ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation:	THE "PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHERS": HOW JOURNALISM EDUCATORS ARE INNOVATING AND COLLABORATING IN RESPONSE TO THE NEWS CRISIS
	Alison Burns, Doctor of Journalism Studies, 2023
Dissertation directed by:	Professor, Linda Steiner, Philip Merrill College of Journalism

This dissertation examines the motives, experiences, and perspectives of journalism faculty members at colleges and universities who have invented, developed, and led innovative experiential learning collaborations in their programs. Through qualitative interviews and constructivist grounded theory, this study finds that journalism educators are launching specific types of collaborative projects in response to ongoing and emerging problems in journalism. This dissertation offers a typology of ideal-type j-school collaborations, and a new conceptualization of *collaboration as a strategy for democratic stewarding in journalism education*.

THE “PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHERS”: HOW JOURNALISM EDUCATORS ARE INNOVATING AND COLLABORATING IN RESPONSE TO THE NEWS CRISIS

by

Mary Alison Burns

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
2023

Advisory Committee:
Professor Linda Steiner, Chair
Associate Professor Kalyani Chadha
Professor Deborah Nelson
Professor Karen O’Brien
Associate Professor Krishnan Vasudevan

Dedication

For my mom and dad

Acknowledgements

More than anything else, I have learned through this PhD process about the transformative power of caring women in my life. Thank you to my mentor, advisor, and friend Dr. Linda Steiner. When I left a 20-year career as a TV and radio reporter, I thought my "big career" that had been such a huge part of my life and identity was behind me. I was so wrong. Linda has inspired and guided me in her brilliant and thoughtful way to find new purpose as a journalism scholar and teacher. She is a treasure in this field, and I'm in awe that I get to work with her. Thank you, Linda!

Special thanks to my dissertation committee: Kalyani Chadha, Deb Nelson, Karen O'Brien, and Krishnan Vasudevan. Kalyani, you have been a wonderful mentor and role model. Deb, you have made such a difference in our field as a journalist and teacher, and I'm honored that you are on my committee. Karen, I'm so glad we met as Do Good Faculty Fellows. Thank you for sharing this journey with me. Krishnan, I see you as one of the most innovative faculty members in our program. It's exciting to hear about your projects and accomplishments. Thank you for sharing your ideas and taking such an interest in mine. Thanks also to the Merrill College faculty, especially Mark Feldstein and Ira Chinoy for hiring me as an adjunct lecturer and always being available to listen, to Clint Bucco for being a friend and ally, and to Lucy Dalglish and Rafael Lorente for supporting me and greenlighting my ideas.

The trouble with becoming a graduate student *at a certain age* is that life can get in the way, and it can be a painfully humbling experience. More than anything, you need allies who see what you're going through, know your strengths, and can offer wise counsel and support.

For me, one of my biggest allies and cheerleaders is Vanessa Nichols-Holmes. When I felt lost, invisible, and frustrated, she reminded me what I was doing right and kept me in the game. Thank you, Vanessa.

Thanks to my mom, Elizabeth Burns, who loves me so much and wants to see me get every last drop out of this incredible learning experience. From helping me with my notes and charts, to searching for relevant articles, and motivating me to try to make this dissertation really matter to journalism, my mom has been a constant source of support and generosity. Thanks, Mom! Thanks also to my aunt Mary Louise de Sarran for her kindness and positivity.

Of course, none of this would have been possible without my husband Steve holding down the fort at home, driving the kids to school and practice, making meals, paying the bills, and making sure I always had gas in the car! This, I know, is his "love language." My sons, James and Leo, are my guiding lights. I'm so thankful for their hugs, laughter, and pep talks. James and Leo, you make me so proud every day.

I am also grateful for the encouragement of my PhD buddies: Karin Assmann, April Spray Newton, Sohana Nasrin, Bobbie Foster, Dinfin Mulupi, and Ben Parks. Thanks to my UMD Scholars family, especially Kelly Brower and Susannah Washburn. Finally, I have the smartest and best friends in the world to thank for their love and loyalty: Alana Anyse, Emily Dubis, Heidi Junk, Annie Murphy Paul, Brooke Steuart, Lisa Wood, and my Annapolis Landing book club sisters.

