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Peace journalism and radical media ethics

Kurzfassung: Die radikalen Eigenschaften des Friedensjournalismus positionieren ihn als ein Modell, welches das gängige Verständnis normativer Medientheorien erweitert. Der Friedensjournalismus spiegelt die innovativsten Forderungen der Medienethik wider, namentlich jene der radikalen Medienethik. Grundgedanke ist, dass die Medienethik zwecks Anpassung an eine globalisierte und demokratisierte Medienlandschaft, wie sie durch die neuen Medientechnologien ermöglicht wird, einer Erweiterung bedarf. Um die kulturelle Gewalt, die Konfliktberichten innewohnt, zu überwinden, sollte sowohl in der professionellen als auch in der alltäglichen Kommunikation zwischen Bürgern eine globale Verschiebung in Richtung auf Konfliktsensitivität stattfinden. Anstrengungen dieser Art stellen in vieler Hinsicht eine Herausforderung dar, infolge ihres Potentials, zur Schaffung friedensbereiter(er) globaler Gesellschaften beizutragen, sind sie jedoch enorm lohnenswert.

Abstract: The radical characteristics of peace journalism position it as a model that expands the current understandings of normative media theory. Peace journalism echoes the most innovative calls of media ethicists, such as the proposition of radical media ethics. This idea asserts the necessity to expand media ethics to better fit the globalized and democratized media landscape, which is enabled by contemporary new media technologies. Essentially a global shift, among professionals as well as regular citizen-communicators, should advance towards conflict sensitivity in order to transcend the culturally violent elements of covering conflicts. Similar efforts will bring numerous challenges, however, these efforts are tremendously worthwhile with their potential to assist the creation of more peace-prone global societies.

1. Introduction

This article offers a consideration of peace journalism (Galtung & Ruge, 1965; Lynch & Galtung, 2010) in connection to the concept of radical communication/media ethics (Ward, 2014). The main theoretical principles of peace journalism and its key concept – conflict sensitivity – are outlined. Then, peace journalism is situated within the framework of normative media theory, where peace journalism supports the notion of the mass media playing the radical role in society. This argument is supported in the point that peace journalism/conflict sensitivity includes a direct challenge to power structures. The characteristics of peace journalism position it as a model that expands the current understandings of normative media theory. Hence, peace journalism echoes the most innovative calls of media ethicists, such as Ward's proposition of radical media ethics. Peace journalism practitioners have to face limitations when attempting to cover issues of international conflicts and crises in peace journalistic/conflict sensitive manner. Particularly, peace journalism's resistance to direct violence is constrained by societies' cultural and structural violence. These societal issues have implications for both professional and non-professional media communicators. Therefore, radical communication/media ethics with conflict sensitive orientation is a global responsibility of (a) the professional journalists who cover conflicts as well as of (b) the citizens who reflect on conflicts in a form of user-generated content on the platforms of the Internet and social media.

2. Peace journalism

2.1 Theoretical tenets

Peace journalism exists primarily in two main forms; (1) as an academic concept of understanding and analysis of journalism and (2) as a movement to reform the praxis of journalism. The two existences of peace journalism are closely interconnected on the platform of Galtung's broader philosophy of peace and conflict resolution, which might be labeled simply as an approach towards conflict sensitivity.

The roots of peace journalism are traced to the seminal article by Galtung and Ruge (1965). The authors criticized structure of the Western mass media and consequent prejudiced content of foreign affairs coverage that appeared on the media. The biased content was labeled by the authors as *war journalism*. Galtung developed and has been advocating for implementation of alternative practices, which would lead to the type of content that he labeled *peace journalism*.

Lynch and Galtung (2010) proposed that a large part of the Western mass media's coverage of conflicts tends to possess features of war journalism. The main characteristics of war journalism include orientations towards (1) propaganda, (2) elites, (3) violence, and (4) victory. Such coverage creates a biased picture of the actual events and gross oversimplifications of reality. Peace journalism should, according to Lynch and Galtung, exemplify more objective style of media conflict coverage with orientations towards (1) truth, (2) people, (3) conflict, and (4) solution. First, more truthful coverage outlines a number of different parties that are involved in a particular

conflict. Furthermore, all parties' sufferings as well as lies are to be exposed by peace journalism, without tolerance for cover-ups or demonization of certain groups. Second, peace journalism has to incorporate narratives of people from various echelons of impacted societies, not only elite narratives. Third, the focus on conflict in peace journalism implies that roots of the conflict should be traced in order to better understand the grievances of the involved parties. Violence is just a symptom of conflict, while journalists should inform about deeper causes of each conflict. Fourth, peace journalism presupposes that journalists are also responsible to provide a summary of possible non-violent alternatives of dealing with a specific conflict.

