

THE READER

A publication of the McCandlish Phillips Journalism Institute

God and the Newsroom

*Has truth been trumped?
Why journalism and religion still matter.*

A talk by Paul Glader at Bethel University in 2017 and in May 2019 in New York City to leaders in media and religion

The invite said “God and the Newsroom” as the topic for this talk. But I might propose a more sensational headline for this evening: “Has truth been trumped?”

In journalism classes at The King’s College in lower Manhattan where I work, we teach students the inverted pyramid style of lede used to write news stories, which means we deliver the most important information first to readers.

So turning our attention to the question: “Has Truth Been Trumped?” I won’t bury the lede.

The answer? No. It has not.

Are we in challenging times?

Yes we are.

Those who came here expecting tales of woe and laments by a journalist, I’m sorry to disappoint you. I’m optimistic about America. I’m optimistic about journalism. Most of all, I’m optimistic about truth and the notion that truth cannot ultimately be trumped. But I’m not necessarily optimistic about some of our current political dynamics and media ecology. We will serve up some skepticism.

But I will do my best to focus our thoughts on the current state of media and journalism without making us feel doomed. My remarks will stay away from most of the public policy aims of our new presidential administration and will focus on the relationship of that administration to the news media and to truth telling.

So we’ll divide our time by first examining the problem with news media in today’s world and later by dealing with solutions to that problem.

How do we define the problem?

Well, have you heard this quote:

“A lie can travel around the world and back again while the truth is lacing up its boots.”

Many people attribute to author Mark Twain, except we can’t be sure Twain said it. Others

attribute the quote to a list as wide-ranging as Sir Winston Churchill, Thomas Jefferson and Ann Landers.

We can now check that quote via the web site QuoteInvestigator.com, which is operated by Dr. Garson O’Toole, a Yale PhD. By the way, I see that Yale’s alumni magazine verifies O’Toole is a 1986 PhD but that his name is a pseudonym.

Anyways, Quote Investigator indicates Twain, for all his quotable wit, did not utter these words. In fact, we don’t know who exactly did utter those words. Writer Jonathan Swift expressed the idea in 1710. It surfaced a few other places. But the published version that most closely mirrors the quote appeared in The Portland Gazette newspaper in September of 1820, which read, “for falsehood will fly from Maine to Georgia, while truth is pulling her boots on.”

So has the truth always had a hard time pulling on her boots? Have falsehoods used frequent flier miles to get from Maine to Georgia for a long time on the campaign trail?

That quote, regardless of who said it, attacks the heart of our current disinformation quandary. Did fake news writers, profiteers and hoax artists manipulate the social media giants - Facebook, Twitter and Google (and users of those services) - to spread rumors that helped Donald Trump in his path to be president? Let’s consider a few of the lies and distortions we have heard and read about recently.

We have seen the rise of hoax artists:

Case in point?

NPR, MSNBC and CBS 60 Minutes reported on a registered Democrat named Jestin Coler. Under an umbrella company called Disinfomedia, Coler started a set of fake news sites in California with names such as NationalReport.net, USAToday.com.co and WashingtonPost.com.co. These sites published myriad fake stories such as one headlined, “FBI Agents Suspected In Hillary Email Leaks Found Dead In Apparent Murder-Suicide.” People shared that story on Facebook more

PAUL GLADER



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An award-winning journalist, he spent 10 years as a staff writer at The Wall Street Journal, covering a variety of beats including technology, health & science, travel, metals & mining and finance. He’s written for countless publications including The Washington Post, The Associated Press, Der Spiegel Online, The Indianapolis Star, FastCompany.com, Bloomberg BusinessWeek, The American Legion, Christianity Today and Forbes.com. Appearances on international TV and radio programs include CNBC, Fox Business, Infobae, All India Radio and WSJ Radio. He speaks regularly at high school and college journalism conferences nationwide.

He has a bachelor’s in political science from the University of South Dakota, a master’s from Columbia University as a Knight-Bagehot Fellow at the graduate schools of business and journalism. He earned an EMBA and served as a media scholar at The Berlin School of Creative Leadership at Steinbeis University in Germany. He lived in Germany from 2011-2013, as a Robert Bosch Foundation Fellow and as a European Journalism Fellow at Freie Universität in Berlin. He’s a roster specialist for the Fulbright Program through 2025.

than 500,000 times. “Some of this has to fall on the readers themselves,” Coler told NPR, when asked about the plague of bogus news he helped create. “The consumers of content have to be better at identifying this stuff. We have a whole nation of media-illiterate people.”