Table of Contents:

Chapter 1: Introduction

Collaborate or die. A growing number of journalists and journalism educators are embracing this grim warning as a rallying cry. At the 2022 Collaborative Journalism Summit in Chicago, organizers printed the phrase on brightly colored stickers, while speakers at the conference used it to emphasize the idea that sharing resources, information, and knowledge through innovative partnerships will be the key to journalism's survival in the foreseeable future. At the same conference, keynote speaker Marina Walker Guevara declared that the trend toward collaboration is the biggest paradigm change in journalism in 50 years. Guevara, the Director of the Pulitzer Center, managed two of the largest collaborations of reporters in journalism history: The Panama Papers and the Paradise Papers. She explained, "Just think about all the things we had to unlearn in order to put radical sharing at the center of our reporting. For centuries journalism's whole ethos revolved around hoarding information, scooping others, getting ahead alone. The thing is…the world got complicated, interconnected, and increasingly more dangerous, and so did the stories that the lone wolf reporter was trying to tackle in glorified isolation" (Guevara, Conference Presentation, 2022).

Among those engaging in innovative collaborations, in response to upheaval in the news industry, are journalism educators (Salahi-Smith, 2021). Faculty-led journalism collaborations with other universities, foundations, professional news organizations, civic organizations, and community media outlets have played an important role in responding to transformations in the field. Among other things, they have expanded news coverage in communities identified as

news deserts, provided a lifeline to struggling news organizations, and launched cutting edge and inclusive approaches to investigative reporting and immersive storytelling. For example, students and faculty at the University of Kansas partnered with civic leaders, and eventually a journalism foundation, to create an online community newspaper in Eudora, Kansas – a town of 6,000 that lost local news when the newspaper closed in 2009 (Finneman et al., 2022). Students and faculty at the University of Georgia's Grady College recently teamed up with a local newspaper publisher to save a 148-year old weekly newspaper in rural Oglethorpe, Georgia (Freeman, 2021). At my own University, the University of Maryland, the Merrill College of Journalism's Howard Center for Investigative reporting has won the SPJ Sigma Delta Chi award for collaborative journalism three years in a row, most recently for its collaboration with six other universities, including HBCUs, on *Printing Hate*, an investigation of the racist past of white-owned newspapers. As Finneman et al. noted in their 2022 study *Reimagining Journalistic Roles: How Student Journalists Are Taking on the U.S. News Desert Crisis*, "journalism schools with professional faculty, a steady influx of young reporters, and multimedia equipment resources have critical infrastructure to help serve communities' information needs" (p.2).

Researchers have also found that students involved in collaborative journalism projects have challenged traditional news values that emphasize conflict, immediacy, and elite voices, by focusing on engagement, service, solutions, community building, and in-depth coverage of issues that affect marginalized communities (Francisco, Lenhoff & Schudson, 2012). In her 2020 book, Olsen identifies university-based newsroom/classroom collaboratives as "ideological lighthouses" because of their potential to function in a way that allows them to be standard

bearers to the rest of the profession through their "high-legitimating – and thus profession strengthening – value" (Olsen, 2020, p.128). Journalism philanthropists have embraced university-based collaboratives as innovative and potentially vital for democracy by producing news for and about underserved communities. In June 2022, the University of Vermont launched the national Center for Community News, supported by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, to build a database of news-academic partnerships and support them with the goal of "using creative solutions to help fill news gaps, train emerging journalists, and create a more sustainable economic news model for the future" (University of Vermont, 2022). At a 2022 conference, Rowan University professor Mark Berkey Gerard, who studies collaborative news ventures, identified more than 100 partnerships between colleges and universities and professional news organizations in the United States that had either recently concluded or were ongoing. His surveys and interviews with faculty members and news staffers found that foundation grants were their primary source of funding for collaborative projects, and that almost everyone he surveyed said the partnership was significant to the goals of their academic program (Gerard, Conference Presentation, 2022).

Despite the growing interest in producing and researching university-based journalism collaborations, gaps in knowledge and understanding persist about the type of journalism they are producing, how and what they're teaching, and ultimately, the purpose and impact of their work. This dissertation investigates the perspectives and experiences of journalism faculty members at colleges and universities related to innovative journalistic collaborations in their programs, the extent to which they view different types of collaborations as a direct response to problems in the journalism field, and how those projects advance the work of democratic

stewarding in journalism education. The American Association of State Colleges and Universities has called on universities to embrace the role of democratic stewards by educating students for a diverse democracy and empowering graduates as "civic agents ensuring America delivers on its promise for everyone" (AASCU, 2022). I also apply sociologist and journalism scholar Michael Schudson's (2013) conceptualization of *democratic stewarding* to analyze how collaborative projects in journalism education might promote journalism that serves a participatory and inclusive democracy. Schudson described democratic stewarding in journalism as providing citizens information-centered political news, offering news and political analysis, undertaking investigative reporting, presenting "social empathy" stories, providing a location for public conversation, attending to how representative democracies work, and mobilizing citizens for political life. Schudson also coined the term "practical philosophers" that I have adopted in this dissertation, to describe journalism innovators who are "inventing notable responses to a crisis of journalistic legitimacy that is shaking the profession they thought they were a part of or hoped to enter" (Schudson, 2013, p.169).