In brief, peace journalism incorporates an attempt to provide a more objective coverage of conflicts along with a coverage of possible directions of conflict resolution (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2013). Furthermore, peace journalism includes a dimension of propensity towards a radical change of society – towards becoming more sympathetic to peace. Shinar (2007: 2) provided following characterization of the concept:

> "Peace journalism is a normative mode of responsible and conscientious media coverage of conflict, that aims at contributing to peacemaking, peacekeeping, and changing the attitudes of media owners, advertisers, and audiences towards war and peace. Such goals are sought through (a) critical evaluations of the current state of conflict coverage and (b) efforts to conceptualize professional values and practices in both theoretical and operational terms."

The broader implications of peace journalism's endeavor is a movement for overall increased conflict sensitivity in comprehension of issues between groups of people. Hence, peace journalism is also referred to as conflict sensitive journalism (Yiping, 2011). The concept of conflict sensitivity is very crucial as it provides a more inclusive range of rhetorically implied understandings than the term peace journalism. The reference to peace in the term may evoke impression that the type of reporting blindly endorses "peace propaganda" (Bläsi, 2009: 6), which is indeed a conflict insensitive slant ignoring complexities of the problem. Thus, in this paper the concepts of peace journalism and conflict sensitive journalism are used interchangeably but also in conjunction. The concepts carry identical main tenets. However, conflict sensitive approach is a term that well captures the notion beyond a simple dichotomy between peace and war journalism. Conflict sensitivity can be understood as an aspect that makes peace journalism the process of being "one step ahead of the ruling social discourse in the direction of de-escalation, conflict resolution, and reconciliation" (Kempf, 2003: 9).

The reference to journalism in the term limits its implication to the journalistic profession, which fails to embrace the reality that a massive amount of media content today is produced outside of the profession, for example the user-generated content (Dylko & McCluskey, 2012). For this reason, Ward (2014) called professional media-journalistic ethics obsolete in the contemporary era. Ward encouraged a notion towards radical global communication ethics as the normative code to guide not just journalists but also a general public in decision-making on what and how ought to be said on various media platforms. Thus, further discussion of radical communication/media ethics that is provided in this paper will be particularly well addressed by thinking of conflict sensitivity as not exclusively constrained by professional belonging. An appropriate term could perhaps be conflict sensitive communication. The type of communication, whether professional or not, which is the one that should be one step ahead of ruling discourse towards peacebuilding (Kempf, 2003).

Peace journalism finds support in framing (Lee in Wilkins & Christians, 2009; Lynch & Galtung, 2010). Lynch and Galtung especially relied on Entman's (1993, 2003) model of framing, where frames are viewed as structures of elite discourse and media coverage as well as public's schemata of interpretation. A frame, throughout various listed stages of its existence, provides a specific definition of a problem, attribution of causes, moral evaluation, and remedy recommendation. Gitlin (1980) pointed as evident that journalists are not able to avoid framing as only a limited number of attributes of an issue physically fits into a media coverage. Hence, peace journalism proponents have argued that conflict sensitivity ought to be the preferably adopted frame (Lynch & Galtung, 2010). Peace journalism basically exemplifies expansion of framing theory into a normative realm (Lee in Wilkins & Christians, 2009). The normative recommendation holds that peace journalistic/conflict sensitive framing is ethically preferable way of describing conflictual situations than war journalistic framing. This moral superiority is grounded in Galtung's broader theory of peacebuilding; a development of more profoundly peaceful global societies (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, & Miall, 2011).