We have also seen the rise of paranoid, media illiterate Americans who fashion themselves as armchair journalists and armchair vigilantes:

Case in point?

Pizzagate

Many people believed a conspiracy theory that falsely linked Hillary Clinton to an alleged child-sex trafficking ring operating from a D.C. pizza parlor called Comet Ping Pong. A North Carolina man named Edgar Maddison Welch traveled to a restaurant in DC with an assault rifle, firing it at least once while searching for evidence of a child sex abuse ring. Finding no such evidence, he turned himself into police, pled guilty to weapons and assault charges and was sentenced to four years in prison. Conspiracy theorist named Alex Jones, who promoted this hoax on his web site Infowars, apologized for spreading the false information. If you watch his so-called apology he promotes other suspect claims.

Alternative Facts

A day after the new president was inaugurated in January of 2017, he claimed media images misrepresented the number of people who attended his inauguration. His press secretary, Sean Spicer, said on Jan. 21: “We know that 420,000 people used the DC Metro public transit yesterday, which compares to 317,000 that used it for President Obama’s last inaugural. This was the largest audience to ever witness an inauguration - period - both in person and around the globe.” But photographic evidence contradicted Spicer’s facts. Time-lapse video by PBS’ NewsHour contradicted Spicer’s assertions. The Metro figures for ridership also contradicted his facts. A day later on NBC’s Meet the Press, White House counselor Kellyanne Conway told reporter host Chuck Todd that he was being “overly dramatic” about the fact that the President and White House spokesman were uttering falsehoods in their first two days on the job. “Our press secretary gave alternative facts” she said. So we started off a new presidential administration in terrible conflict with the news media.

What about Fake News?

In response, the President and his team have seized upon the Achilles heel of the national media: In spite of professional ethics and standards around news gathering at the elite media, the media is not perfect. It can and will make mistakes. Good media outlets correct themselves when they do make mistakes.

But a practice of making corrections doesn’t solve the bias problem. Bias still plays a role in every publication and every journalist’s work. The very act of reporting and writing involves decisions and bias as to what to include and what to exclude. It involves judgement about how to headline a story, who to photograph and how to display the story. The decisions of the reporter and editors will never make everyone 100 percent happy. That’s the dilemma of the news business and its Achilles Heel.

It’s also not hard to observe that a bulk of the nation’s media is based here in New York City with other hubs for national media jobs in other coastal cities such as Washington DC, Los Angeles and San Francisco. People in these coastal cities tend to vote Democratic and espouse more progressive, secular, left-leaning outlooks on the world. It’s therefore understandable how this national media, with a few key exceptions, sees Republicans, Donald Trump and conservative, religious people as backward or dangerous. Their coverage often reflects such an outlook.

So our current president has used this dynamic as a way to battle the press. He calls those of us in the press the “enemy of the people.” He suggests laws should be changed to muzzle the freedom of the press. Local newspapers that cover our school boards, city governments and local crime have lost more jobs than the coal industry in recent years but the president gloats about the news industry suffering while aiming to save the pollutive coal industry.

And the body politic in the last few years has developed a tilt-a-whirl approach to the news media and facts themselves.