In-depth interviews with journalism educators leading collaborative projects enable me to provide new insight into the motives, processes, opportunities, and challenges associated with various types of college and university-based experiential learning collaborations. This dissertation also proposes a typology that categorizes collaborative projects at journalism schools based on types of partnerships, outcomes, and goals of the faculty members who lead them. Scholars have argued that typologies that categorize activities and phenomena generate theories that provide blueprints for future research and innovation (Doty & Glick, 1994).

I believe that this dissertation's most significant contribution to journalism scholarship could be this typology that identifies and analyzes the democratic stewarding functions of collaborative projects in journalism education. This typology proposes nine ideal types of functions of j-school collaborations that individually or, ideally in combination, are hypothesized to help respond to the news crisis and promote journalism schools as democratic stewards. The nine ideal type functions of j-school collaborations are: coverage expanding, citizen informing, civic discourse facilitating, co-cultural connecting, critical consciousness raising, community building, cutting edge experimenting, cross training, and credibility boosting. While some of the projects that faculty members described to me fall into one or a few of these categories, other projects have successfully carried out nearly all these functions, essentially simultaneously. For example, a j-school partnership in which students train veteran journalists in rural newsrooms on digital audience engagement would be categorized as a coverage expanding, cross training, and co-cultural connecting collaboration. I categorized another project as cutting-edge experimenting, coverage expanding, citizen informing, civic discourse facilitating, critical consciousness raising, and co-cultural connecting. This project involved partnerships between a reporting class at a small private college with national audience engagement organizations and a local newspaper to use billboards, texting services, and community listening sessions to reach people who were experiencing food insecurity issues. The college journalism students connected people in the community who responded to their outreach with helpful resources, reported on the problem for a local newspaper, and hosted community forums with civic leaders about the issue. I have detailed the criteria for each category in the methods chapter of this dissertation and then used the categories to

analyze interview data in the findings chapters. Ultimately, I hope this dissertation will help journalism educators and other stakeholders identify and carry out more meaningful and impactful experiential learning collaborations, especially those that advance the role of journalism schools as stewards of democracy.

1.2 Background of the problem:

Newsroom closures, "apocalyptic" workforce reductions (Allsop, 2020), the rapid rise of online disinformation, and the public's plummeting trust in the news media have raised immediate concerns about the viability of journalism and consequently, the future of democracy. At the same time, the news industry is facing a reckoning about its own lack of diversity and systemic problems in coverage of marginalized communities which have contributed to political polarization and distrust of the news media (Kuhnhenn, 2020). In the search for solutions to this escalating news crisis, the spotlight is on journalism educators and researchers to invent, develop, and study innovations that prioritize democratic values such as multi-cultural inclusion, public service, and civic engagement and that offer some hope for repairing and revitalizing journalism (Moody & Burleson, 2013; Robinson, 2017; Olsen, 2020; Valencia-Forester, 2020). Among the approaches for responding to change and preserving journalism's democratic mission is the paradigm shift toward journalistic collaboration, which has been described as "a key to survival" (Effron, 2019), a "survival strategy" (Salahi-Smith, 2021), a way "sustain journalism's most important contributions to society" ("All Together Now," 2009, para. 1), and a way to "fulfill journalism's mission in the face of profound economic challenges" (Graves & Konieczna, 2015).

In university-based journalism programs, collaborative experiential learning projects are often initiated and carried out as part of the "learn by doing" or "teaching hospital" model that involves student collaborations with professional journalists and other stakeholders in the production of news under academic guidance and supervision (Valencia-Forester, 2020). Graves and Konieczna (2015) described journalistic collaborations as "news sharing" that involves deliberate cooperative behaviors between two or more newsrooms working together to produce and/or distribute news (p.1967). Nevertheless, collaborative endeavors in university-based journalism programs have also included partnerships to produce and/or distribute news with other schools, civic organizations and/or community groups. Experiential journalism programs that implement this model have also been referred to in journalism scholarship under the umbrella terms of "work-integrated learning" or "service learning," as newsroom/classroom hybrids (Olsen,2020; Valencia-Forester, 2020), university-based newsroom collaboratives (Schaffer, 2013), and pedagogical newsrooms (Jaakkola, 2019). Journalism educators have also carried out collaborative projects in a service-learning capacity with other schools, philanthropic and civic organizations, that do not result in the production of news. Such projects have involved news literacy workshops, summer journalism camps for high school students, and other community outreach and education activities (Clark, 2013; Mensing, 2013; Moody & Burleson, 2013; Novek, 1999; Solkin, 2022).

