1. It cannot be stressed enough that this typology is based on the plea for the reorientation of the existing choices made within contemporary media systems. It does not support the ambition to privilege one side of the model over the other, just the plea for finding new balances.

From the perspective of continued and deepened democratization, the situation that is considered most desirable for the media cannot be simply found on one side of the typology, but requires complex considerations of the different building blocks of this typology, without disregarding the context in which the mainstream media operate. At the same time, it is hardly feasible to take all twelve dimensions into account for the analysis – or for the production – of one specific media product. Rather, his typology has the ambition to offer a variety of possibilities, like a menu from which to choose *à la carte* but with good taste, depending on the (national) contexts but also on the ambitions of those involved.

Table 1:
Typology of democracy and participation-enhancing journalistic practices

Cluster 1: Information and control	
Dimension 1: Comprehensible and accessible information	No attention for comprehensible and accessible information
Dimension 2: Information oriented towards social (inter)action	No information oriented towards social (inter)action
Dimension 3: Positive information when possible and negative when necessary	Negative information
Dimension 4: Structural information	Personalized information
Dimension 5: Critical information (the control and watchdog function)	No critical information

Cluster 2: Representation of the social: community/ies and constituting social subgroups	
Dimension 6: Orientation towards the audience and the community	Media-oriented
• Active audience	• Passive audience
• Multi-layered audience	• Uni-dimensional audience as aggregate or mass
• Spaces for direct forums (direct forum function)	• No spaces for direct forums
• Community connectedness	• Detachment
• Empowerment of community as stakeholders	• Elite-oriented
Dimension 7: Pluriform representation of social subgroups	Stereotypical representations of social subgroups

Table 1: (*Continued*)

Cluster 3: Representation of the political		
Dimension 8:	Orientation towards the broad-political and a decentralized societal decision-making	Orientation towards politics in the strict sense and a centralized societal decision-making by elites
	• Solution-oriented when possible and conflict-oriented when necessary	• Conflict-oriented
	• Orientation towards dialogue and deliberation when possible and towards debate when necessary	• Orientation towards debate
Dimension 9:	Argument-based balance (indirect forum function or control function in the broad sense)	Party or people-based balance or no balance
Dimension 10:	Pluralist neutrality (control function in the broadest sense)	Absolute or no neutrality
Cluster 4: Participatory role		
Dimension 11:	Content-related participation	No attention for content-related participation and power balances
Dimension 12:	Structural participation	No attention for (forms of) structural participation

Conclusions

The twelve-dimensional typology of journalistic practices described here that reinforce democracy and participation first of all illustrates the variety and the broadness of the arsenal of methods and practices that are at the media's disposal. The choice for an approach that tries to respect and extend the different ideologically inspired interpretations and projects has enabled me to build a model that encompasses a wide variety of possibilities. In spite of the fact that the mainstream media already make important contributions to our democracies, plenty of space for additional steps remains available. This typology makes it possible to validate existing practices as well as to implement new practices. They show – each in their own way – that it is possible and feasible to overcome prejudices and constraints in order to foster our democracies even more.

At the same time, the actual typology reveals the complexity of such practices. As is always the case when analyzing the workings of democracy, an ideal pathway does not exist, but needs to be negotiated and constructed over and over again.

The paths we finally choose to follow and the decisions that are made on the road are the result of an alternation between confrontation and dialogue, and remain always susceptible to criticism, contestation, and re-articulation. Therefore, the dimensional nature of the typology (including both poles) was explicitly articulated as part of the typology. This way the necessity to obtain a balance between both poles of each dimension and between the different dimensions is structurally integrated in this typology.

Implementing the choices that originate from this model is far from easy. The context in the different European states can be very different, and in some cases political resistance is to be expected. Not all states applaud when 'their' media become further engaged in the process of democratization. Other boundaries on which the media professionals and organizations stumble are also not to be underestimated. Putting democracy and participation to practice often demands more expertise, time, and financial resources than is considered relevant or acceptable by contemporary capitalist media organizations. For these reasons, external support (which could for instance be provided by a European fund for media democracy) seems to be a necessary condition for the sustained development of similar practices. At the same time it also demands the willingness of the media to question their own position and share more power than is the case at this moment in time.