In summary, this subsection has provided a review of main theoretical points of peace journalism. These tenets include an assertion that conflict coverage should be framed in a particular way that is attentive to complexities of the situation, array of the involved parties, positive and negative actions on all involved sides, and possible nonviolent paths of addressing the issues. The necessity of such conflict sensitive coverage is justified by theorists as being one of crucial building blocks for more sustainable global peace. The following subsection includes some important highlights in empirical scholarly work that deals with peace journalism.

2.2 Empirical findings

Lee and Maslog (2005) observed that "peace journalism made a leap from theory to practice without the benefit of research" (p. 313). Alike, Hanitzsch (2004: 492) wrote: "Although much has been written about the benefits and limitations of peace journalism, many contributions to the debate are based on normative reasoning rather than empirical research." Since this criticism has been voiced, several scholars took up the challenge to proliferate the body of empirical work on peace journalism.

The first category of empirical works that incorporate peace journalism are content analyses. Particularly noteworthy analyses were conducted by Lee and Maslog (2005) and Maslog, Lee, and Kim (2006), where tenets of war and peace journalism were used to derive content categories. The authors were able to empirically demonstrate that war journalism is one of the styles of mass media conflict coverage in non-Western countries as well. Furthermore, the authors sketched which specific tenets of war and peace journalism are predominantly used by the analyzed media outlets. The content analysis scholarship shows that war and peace journalism is indeed a phenomenon. Also, this type of empirical scholarship provides information on how exactly peace and war journalism tends to look in real media coverage.

The second category of empirical works includes experimental studies. The basic theoretical tenets of peace journalism contain a profound assumption of peace journalism having specific effects on individuals and perhaps also societies as wholes. Experimental research is therefore a necessary step to substantiate these claims with evidence. However, the body of experimental studies is less numerous in comparison to other academic works on the topic. Some of the notable effects studies include Kempf (2005), Schaefer (2006), Kempf (2008), Lynch and McGoldrick (2013), and Thiel and Kempf (2014). Authors have found both confirmations as well as limitations of peace journalism effects. For example, Kempf's (2005) experiment demonstrated that exposure to peace journalism is associated with lesser tendency of audience members to view a conflict in polarized terms of binary oppositions. Lynch and McGoldrick (2013) found in their experiment that peace journalism is associated with increased levels of hope and empathy and decreased levels of anger and fear in emotions of audience members. However, the effects of peace journalism are not the same for all of the audience and peace journalism can produce reactance among hardliners who already have subscribed to black and white painting (Kempf & Thiel 2012).

On the whole, the up-to-date empirical findings support the tenets of a deductive model of peace journalism, which expects prosocial and peace-facilitative effects on audiences. Researchers have provided and are providing evidence for normative claims of conflict sensitivity. The empirical evidence offers an important supplementary foundation backing the importance of further normative theory-building, which is outlined in this paper.

3.   Situating peace journalism in normative mass communication theory

Hanitzsch (2004) pointed out that peace journalism has a robust inclination towards a normative niche of mass communication theory. This section addresses how peace journalism factors into the larger spectrum of a general normative mass communication theory. This area of theory outlines what media are ought to do. Christians and colleagues (2009) distinguished four potential normative roles, which mass media are expected to play in the society; collaborative, monitorial, facilitative, and radical (Table 1). The argument, on which this paper bases its thesis, is that peace journalism is a normative mass communication theory that promotes a radical role of mass media in society. The radical role is the only one that represents a true opposition to the structure that is created by the sociopolitical system.

	Interpretation of media's normative obligations	Media's relationship with the sociopolitical system
Collaborative Role	• Media maintain social order • Support stability of the system	• Media are willing and highly integral part of the system
Monitorial Role	• Media inform the public about all relevant events	• Media operate within the system
Facilitative Role	• Media actively support development and thriving of civil society	• Media still operate within the system, however, contribute to reforms by helping different groups to gain voice
Radical Role	• Media speak up against problematic aspects of the system • Empower various echelons of society	• Media challenge the system and attempt to change or reform the sociopolitical order

Table 1: Normative roles of mass media (according to Christians et al., 2009).