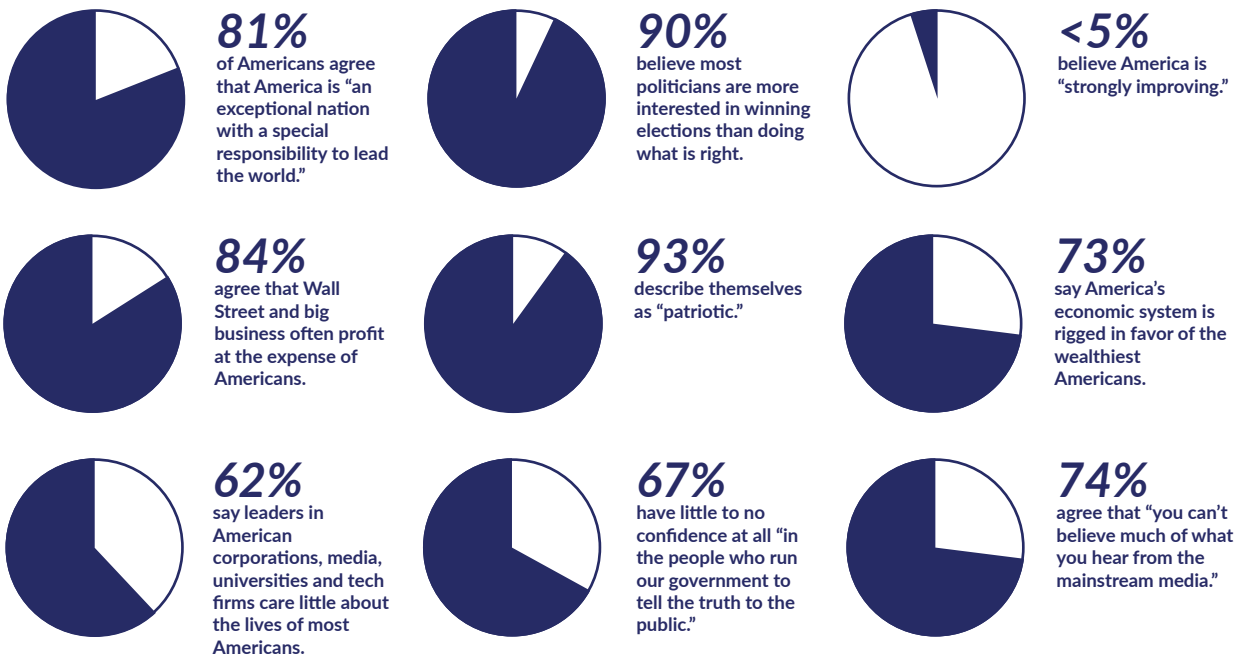
Princeton Sociologist Dr. Paul Starr highlights the importance of the media in his landmark book “The Creation of the Media.” In it, he notes that newspaper readership was higher in the U.S. than any country in Europe in the late 1800s. School enrollment rates in America, according to census data, was up to 56.2 percent. “By 1850, the

growth of education in the United States had already produced a more literate population than the European average.”

In other words, a media literate population contributed to national progress and the so-called American Century. It begs the question: What happens if this nation does not have a media literate population?

development,” Hunter writes. “The media, many now believe, are not trusted to convey the basic information needed for substantive political engagement.”

We are at a strange impasse where the mainstream media and cultural elites believe they must resist the new president and administration that seemingly show little regard to verifiable facts.



from "The Vanishing Center of American Democracy 2016 Survey of American Political Culture" by the Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture

Perhaps we find the answer looking at the work of University of Virginia sociologist James Davison Hunter has studied issues of religion and politics for several decades. His research in 2016 involved 1,904 telephone interviews of American adults with an oversampling of African Americans, Hispanics and well-educated people. The result he says reveals more on the climate of politics in America rather than the weather. Here are a few of his findings regarding Americans views on the nation's political climate:

A Divided Country

What about the media? The climate that Dr. Hunter sampled is rather grim.

74 percent agree that "you can't believe much of what you hear from the mainstream media."

"Given the importance of good journalism - and the information it provides to an electorate and a vital democracy - this is an extraordinary

Meanwhile, many people around the country believe the Mainstream Media doesn't reflect their lives, their truths and perhaps contradicts their opinions. This divide has ripped across friendships and families.

On more than one occasion in speeches and in tweets, Trump's has called mainstream journalists the "enemy of the American people."

Republican Sen. John McCain, a war hero who represents the state of Arizona said in response to that on NBC: "we need a free press, we must have it. It's vital if you want to preserve — I'm very serious now — if you want to preserve democracy as we know it, you have to have a free and many times adversarial press. And without it I'm afraid that we would lose so much of our individual liberties over time."

Others pointed out that President Richard Nixon identified the press, the establishment and professors as "the enemy." Dictators such as Hugo

Chavez and Adolph Hitler and Joseph Stalin often take the same approach by the way. Attack or silence the free press and a political leader can better sculpt their own narrative. Intimidate citizens against speaking their minds and leaders can maintain their hold on power longer.