Despite new scholarly attention to j-school collaboratives, Salahi and Smith (2021) described news-academic partnerships as "understudied." They carried out one of the first empirical studies about contemporary university-based journalism collaborations, examining perceptions of news-academic partnerships as a sustainable business model. Their interviews

and surveys with news managers and journalism faculty revealed that news and resource sharing between universities and professional newsrooms seemed important for sustaining meaningful journalism. They wrote:

> The purpose of news-academic partnerships seems twofold: For universities, it is providing an experiential opportunity for students, and is serving as a pipeline for students to enter the media field. For media organizations, this partnership further establishes their presence within and commitment to the community and serves to fill gaps in news coverage given shrinking budgets and staff. (Salahi & Smith, 2021, p.13)

Their study also identified challenges in news-academic partnerships, including misaligned expectations and differences in perceived cost-benefits that will be detailed in the next chapter.

While Salahi and Smith, and other researchers (see Olsen, 2020) have found collaboration to be a useful strategy for sustaining meaningful journalism, there are still significant gaps in theory and knowledge about the motives, processes, partnerships, accomplishments, and challenges involved in different types of university-based journalism collaborative projects and the extent to which they seek to address specific problems in the journalism field.

1.3 Purpose of the study:

This qualitative study investigates the perspectives and experiences of journalism faculty members at colleges and universities related to innovative journalistic collaborations in their programs, and the extent to which they view different types of collaborations as innovative or novel and a direct response to problems in the journalism field. This dissertation

builds on recent studies that demonstrate new scholarly attention to collaborative projects in journalism education: Salahi and Smith's 2021 study of news-academic partnerships as a sustainable business model and Olsen's 2020 book *Newsroom-Classroom Hybrids: Student Labor and the Journalism Crisis*. While both studies offered significant – possibly even groundbreaking – insight into how journalism schools engage in collaborations with professional news outlets, my dissertation takes a broader look at how j-schools and individual faculty members invent, develop, and carry out collaborative projects with a range of partners, sometimes for purposes other than the production of news.

This dissertation provides new insight about the motives, processes, accomplishments, and challenges associated with various types of collaborations in journalism education. Its typology categorizes collaborative projects at journalism schools based on types of partnerships, outcomes, and goals of the faculty members who lead them. I will argue that this typology can guide journalism educators as they pursue partnerships and projects to solve specific problems in journalism, thus expanding the role of journalism schools as democratic stewards.

1.4 Significance of the study:

Ultimately, this research seeks to make a valuable contribution to journalism studies through new theoretical propositions and greater understanding of how faculty members define, teach, and seek to repair and revitalize journalism through innovative collaborations during a time of upheaval and turmoil in the field. This research could impact how educators and administrators understand, explain, and implement strategies aimed at improving teaching

and learning in journalism education. Among other things, if educators come to understand that some of these new concepts and approaches are not necessarily at odds with the solid, rigorous, empirically grounded journalism that they are accustomed to, and if they see the successes that other universities are having with these newer approaches, including collaborations, they may be more willing to launch their own innovative projects. My study may also help generate understandings of best practices that can be used, shared, and further developed and elaborated.

1.5 Primary research questions:

This project began with my interest in solving some of the problems I had observed as a reporter and journalism teacher, specifically my worry that journalism schools were dispatching students to cover marginalized communities without ensuring they understood the culture of those communities and how news outlets had historically misrepresented and harmed them. As a researcher, I also wanted to know how other journalism educators were addressing this issue and if there was any potential to collaborate with people in those diverse communities so our students could understand more about them and produce more accurate news coverage. Soon I found a corps of journalism educators, journalists, and supporters around the world who are actively and enthusiastically inventing, developing and engaging in collaborations to address problems in the field. However, there was scant research about their projects, goals, and outcomes. Ultimately, my research evolved into this dissertation's investigation of the following questions:

RQ1: *What do faculty members see as problems facing the journalism field and to what extent are they pursuing specific types of partnerships and collaborative projects to address those issues?*

RQ2: *To what extent do journalism educators seek to situate collaborative projects within diverse communities? What is the logic behind this, for example, do they see such collaboration as a way of understanding civic life and playing an active role in improving it?*

RQ3: *How do faculty members describe the challenges and opportunities with developing and sustaining different types of collaborative partnerships?*