Christians and colleagues (2009: 181-182) wrote that the radical understanding of the role of mass media in society entails "journalism as an instrument for challenging and changing political and economic systems." Unlike

the other three possible normative roles of mass media (monitorial, facilitative, and collaborative), the radical role presumes a situation in society where injustices and marginalization are present. Thus, the normative demand on mass media is to challenge the power structures while defending those who are oppressed. Peace journalism also presupposes an injustice in war journalism, which serves the purposes of elites and militarism. Hence, peace journalism must be understood as operating against the system in an attempt to change it (Shinar, 2007), which makes peace journalism a radical alternative.

A normative tendency of the radical role of mass media has roots in political economy of Marxian philosophy (Christians et al., 2009). The authors pointed out that the applicability of the radical role goes beyond specific aspects of an oppression that stems utterly from politics and economics. The radical role of journalism incorporates an active fight against marginalization based on gender, race, ethnicity, and a number of other characteristics. A hostility to peace should also be inserted to the list of oppressions that are perpetuated within the sociopolitical power structures of today's world (Giroux, 2008; Harvey, 2005). Giroux proposed that one of the main characteristics of the current capitalist Western regimes is militarism. This propensity is embodied in the governments' tendency to view foreign affairs exclusively through a militaristic lens. According to Giroux, a direct war or a threat of violence are becoming the two go-to tools that are applied to address international crises. Harvey also asserted that the contemporary dominant philosophies of the political thought in the West (neoliberalism and neoconservatism) privilege violent means over peaceful means of world politics. In the light of the arguments of Giroux and Harvey, peace journalism very organically fits into the radical role of mass media.

While this section has illustrated the radically-leaning placement of peace journalism in the established landscape of normative media theory (Christians et al., 2009), the next section focuses on the novel contribution that peace journalism brings to this theory.

4. Peace journalism's resonance with new directions of normative media theory

Peace journalism fits into the category of radical role of mass media in normative sense. The term radical in this instance refers to the quality that it poses a challenge to the established sociopolitical system. Additionally, the radical aptitude of peace journalism also compliments a new wave of normative mass communication theory. In the next instance the term radical reflects the rethought vision of what mass media encompass, who creates media content, and what set of normative implications stem from the new reality.

4.1 Universal principles of peace journalism

This subsection highlights peace journalism's versatility in complimenting the core moral value of democracy. The subsection furthermore outlines how peace journalism adequately factors into more universal notion of morality as well.

The dominant take on normative media theory recognizes values of democracy as the basis (e.g., Christians at al., 2009; Wyatt, 2007). Peace journalism promotes the idea of opposition to all forms of violence as the basic normative principle (Lynch & Galtung, 2010). It is vital to address this difference in the view of the foundational moral value concepts. Importantly, peace journalism is not incompatible with democracy. Instead, peace journalism is facilitative for democracy. According to Shinar (2009), war journalism (with its propagandistic tendencies of oversimplification of a conflict, demonization of one of the conflict parties, and essentially partial depiction of the events) contributes to misinforming citizens about crucial facts. For a truly meaningful democracy to function, a necessary condition is informed citizenry. Thus, war journalism is antagonistic to principles of democracy. Ivie (2009) suggested that peace journalism is the more pro-democratic alternative, as it provides citizens with pertinent facts and information that are indispensable for a meaningful deliberation within the public sphere.

Unlike democracy-centered tradition of Western normative media theory, peace journalism reaches beyond the democratic niche. Some theorists of media ethics have been proposing that it is timely to move beyond limitations of the philosophy of the global North-West in order to incorporate more inclusive moral values into mass communication normative theory (e.g., Ward & Wasserman, 2010; Ward & Wasserman, 2014). Christians and Nordenstreng (2004) drew one path along which a truly global normative media theory might be constructed.

Christians and Nordenstreng (2004: 25) reviewed a diverse body of philosophical thought on normative perspectives in order to derive a truly "culturally diverse" approach – to uncover values that should be located within the roots of global conversation about mass media ethics. The authors proposed that sacredness of life is the universal value: "Reverence for life on earth establishes a level playing field for cross-cultural collaboration on the ethical foundations of social responsibility. It represents a universalism from the ground up" (Christians & Nordenstreng, 2004: 21). The authors drew a link between value universalism and implications of this universal value to normative expectations placed on mass media professionals: "Through this understanding of worldwide social responsibility, journalists are committed to such values as international understanding and peace alongside

skills-oriented professional competence" (Christians & Nordenstreng, 2004: 25). The link between the propositions of Christians and Nordenstreng (2004: 21) and the basic tenets of peace journalism are even more explicit in the following statement: "In our systematic reflection on this primordial generality, we recognize that it entails such basic ethical principles as human dignity, truth, and nonviolence." These three basic principles are unequivocally compatible with peace journalism's four basic principles of orientation towards truth instead of propaganda, people instead of elites, conflict itself instead of violence, and solution instead of victory (Lynch & Galtung, 2010). Hence, peace journalism adequately compliments the new endeavor of normative media theory with its universal capacities.