Solutions? So what's the response?

Well, folks. This is the U.S of A. This is America. And we don't believe in a silent press. We are a people who do speak our minds. And we in the press do not see ourselves as the enemy of the people:

Bryan Gruley is a writer for BusinessWeek magazine, a mystery novelist and a former writer and editor at The Wall Street Journal. After Trump's tweet, Gruley wrote a post on Medium headlined, "We weren't enemies of the people on 9/11 and we are not now." He wrote of the WSJ reporters who covered the 9/11 terrorist attacks in Washington DC and in New York City, which happened across the street from our office on 200 Liberty Street.

After describing the mayhem and the brave reporters who documented all of it first hand, Gruley concludes: "I understand that people dislike the "media." Sometimes we screw up. Sometimes we're more concerned about amassing web clicks and TV viewers than about getting the story right. Sometimes we tell people things they would rather not hear. Oddly, though, I've never in almost 38 years of being a reporter and editor had anyone criticize me to my face about my profession... Sometimes I tell them about that day and how proud I was to work with those journalists in New York who simply did what they were supposed to do so we could tell our readers--hell, the whole world--what happened.... They are not an enemy. We are not an enemy. I am not an enemy."

Sadly, I noticed the post on LinkedIn had hundreds of comments from Internet trolls who still disagree with Gruley. They seem to suggest that those of us who report, who teach, who study - are indeed enemies.

The "Enemy" is Flourishing

Meanwhile, the same president likes to suggest his "enemies" in the news media such as The New York Times are "failing." Unfortunately for him that is also far from the truth along with thousands of other statements he has made. The New York Times and other large media outlets are flourishing.

The Washington Post has topped more than 1 million digital subscriptions. The New York Times says that it has more than 7.5 million digital and print subscribers, predicting 10 million subscribers one day. The Post, The Times, The New Yorker, The Wall Street Journal and other prestigious media have experienced a "Trump Bump" with more people subscribing to their publications. Their revenue model has shifted away from advertising and more toward direct paid subscriptions from their audiences. This insulates the media economically from Big Tech companies such as Google, Facebook and Twitter that have gobbled up digital advertising dollars that formerly flowed to news media outlets.

Vetting the News

Back in February of 2017, I published a piece on forbes.com titled "10 Journalism Brands Where You Find Real Facts Rather Than Alternative Facts."

I wrote this because, several friends wrote to me asking for help knowing what to read. So instead of writing them back individually with advice, I wrote this post and put it up on Forbes. I listed my top 10 news outlets and explained why each of those outlets belonged in my top 10. I also opened the post, explaining some tips to people on how they can evaluate quality news outlets. It went viral almost immediately with more than 3 million people viewing the post and thousands sharing it and discussing it, including top editors at publications such as The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal.

Does the news organization label news & opinion? Does it correct itself when it makes mistakes? Does it use a code of ethics and make it visible?

Many citizens reached out to me with questions and comments via email and Twitter and Facebook. Many of them wanted me to expand this list and to start rating news organizations.

So I listened to the readers, formed a company and launched an initial product: A ratings agency for news organizations. It gives a red light, yellow light or green light to each news organization in our database of 55,000 + news organizations. The idea was to help flag hoax sites and direct citizens to legitimate news organizations. Our company is called Vett Inc., a Swedish word that means “Savvy.” And our first product “VettNews” aims to make citizens more savvy about the news media and the news media more transparent with the public.

We used a set of three binary tests to rate the news organizations:

- 1) Does the news organization label news and opinion?
- 2) Does the news organization correct itself when it makes mistakes?
- 3) Does the news organization use a code of ethics and make it visible?

A major finding was that news organizations are not as transparent with the public as they could be. Even good news organizations such as The New Yorker and CNBC. Our first product led us into a startup accelerator and into many forums and discussions about media trust. We discovered another company led by journalists called NewsGuard, which had a product similar to ours. We kept thinking and talking to customers and pivoted our company toward another pioneering area of news technology.