It is, however, especially this kind of attitude and willingness that makes it possible to find creative solutions for these boundaries. Through continuous experimentation, it can be shown that many of these journalistic practices that reinforce democracy and participation demand less investment (except for an investment in willingness and goodwill) than expected. This way the mainstream media organizations can each find their own way to – as Drijvers *et al.* (2002) suggested – conquer their agoraphobia, to contribute in taking on their social responsibility and to reinforce the democratic quality of the mass media as a whole.

Notes for Chapter Seven

[1]   This typology was developed as part of the 'Media and citizens' campaign of the Koning Boudewijn Foundation. The resulting publications are Carpentier *et al.*, 2002a, b, Carpentier and Grevisse (2004), and Grevisse and Carpentier (2004).

[2]   The concept 'media professional' covers a broadly defined journalistic identity, including popular journalism (see Meijer, 2001).

[3]   The authoritarian and Marxist-Leninist model are considered less relevant in the contemporary Western context.

[4]   Siebert *et al.* (1956: 91) provide here the following (out-dated) clarification of this position: '[…] this requirement would have the press accurately portray

the social groups, the Chinese and the Negroes, for example, since persons tend to make decisions in terms of favorable or unfavorable images and a false picture can subvert accurate judgement'.

[5] See Nerone, 1995.

[6] In the fifth edition, the six models were replaced by the following four models: the liberal-pluralist model, the social responsibility model, the professional model, and the alternative media model (McQuail, 2005: 185–186).

[7] A relatively similar list can be found in Biltereyst *et al.*, 2000: 22.

[8] For a description of development and (specifically) emancipatory journalism, see Shah, 1996; for new journalism, see Wolfe, 1973, and Thompson, 1980; for human-interest journalism, see Harrington, 1997, and Meijer, 2000, 2001; for peace journalism, see Galtung and Vincent, 1992; and for public journalism, see Rosen, 1994, Merritt, 1995, 1998, Glasser and Craft, 1998, and Puissant, 2000.

[9] Values of course risk receiving Western interpretations. To better capture the required process of cultural dialogue when articulating them, the words 'universalized' and 'universalisable' are preferred.

[10] Van Zoonen (1997: 217) describes intimization as 'a growing attention to human interest subjects, an intimate and personal mode of address and the treatment of political behavior and issues as though they are matters of personality'. In this text, the evoluative aspect of this description – which lies in Van Zoonen's term 'growing' – is not taken into account, so that the accent on the personal can also be seen as a factual condition.

[11] In spite of the fact that Communication Studies focus on these two subgroups, it is evident that the discussion cannot be narrowed down to them. Others, like handicapped persons, gay/lesbian/bisexual people, children and elderly people (sometimes) also find themselves in inferior power positions. More radical examples of these social subgroups are homeless and poor people, prisoners and prostitutes.

[12] The concept of 'ordinary people' is often – following the footsteps of Laclau (1977) and Hall (1981) and Fiske (1993) – defined in a negative way by comparing it to the elite, the power bloc or – in the words of Livingstone and Lunt (1996: 9) – the 'elite representatives of established power'.

[13] Keeping Dyer's (1984) differentiation between types and stereotypes in mind.

[14] Based on Laclau and Mouffe (1985: 112–113).

[15] This plea for maximizing the possibilities of decentralized societal decision-making does not imply the abolishment of representative democracy, but offers an opportunity to deepen it.

[16] As Manca's (1989) concept of pluralist objectivity is considered too broad, it has been renamed as pluralist neutrality.

[17] More specifically, this approach is based on Foucault's (1984) so-called analytics of power.

[18] Here can be referred to Prehn's (1991: 259) interpretation of participation (in relation to community media) as 'involving people directly in station programming, administration and policy activities'.

[19] For more information, see the SDL-website at http://sdl.lemonde.fr/. In addition, the 'Société des Rédacteurs du Monde' (SRM) held in 2005 another 29.58% (Deshusses, 2005: 1). For a history of the SRM, see Eveno (2004).

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