4.2 Radical media ethics

The above mentioned notion towards global universalism has an implication for another contemporary call in the arena of mass communication normative theory. Ward (2014) deemed the current state of journalism ethics as obsolete and indeed inappropriate for the existing mass media landscape. Ward recapped that the radical changes in mass media landscape require radical changes in mass media ethics. For example, the modern professional media ethical code was conceived as a response to radical change in mass media production and distribution due to the rapid progress of the industrial revolution. The most noteworthy developments of contemporary technologies create a media landscape that is according to Ward (1) "democratized" as citizens are active contributors to media content and (2) "globalized" as the discourses on media platforms easily transcend borders. The existing possibilities and inclusions that are enabled by digital media should provide a blueprint for the reformed, and radical, media ethics. Ward (2014: 9) advocated for such reformed media ethics that would encompass "unity in difference." This approach recognizes that integrative notions are important for ethical codes in creation of a playing field where a set of universal principles provides structure, which is crucial for a common ground of understanding. Christians and Nordenstreng's (2004) universal principles, which correspond to basic tenets of peace journalism (Lynch & Galtung, 2010), emerge as one such value that factors well into the radical global media code that Ward encouraged.

Importantly, Ward (2014) rejected the limiting notion of professionalism in the proposal of radical global media ethics. The expansion beyond professional ethics is what essentially makes Ward's proposal of new ethics radical in its core. Ward highlighted that since the new media landscape is truly global and democratized, the negotiation and relevance of ethics must be global and democratized as well. This means that global public must have an access to negotiate the new ethics and this new ethics would apply to all media content creators, which today is not entirely restricted to media professionals, such journalists. Ward (2014: 15) concluded that radical media ethics are for "responsible communicators of our digital media world." This is specifically crucial because the focus is moving from specialized media norms, which are applicable to professionals, toward general communication norms, which are applicable to the public. The original tenets of peace journalism, as recalled by Lynch and Galtung (2010), with the stress on substituting focus from elites to people, suitably perform for the radical normative role in addressing the context of modern media landscape.

Conflict sensitivity, as the essence within the peace journalism project, has implications for radical global media ethics. Peace journalism proposal recognized the importance of journalistic media content in the process of transcending conflicts. Other than professional content, which is so abundant on the contemporary media platforms of the Internet and social media, should not be ignored as also an active part of the process towards global peacebuilding. Ramifications are that conflict sensitivity represents a norm of how both journalists and members of a wider public ought to talk about conflicts. While Benn (2015) drew a continuum, where passive types of peace journalism match the criteria of traditional "good journalism" and active types match the tendencies of alternative media that explore potential solutions of conflicts, user-generated communication has not yet been entered into this normative discussion. Radical media ethics theory helps to acknowledge normative value of conflict sensitivity in all mediated communication.

In summary of this section, peace journalism demonstrates that it has the capacity to expand the current state of normative mass communication theory. Peace journalism corresponds to universal principles that are, according to social responsibility arguments, fundamental for development of normative media framework on global scale (Christians & Nordenstreng, 2004). Also, peace journalism is compatible with the call for radical reconfiguration of communication ethics that would recognize democratization and globalization of the contemporary mass media landscape (Ward, 2014).

Before continuing with the discussion of peace journalism/conflict sensitivity and radical communication/media ethics, the practicality of peace journalism has to be considered. What are limitations of practicality of peace journalism for professionals who cover present-day crises and conflicts while working in the environment of "old" and "new" media (besides other impactful contextual settings)? This pertinent question is encountered in the following section.