Some news organizations asked us to build tools that could help them improve their management of corrections and reader feedback. We received a \$75,000 grant from the Knight Foundation to build VettNews Cx, a corrections management tool that allows readers to report an error of fact, bias or missing context. It also enables speedy communication newsrooms and the readers, fostering a better relationship and improved trust. We’ve forged partnerships for VettNews Cx with the News Leaders Association, Poynter.org, TrustingNews, several state press associations, a libel insurer called Mutual Insurance Company Ltd. and the Radio, Television, Digital News Association (RTDNA) to make our tool available to their members. We now have more than 20 news organizations using the VettNews Cx technology and we look forward to expanding the product.



Photo of students and faculty at the European Journalism Institute in 2019 in Prague, a program of The Media Project and The Fund for American Studies.

These problems are not completely new. In the last 300 years, the news media has dealt with sensationalism and outright hoax stories. For example, The New York Sun in 1835 ran a series of stories that explained life on the moon.

But the stakes are high now for human lives. The United Nations investigators and human right groups accused Facebook of being a platform where anti-Muslim hate speech and false news in Myanmar led to extensive violence against the Rohingya Muslim minority.

A report from the Knight Foundation in 2018 shows that 64 percent of Americans say their trust in a news organization involves how well that news organization distinguishes news stories from commentary, analysis or advertiser-paid content. It showed 58 percent said it’s important for news organizations to be “neutral.”

Nearly 90 percent of citizens told Knight Foundation their trust in news organizations depended on the news orgs commitment to accuracy and willingness to openly correct mistakes. More than 70 percent say a commitment to transparency, fact-checking, fairness and providing links and facts to back up reporting are important factors for trust.

So we are building tools to improve how news is produced and surfaced to the public.c

Where do Christians Fit in All of This?

With the growing divide in America, I am heartened that the nation is discussing the nature of objective truth. Fake news artists on the right may deny objective truth and kale-eating yogis on the left might also deny objective truth. Christians and journalists both believe in such a thing as objective truth. We have

that in common. And we believe the pursuit of such truth is noble.

Let me tell you more about my own story. I grew up as a preacher's son in rural South Dakota. I listened to talk radio on headphones while pulling weeds from my family's massive garden. These talk show hosts ridiculed Democrats. They made fun of environmentalist "whackos" and women they called "feminazis." They made politics seem fun and engaging. What facts they gathered about civic life, they read from a dozen newspapers before their radio show went on the air. But after digesting those facts that reporters worked hard – sometimes even jeopardizing their lives to report – these radio talk show hosts would then criticize the despicable "mainstream media" for its biases. These hosts bit the hands that fed them facts.

I was a paperboy for The Rapid City Journal and voraciously read newspapers since age 12 or so. I began to see that newspapers were much more factually accurate than talk radio hosts. I started writing for newspapers as a teen, writing news, features and opinion pieces for The Rapid City Journal and the Faith Independent.

Central Newspapers when Russ Pulliam's grandfather, Eugene Pulliam Sr., started traveling the world and realized that press liberty was often intrinsically linked to religious liberty.

New Generations

In my view, young people who want to be journalists need a good mentor as well as some skills training and a good liberal arts education. That's what my colleagues and I try to provide at The King's College. One of our mottos is to "Practice what we teach," to continue doing journalism as we teach journalism.

And we aim to help young people learn the skills of journalism so they can quickly do journalism on the student publications and with internships in professional publications in New York City. We are having dramatic success on those fronts with our student journalists winning national awards and an incredible number of them landing impressive internships and jobs in the mainstream media at outlets such as The Wall Street Journal, CNBC, Fortune magazine, TheStreet.com and American Banker.

It's clear to us the mainstream media is not actively working to keep out people of faith. On the contrary, the mainstream media is just looking for talent. And we find they are eager to hire diverse talent that includes ethnic diversity, gender diversity, geographic diversity, religious diversity and intellectual diversity. We help to provide all of that diversity and they appreciate it very much.

By the time I went to college I had a good sense of why journalism matters. I attended The University of South Dakota on a full-ride journalism scholarship named after my fellow South Dakotan, my grandfather's cousin, USA Today founder Al Neuharth. On my college newspaper, few staff members were Christians my first year. But by the time I was a senior, many other Christians had joined the staff. Perhaps it was because myself and another editor were very involved in the paper and as leaders on campus and also were very open about our faith?