1.6 Research design:

To gain a greater understanding of how faculty members seek to address problems in the journalism field through various types of innovative collaborations, this qualitative study employs a constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2006, 2014). The grounded theory research approach developed by sociologists Glaser and Strauss in 1967 seeks to generate a general explanation of a process or action as its shaped by the views of those involved (Charmaz, 2006, 2014; Creswell & Poth, 2018). Instead of using research to verify or test pre-existing theories, they advocated for "systematically discovering and interpreting empirical data to generate theory" (Rakow, 2018, p. 11). More recently, one of their former students, Kathy Charmaz (2006, 2014) offered a constructivist and interpretivist approach to grounded theory that allows for the researcher and the participant to play a role together in the construction of meaning (Martin, 2018) as well as more flexible, responsive GT methods that

consider “diverse, local worlds, multiple realities and complexities of particular worlds, views and actions” (Creswell & Poth, p. 134). This approach seems especially appropriate for my study of faculty perspectives as I seek to understand how journalism educators with diverse backgrounds in unique settings make meaning of their work.

As I will explain my methods section, data collection for this research primarily involves interviews with journalism educators about their perspectives and experiences. Scholars have found interviews are especially well suited to “understanding the social actor’s experience, knowledge, and worldview (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, p. 173). I interviewed 20 journalism faculty members from 16 different colleges and universities who have led collaborative projects.

1.7 Theoretical Framework:

Constructivist grounded theory has provided an opportunity for me to launch this dissertation as an open and exploratory process of data gathering and analysis. The constructivist grounded theory approach been used to study faculty perspectives and experiences in higher education and has led to new conceptualizations of innovative teaching and learning strategies (Hachtmann, 2012; Venance et al, 2013), and thus is proven to be a useful tool for data collection and analysis for this dissertation research. Details about those studies and a more detailed description of this methodology are in the methods section of this dissertation.

Three other theoretical frameworks that have proven useful for providing some degree of focus and direction for analyzing and understanding the role of university-based collaborative newsrooms come from: Graves and Konieczna’s (2015) treatment of journalistic

collaboration as field repair; a "Deweyan approach" to journalism education based on John Dewey's philosophy of the role of journalism to facilitate inclusive public discourse (Robinson, 2017); and Michael Schudson's (2013) categorizations of the functions of journalists as "stewards of democracy." Graves and Konieczna (2015) propose treating journalistic collaboration as "field repair." They define field repair in journalism as "self-conscious efforts to respond to the on-going crisis in journalism – directly, by providing the kinds of public affairs coverage that seems to be lacking, and indirectly, through institution-building meant to promote such coverage in the news industry as a whole" (p.1968). Their field repair approach relies on the concept of "field" introduced by French sociologist and philosopher Pierre Bourdieu (2005), who defines fields as semi-autonomous sites of struggle where occupants seek to "valorize" their economic and cultural capital (Benson, 2006, p. 160). In the case of journalism, field repair "highlights journalistic failure in order to ratify new alternatives" and "protect journalism by changing it and legitimizing new approaches to or definitions of professional, objective reporting" (Graves and Konieczna, 2015, p. 1969).

As part of their study of journalistic collaboration as field repair, Graves and Konieczna (2015) studied news sharing practices at two investigative news non-profits (The Center for Public Integrity and the Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism (WCIJ)) and two national fact-checking groups (FactCheck.org and Politifact). The researchers conducted hundreds of hours of participant observation in the newsrooms, carried out dozens of in-depth and informal interviews, and participated in newsroom meetings and training sessions. Graves and Konieczna found the practice of sharing resources and stories in partnership with other news outlets challenged traditional reporting norms that valued competition, in favor of collaboration for the

sake of preserving and advancing journalism's watchdog role and holding officials accountable for false claims. Graves and Konieczna concluded the collaborative work of the news organizations they studied reflects "a critique of conventional political reporting that simply transmits official claims" and an "appeal to the democratic mission of journalism, highlighting ways news organizations must work together to address the field's failures and face its threats" (p. 1977). In this case, examining university-based collaborative journalism projects through a field repair lens means I am seeking information from journalism educators through in-depth interviews about what they perceive as problems, or areas of struggle and failure, in journalism and journalism education and how – if at all – collaborative endeavors are or could be playing a role in reform and repair.