5. Considerations of practicality

An important point that has to be addressed concerns the practicality of applying peace journalism. Bläsi (2009) listed a set of obstructions that diminish conceivability of conflict sensitive coverage; ranging from broader concerns such as journalistic system, existing propaganda, and public climate regarding the issue, to idiosyncratic aspects such as individual characteristics of journalists, characteristics of a particular audience, and the on-site situation including limitations of access to information. Bläsi recognized that the degree to which these limitations pose a threat to peace journalism is impacted by the type of conflict; nonviolent conflict, violent conflict, or aftermath of a violent conflict.

The issues faced by journalists who employ conflict sensitivity are specifically severe in connection to international crises and conflicts (Terzis, 2008). These types of issues are subjected to strong pressures of nationalism and propaganda. Bläsi (2009) also pointed out a tremendous difficulties for implementing peace journalism by professionals in covering specifically violent conflicts. The roots of these limitations are located in structural and cultural types of violence (Galtung, 1969; 1990). Two specific selected examples of drawbacks of implementing peace journalism that are discussed in this section are social ostracism and cooption of new media technologies against conflict sensitivity.

Praxis of peace journalism is possible. The simple evidence of this claim is the fact that it is being practiced by journalists across the world (Lynch & Galtung, 2010). Increasing number of projects has been focusing on proliferation of peace journalism through pedagogical initiatives that educate professionals in the field (e.g., Obonyo, 2010; Terzis, 2008; Youngblood, 2012). Furthermore, many journalists are already practicing peace journalism without necessarily being aware of its theoretical existence; Lynch, Hackett, and Shaw (2011: 11) referred to this group as "accidental peace journalists." However, the relevant question remains to what degree peace journalists are able to maintain consistent fidelity to the tenets of conflict sensitivity when confronted with realities.

For instance, Terzis (2008) recalled limitations to practicality of peace journalism by media professionals who work in the countries that are directly involved in specific conflicts. Terzis pointed out that students (who were also journalists) from the peace journalism educational program that the author conducted, initially after the program practiced peace journalism. Nevertheless, many journalists found it difficult to continue this pathway because the conflict sensitive media content that they were producing was perceived by their compatriots as inappropriate and even somewhat treasonous. In certain real situations, professionals might face social ostracism and other negative repercussions of practicing peace journalism. Terzis, thus, concluded that a broader movement on all levels of the system is necessary in order to increase peace capacity of culture in general.

Another double-edged sword that is directly related to practicality of peace journalism is the advancement of new technologies, particularly communication media technologies. New technologies provide countless opportunities for information dissemination, and many theorists saw emancipation of people being enabled specifically thanks to the new media (e.g., Fenton, 2008; Poster, 2007). This way, new technologies are an immensely useful tool for peace journalism praxis, as the technologies help in collection of materials on specific conflicts. However, some scholars also warned that the new media technologies would become just another tool that serves to proliferate existing problems and disparities (e.g., Meek, 2000; Morozov, 2011; Schiller, 2000). In this sense, new media are coopted to spread misinformation, cover-ups, and propaganda. So, war journalism is benefiting from the new technologies as well. Such trend poses a limitation to practicality of peace journalism.

The two above-mentioned limitations to practicing peace journalism are just symptoms of a larger problem of structural and cultural violence (Galtung, 1969; 1990). Galtung has been asserting that peace journalism is not sufficient on its own to implement true reform of society. Broader changes are necessary across the overall societal structure. Peace journalism, however, plays a necessary role in the notions towards the change. Galtung advocated for a peace movement that combats violence on all levels. One level is the direct level, which corresponds to actual war and other forms of harming of people, property, and environment. Furthermore, violence also exists on structural level; this category encompasses systemic disparities, which are avoidable but remain perpetuated, and which cause harm to people, property, and environment. Galung also outlined the concept of cultural violence; this category includes all cultural artifacts, ranging from myths to songs, from stereotypes to media content, which are used to justify structural or direct violence. The impacts of structural and cultural violence halt work of peace journalists. Structural and/or cultural obstacles to peace journalism are posed through, for instance, socially ostracizing specific journalists or coopting new media technologies to spread propaganda of war journalism. Thus, when considering limits to practicality of peace journalism, broad problems of structural and cultural violence must be addressed. Similar line of reasoning is proposed by Bläsi (2009) in asserting that in order to attain a shift towards peace journalism in coverage of violent conflicts, which is difficult to achieve, it is necessary to first pursue implementation of consistent peace journalism in coverage of nonviolent conflicts. It is an example of resistance to normalization of cultural violence in any conflict media coverage.