As I progressed in my journalism career and worked at some of the top brands in the world such as The Wall Street Journal and The Washington Post, I noticed very few journalists talk much about their religious faith even though they talk about many other subjects. Why did so few people of faith want to be in an exciting field like news journalism? As I look at it now, we see a strange dichotomy between religious



JCS majors and NYCJ students at King's on a visit to the Associated Press headquarters in 2019.

At a conference for home school kids in the early 1990s, I met an editorial page editor at The Indianapolis News and Star named Russ Pulliam. We became pen pals. He invited me to work for him the next summer when I was 16 years old. He became a mentor for me into the news business over the next few years. He was also a mentor in the Christian life.

The front page of The Indianapolis Star carried a Bible verse, 2 Cor. 3:17: "Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." That verse was placed at the top of each of the 22 newspapers owned by

people and journalists. The news media perhaps frequently doesn't understand religious people and religious people are often skeptical of the press. My sense is that many churches, Christian families and even colleges are scared of the industries such as contemporary art, theater and news journalism. Some religious communities such as Muslims and Evangelical protestants seem to be either scared of the mainstream press or antagonistic toward the press because they cannot control the press. As a result, we have few folks from those faiths in

peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

But they are sometimes at odds. They sometimes don't get along.

And that is strange, because they have much in common. These are two freedoms that allow citizens to act as a check and balance on power. They allow citizens to exercise moral authority. They allow us to act with conscience and speak truth in society. Both journalists and the church act with conscience in the following ways in a free society:

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- They speak truth to power
 - They consider the weak, the needy and the community
 - They safeguard liberty
 - On good days, they care for words in a culture of lies
 - They discuss the fallen nature of man and the problem of evil
 - They present the idea of hope, peace, redemption and shalom

mainstream journalism. And that is not good for journalism or the nation.

Why? Here is how the editor of The New York Times explains what happens when religious people are under-represented in journalism:

“I want to make sure that we are much more creative about beats out in the country so that we understand that anger and disconnectedness that people feel. And I think I use religion as an example because I was raised Catholic in New Orleans. I think that the New York-based and Washington-based too probably, media powerhouses don't quite get religion. We have a fabulous religion writer, but she's all alone. We don't get religion. We don't get the role of religion in people's lives. And I think we can do much, much better. And I think there are things that we can be more creative about to understand the country,” said Dean Baquet, Editor of The New York Times during an interview on National Public Radio in December of 2016.

It doesn't have to be this way!

Freedom of religion and freedom of the press share billing in the first amendment of the U.S. Constitution. They are twin engines, Siamese twins of liberty, conjoined within this paragraph:

“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

Journalism & Religion

Let's go back to the 4th Century Roman Empire. Theodosius enforced Christianity during his reign from 379 to 395 A.D. At one point in his reign, a skirmish between Rome and Thessaloniki led to a terrible event. Theodosius' Roman Army invited Thessalonians into the local colosseum for a “special games.” The Romans locked the doors with 7,000 people inside and murdered every man, woman and child.

Ambrose, the bishop of the city in which Theodosius lived, sent Theodosius a letter and demanded that the emperor repent. One account tells how Theodosius approached the church one day, only to meet Ambrose in his bishop's robes; Ambrose told him to leave until he repented. Ambrose would not give the Lord's Supper to the Theodosius.

Eventually, Theodosius relented and asked for forgiveness in the church of Milan, kneeling down and weeping in public. This established a precedent of the church over the state, which would last over 1,000 years and is not the model for modern free societies. Theodosius later said that Ambrose was the first man he knew who told him the truth. Theodosius died five years later, in 395, with Ambrose at his bedside. In his funeral sermon, Ambrose told the soldiers: “Where unbelief is, there is blindness, but where fidelity is, there is

the host of angels.” Ambrose died two years after this, on Easter weekend of 397.

Journalists play a similar role in society, exercising a sort of moral conscience - guarding against corruption and lies - in their reporting on factual information and reporting stories of consequence. We journalists often report on the evil deeds in society, showing the Fall of Man in stories every single day.

Danish immigrant Jacob Riis had a tough beginning when he first moved to New York and couldn't find good work. He became a journalist and photographer, who covered the Lower East Side of Manhattan in the 1870s, a neighborhood then riddled with crime and poverty. His photography and reporting was so vivid on the squalor that Police Commissioner Teddy Roosevelt took action and cleaned up the tenements.