This project is also guided by what other researchers have referred to as a "Deweyan framework" (Robinson, 2017; Hermida et al, 2011) - a theoretical approach based on the philosophy of John Dewey that the active participation of ethical and informed citizens is essential to a functioning democracy and that the role of journalists is to facilitate an inclusive public discourse (Dewey,1954; Hermida et al, 2011). To that end, Robinson maintains that journalism educators are uniquely positioned to affect the path of democracy by "shaping the profession of the press and influencing those who will steer its future" (Robinson, 2017, p.303). In her article, *Teaching Journalism for Better Community: A Deweyan Approach*, Robinson (2017) argued that journalism educators can play a role in improving society by teaching students to think critically about how institutions – including the news media – have long privileged Whites and perpetuated institutional racism and individual stereotypes: "Today's journalists must be trained to understand their complicities in what can be toxic structures, and

they must be given the knowledge to help rebuild them" (p. 304). Robinson proposed that rebuilding can begin through pedagogical strategies "aimed at better aligning the journalism profession with more inclusive democracy" (p.303). Adopting a Deweyan framework means I am also investigating the extent to which faculty members seek to situate collaborative projects within diverse communities as a method of understanding civic life and playing an active role in improving it. Placing this study in the context of journalism education's role in a healthy democracy seems especially relevant now because of what the News Integrity Initiative at the Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism refers to as this "unique cultural moment" for the journalism industry in the United States to address its failures to accurately cover and serve people of color and represent the nation's diversity (Equity First, 2020).

Finally, sociologist Michael Schudson (2013) has proposed categorizing democratic functions of the press and casting journalists as democratic stewards, albeit "reluctant," stewards of democracy. He wrote, "Journalism serves democracy in a variety of ways: providing citizens information-centered political news, offering political analysis, undertaking investigative reporting, presenting "social empathy" stories that–often in a human-interest vein–inform citizens about neighbors and groups they may not know or understand, providing a location for public conversation, attending to how representative democracies work, and mobilizing citizens for political life by advocating candidates, policies, and viewpoints" (Schudson, 2013, p.167). I argue that university-based journalism collaborations have great potential to play a vital role in carrying out those services to democracy, thus elevating the role of journalism schools – students and faculty - as "stewards of democracy."

1.8 Chapter outlines:

In Chapter 2, I review existing scholarship surrounding how journalism educators are responding to transformation and upheaval in the field, and the extent to which a growing number of faculty members and journalism programs are *responding* to industry and societal changes and challenges by *reckoning* with mistakes and missed opportunities and *refocusing* on innovative and collaborative journalistic projects. This dissertation takes the position that journalism educators can – and should – respond to the current crisis in journalism by engaging in various types of innovative and collaborative experiential learning projects that could also have the potential to expand the role of journalism programs as democratic stewards. In this literature review, I examine how existing scholarship supports or challenges that position.

Chapter 3 details my qualitative grounded theory approach to this dissertation. I explain the grounded theory approach, why I chose to use it, and how I applied it to this dissertation. This chapter also explicates how the data from interviews with journalism faculty members led me to identify nine primary and overlapping functions of collaborative projects in journalism education and conceptualize a grounded theory typology of those functions. I will also explain how this typology provides a framework for theorizing about collaboration as a strategy for responding to the crisis in journalism and promoting democratic stewarding in journalism education.

Having introduced a grounded theory typology in Chapter 3, I will use it in Chapter 4 to frame my analysis of faculty member descriptions of their collaborative projects. In other words, I will use the typology to analyze real world experiences and perspectives of journalism

educators. This chapter also provides data and analysis relating to RQ1 about what faculty members see as problems in the journalism field and how they are developing and carrying out collaborative projects in response to those issues.

In Chapter 5, I report my findings related to RQ2 & RQ3 that examine the extent to which journalism educators situate their collaborations in diverse communities and how they describe the benefits and opportunities associated with different types of collaborative partners. One of the most encouraging findings in this dissertation is the commitment expressed by faculty members to situate their projects in diverse communities for the purpose of "getting students out of their comfort zones" and elevating marginalized voices that have historically been misrepresented or ignored in news and media coverage.

In Chapter 6, I offer an overview of conclusions, discuss the limitations of this research, and offer recommendations for research. I conclude that while more journalism educators seem to be engaging in more collaborative projects related to news production and audience engagement and experimenting with novel approaches to teaching and learning in response to crises in journalism, faculty members often see these projects – while successful - as temporary or one-off activities. My interviews indicate that only those collaborations affiliated with larger, well-funded colleges that have built the projects into the identity of their programs through news bureaus, specialized investigative or innovation centers seem to have much hope of long-term impact or sustainability. I draw no broad conclusions about which types of partnerships are best overall, but the data show how certain partnerships seem more suited to specific goals.