6. Radical – conflict sensitive – communication ethics

Galtung (1969; 1990) emphasized that cultural violence essentially feeds both structural violence and direct violence. Mass media are a part of culture but are also a co-creator of culture. Hence, mass media might function as vehicles for dissemination of culturally violent elements that are already present in common attitudes, but also act as co-creators of culturally violent elements. Similar understandings have been also proposed by Giroux (2008), Harvey (2005), and Herman and Chomsky (1988). A very stern stand was taken by Hamelink (2008), who proposed that mass media's calls for violence should be perceived and treated as war crimes. Within such view it is mass media's responsibility contributing to formation of the culture that enables violence. This reality needs peace journalism as the answer, despite the practical difficulties. Particularly as these practical difficulties are just another pieces of evidence demonstrating cultural and structural roots of the broader violence. Hence, the cultural changes are necessary in order to cut the culturally violent sources of sustenance of other types of violence.

Furthermore, another complication arrives with the technological advancements of the present epoch – digital media and thus the democratized access to media content creation. As citizens around the world contribute to creation of culturally violent media content, they are essentially an active part of the mechanism that feeds violence on its various levels. Ward's (2014) radical communication/media ethics thus emerges as an indeed necessary normative response. While peace journalism has been presented in this paper as the normatively superior alternative for professional journalists, radical communication/media ethics with incorporated principles of conflict sensitivity represents a preferable normative choice for a general global ethical code of communicating about conflicts.

7. Future research suggestions

The theoretical discussion of normative implications that is proposed in this paper would tremendously benefit from conduction of pertinent empirical studies. As was already mentioned in this paper, peace journalism researchers have already started applying empirical methods in testing of tenets of the theory. Such studies will be helpful in engaging broader groups of scholars in the field. In instances when practical goals of social improvement are the objective, paradigmatic diversity should be embraced (Craig, 1999).

A specific case that would likely yield interesting empirical findings is the war in Donbass/Eastern Ukraine. This conflict and its settings provide the features that are well capturing the complexities of the era, which are addressed by the theorists cited in this paper. The conflict itself is very convoluted with a number of internal and external parties that are in some way connected to it. The discourse that surrounds the conflict includes very polarized and war oriented elements in many cases. The populations that are involved within the conflict are of rather high digital access and digital literacy levels. Also, the actual places where conflict is taking some demonstrated shapes or forms, including places that are impacted by furious direct violence, are covered by professional journalists as well as by non-professionals. Thus, besides professional coverage materials, online platforms show a large number of stories, photos, and footage from the region that are produced by citizens, combatants, and other individuals on the ground. This convoluted case could serve in exploring a number of research questions about the role of conflict sensitivity/peace journalism and radical communication/media ethics.

8. Conclusion

Peace journalism is a broader movement that incorporates theoretical and empirical branches as well as practical and pedagogical initiatives. Within the framework of normative media theory, peace journalism is compatible with the view that promotes the radical role of mass media in society, which presupposes that the media are to serve as one of the challengers of oppressive power structures. Peace journalism has also an aptitude to integrate into the innovative paradigmatic formations in the field of media ethics. It is specifically peace journalism's radical aspect that positions it as well suited to contribute to renegotiation of normative role of the mass media in globalized and democratized world that is enabled by the new technologies. Nonetheless, peace journalism faces numerous difficulties with practical implementation, specifically when considering coverage of violent crises and conflicts, where the complications emerge as especially pronounced. A broader radical opposition to structural and cultural violence is essential in establishment of a society that is truly receptive to conflict sensitivity/peace journalism. Essentially a global shift, among professionals and regular citizen-communicators, should advance towards conflict sensitivity, in order to transcend the culturally violent elements of covering conflicts. Similar efforts will bring numerous challenges, however, these efforts are tremendously worthwhile – and perhaps even necessary for survival chances of the contemporary world. The *radical – conflict sensitive – communication/media ethics* notion will assist the creation of more peace-prone global societies.

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