In 2015, we saw the film *Spotlight* win Best Picture at the Academy Awards. The film portrays a team of investigative reporters at *The Boston Globe*, who used boots on the ground reporting and data analysis to connect the dots that the Catholic church in Boston had been covering up cases of child molesting by priests who were serial molesters. The story echoed around the world, leading to the expose of a global problem. The film shows the journalists as abstemious people... like a “priesthood.” Many of us applaud this work. But if you are Catholic, you might have mixed feelings as this reporting shakes the structures of your religion. The truth often hurts somebody. That is the consequence of living in a broken world. Ultimately, this reporting by *The Boston Globe* did help purify the Catholic Church, giving it opportunity to repent from its sins the same way Bishop Ambrose gave Theodosius that opportunity.

The Bible as Journalism

The Bible itself is a great example of narrative journalism. In its pages, we find fact-based reporting. We find characters, scenes and anecdotes corroborated by historians. We find narrative arcs with characters on quests, finding obstacles in their way. We find incredible villains, plot points and plot twists. The authors of the Bible understood the importance of reporting, documentation and the power in story, the power of narrative non-fiction. The truths of this story, the Gospel, is what drives our belief and the belief of billions of people worldwide now and for the last 2,000 years. In each of the four Gospels we find powerful reporting... and narrative and story.

Journalists - whether religious or not - might stand up, cheer and claim this

mantra as their own from the Gospel of John.

“And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

- John 8:32 (KJV)

But we know that many people appreciate truth unless it makes them uncomfortable. So journalists often suffer the same disdain from society that Christians might. The truth is not always welcome. In fact, the truth sometimes makes us odd as the great southern writer Flannery O'Connor once pointed out: “You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you odd.”

More Diversity in News

We need more diversity in newsrooms of all types. That will help us understand our country better.

We believe the story of John McCandlish Phillips encouraged generations of journalists. Many people have spoken about how John acted as a writing coach and editor for them during his retirement. Here is one quote about him by a famous writer named Gay Talese a colleague at the *New York Times*.

“He was the Ted Williams of the young reporters. He was a natural. There was only one guy I thought I was not the equal of, and that was McCandlish Phillips.”

Photos of John at work in the *New York Times* show him with his Bible on his desk. Now, let's be clear, we are not advocating that our students keep a Bible on their desk. In fact, John didn't put one on his desk until he was a verifiable star at the *Times*. Rather, we encourage our students to pursue the kind of faithful presence, commitment to journalism and enjoyment of craft that he exhibited.

At the King's College in NYC, we are doing our part to bring intellectual and geographic diversity to the media world in New York City. And we are grateful to our more than 40 partner schools that send students to be part of this program. It involves us placing the journalism students in media outlets for an internship of 20 hours per week. They take three classes at King's with me and my colleagues. We also take students on newsroom visits to outlets such as *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Associated Press*, *ProPublica*, *The New York Times*, *Buzzfeed* and *Quartz*. We are seeing many of these students land full time jobs in NYC and attend prestigious graduate schools.

The Czech dissident playwright named Vaclav Havel became the first president of the Czech Republic when the Soviet Union fell apart. The citizens elected him because of his powerful writing - both plays and essays - about living under a totalitarian regime. From

his essay “Power of the Powerless,” he advised his fellow Czechs that they can resist tyranny by living within the truth. That meant living for the soul. It meant discerning fact from fiction. It meant caring about family and caring about the common good. It meant living in the present, the real world, as if the authoritarian regime didn't exist.

In his essay “Disturbing the Peace,” he said:

“Hope is not the conviction that something will turn out well but the certainty that something makes sense, regardless of how it turns out.”

Whatever your political persuasion or whomever you see as the bogeyman of facts or fiction, you can adopt this idea. If we do that, the truth can never be trumped. Thank you.



Paul Glader speaking to Bethel University on God and the Newsroom | Credit: Bethel University

The Reader is a publication of The McCandlish Phillips Journalism Institute

The McCandlish Phillips Journalism Institute (MPJI) is based at The King's College in New York City. MPJI provides education, training and professional development projects for journalists at the high school, undergraduate and professional levels. It is named after the late John McCandlish Phillips, a legendary reporter at *The New York Times*.

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