Summary:

Journalism educators nationwide are launching innovative collaborative experiential learning projects in direct response to transformation and upheaval in the news industry. Graves and Konieczna (2015) have described collaboration in journalism as field repair: "self-conscious efforts to respond to the on-going crisis in journalism." This qualitative study investigates the motives, perspectives, and experiences of journalism faculty members at colleges and universities related to innovative journalistic collaborations in their programs, and the extent to which they view different types of collaborative projects and partnerships as a direct response to problems in the journalism field. Through data from in-depth interviews with journalism faculty members, this project provides new insight about the motives, processes, accomplishments, and challenges associated with various types of collaborations. I'm also proposing a typology that categorizes collaborative projects at journalism schools based on types of partnerships, outcomes, and goals of the faculty members who lead them. I will argue that this typology can guide journalism educators as they pursue partnerships and projects to solve specific problems in journalism, thus expanding the role of journalism schools as democratic stewards.

Chapter 2. Literature review

The late journalism scholar James Carey observed that journalism programs have always been an uneasy fit on university campuses: "this rough-hewn craft has never been very comfortable in the overstuffed chairs of the faculty commons upholstered for professors of the liberal arts and the traditional professions of theology, law and medicine" (Carey, 2000, p.16). He added that where journalism programs exist, the pursuit of journalism as a social act that is deeply democratic, pluralistic, humanistic, and imaginative "is a modest part of the whole" of journalism education. Carey argued that for the most part, universities and journalism educators have undercut the potential of journalism as an academic study and missed opportunities that have "radically compromised the possibilities of a democratic and public life I think in the contemporary world" (p.23).

Twenty years after Carey's critique, journalism educators are facing the consequences of those missed opportunities and could finally be taking a more collaborative and inclusive approach to addressing them. At a time when America's democratic institutions are under siege, news audiences are splintering into partisan camps, disinformation is spreading wider and faster than truth, and the business model for local news is collapsing, more journalism programs are launching activities that could signal a more inclusive, reform-oriented model of teaching and learning, and producing news, that is ***more situated in improving democratic and public life***. These activities include the development of investigative journalism centers that interrogate societal injustices, partnerships to save and expand community news, collaborations with community and civic groups, and new courses on diversity and inclusion

and community-engaged listening and reporting. After decades of debate - and even disappointment - within academia and the journalism industry about the purpose and value of formal, university-based journalism programs, researchers are finding emerging evidence that journalism schools are beginning to have a real-world impact on repairing and revitalizing news and helping journalism survive.

While the "standard model" of journalism education that relies on more traditional "tried and trusted" industry-led routines still dominates most j-school curriculums (Solkin, 2020), this literature review will review published literature on how faculty and journalism programs are *responding* to industry and societal changes and challenges by *reckoning* with mistakes and missed opportunities, and *refocusing* on innovative, inclusive, and collaborative journalistic projects. To fully understand the purpose and value of my dissertation, it's important to consider my findings, analysis, and recommendations in the context of existing scholarship about journalism education, including debates about definitions of journalism, the role of journalism and journalism education in a democracy, and ultimately what and how we should be teaching students. I take the position that journalism educators can – and should – respond to the current crisis in journalism by engaging in various types of innovative, inclusive, and collaborative projects that could also have the potential to expand the role of journalism programs as democratic stewards. In this literature review, I will examine how existing scholarship supports or challenges that position.

First, in section 2.1 of this literature review, I examine attitudes toward change in journalism education. Among the significant literature in this section is Solkin's analysis of 20 years of scholarship about journalism education that reveals a spectrum of attitudes toward

change from resistant to "radical" (Solkin, 2020). In section 2.2, I look at problems associated with so-called "tried and trusted" methods of teaching journalism. In Section 2.3, I offer a summary and assessment of scholarship about the ways in which journalism educators have experimented with innovative and collaborative models of teaching and learning, including the emerging teaching hospital model and critical service learning. These studies - while limited – show journalism students are engaged in more real-world reporting and experimenting with new approaches to news gathering and storytelling through diverse partnerships, and that students, news outlets, communities are benefitting in various ways from those partnerships. It's still unclear, however, whether these practices represent any fundamental shift in approaches to journalism or journalism education. About the "teaching hospital model," Solkin noted: "Clearly journalism education needs to respond to changes in the media landscape, whether the development of authentic environments represents a step forward or not may depend on whose authenticity is being simulated and the extent to which it anticipates the future, rather than simply replicating the past (Solkin, 2020, p. 447). In section 2.4, I review existing theories and other conceptualizations of collaboration in journalism and journalism education, including collaboration as field repair (Graves and Konieczna, 2015). While most scholarship related to collaborations in journalism and journalism education focuses on newsrooms and news organizations sharing news and information, this dissertation also focuses on j-school collaborations with other organizations such as civic organizations, community groups, and journalism organizations that aim to respond to the news crisis and advance the role of journalism educators as democratic stewards. In section 2.5, I examine the concept of democratic stewarding in journalism education, including existing research and

proposals from journalism scholars, educators, and pro-democracy organizations to orient journalism education toward improving democratic life.

I conclude that collaboration as a strategy for reform and democratic stewardship in journalism education is an understudied and undertheorized phenomenon. The lack of scholarly attention has – to borrow Carey's phrase – resulted in "missed opportunities" to improve journalism, journalism education, and democratic life for diverse publics. This dissertation's conceptualization of *collaboration as a strategy democratic stewarding in journalism education* could be a valuable tool for journalism educators to reflect on and analyze the value and purpose…and greater potential of their own goals and projects.

2.1 Responding to industry and societal changes and challenges:

As Linda Steiner noted in a 2000 *Journalism* symposium, "attention must be paid" to the shortage of conceptual scholarly research aimed at the public good that is integrated into journalism classrooms. "What kinds of attitudes are promoted, and how do these stances get translated into journalism practice, when craft-oriented adjuncts encourage students to do whatever is necessary to get and keep a job, and conceptual-minded scholars insist that journalism jobs inevitably require the sacrifice of ethics to economics?" (Steiner, 2000, p.51). Steiner also called on researchers to ensure that journalism studies *mattered* to the field, including graduate and undergraduate students preparing for jobs. "[W]e must consider how best to teach them, not merely to work for the highly flawed institutions in which they may initially find themselves, but also for the less-flawed institutions they presumably will help create and nourish" (Steiner, 2000, p.50). At the same time, she acknowledged that the study of

journalism education too is often undervalued and limited - usually seen as "the Cinderella abused by her scholarly stepsisters" (Steiner, 2000, p.50). Since then, the demand for new data, analysis, and theorizing related to journalism education has taken on new urgency amid transformation in the journalism industry. According to Mensing (2017), "the need to experiment with, study, and teach journalistic practices that are powerful and engaging has never been more important" (p. 235). She reported that college and university journalism programs are dealing with significant technological, economic, social, and political changes in increasingly innovative and diverse ways that could impact journalism practice, including expanding traditional boundaries for news work and experimenting with social journalism, data journalism and non-linear storytelling. Mensing referred to these experiments in journalism schools as "living laboratories for analyzing and learning," but added that more applied scholarship and research are needed to "catalyze change in promising new directions" (Mensing, 2017, p. 233).

While more journalism educators are engaging in such experiments, and more researchers are studying them, one constant is that proposals for change have inflamed tensions about what journalism should be and what a journalism education should entail. University of Amsterdam media studies professor Mark Deuze (2018) observed that journalism's transformation from a coherent industry to a "diverse range of practices" has prompted two distinct responses from journalism educators and scholars: either they close ranks around established narrow definitions and methods of journalism or they "dive, headfirst into the chaos" (p.166) and push the boundaries of traditional newsroom constraints.

According to Folkerts (2014), discourse about the training of journalists has always been complex and political. In her monograph, *The History of Journalism Education*, Folkerts traces the origins of the different approaches to journalism education to the conflicting values of journalism as a working-class printing trade endeavor and as an emerging middle-class profession at the start of the 20th century. She writes, "The tension between educating reporters and editors to improve the quality of journalism or contribute to a democracy versus training them to function efficiently in a newspaper office – or any media environment – continues today" (p. 227). Looking to the future, experiential learning advocate Valencia-Forrester (2020) frames the debate in terms of several questions about the role of journalists in a society, "Are journalists of the future mere content creators, reacting to the news of the day? Or are they citizen-activists, working critically in the public interest as the Fourth Estate" (p.697).

Solkin's (2020) analysis of 20 years of scholarship about journalism education identified three models that represent broad approaches to journalism education from a global perspective and can be used to analyze journalism educators' response to industry and societal conditions: the standard model, the reformist model (that Solkin has named J.Ed+), and the radical model (Solkin, 2020). Each model, according to Solkin, is derived from the assumptions journalists, educators, and researchers make about the profession, the way they approach journalism education, their research focus, and their explanations of change. According to Solkin, the standard model relies on industry-led ideas about professionalism that view the role of journalism education as preparing practitioners to operate as "objective observers whose primary mission is to support and hold to account democratic institutions." Solkin described

this as the dominant model that focuses on professional competencies, rarely explores change and defines journalism as a professional practice underpinned by a stable free market system. The reformist J.Ed+ model shares many of the same assumptions about the role of journalists in society but is more responsive to change: "In this sense it reflects many of the issues current or emerging in Journalism practice and seeks to develop new content or new models to enable learners to navigate this new context" (Solkin, 2020, p.450). According to Solkin, evangelists of the J Ed+ model suggest they can save the profession, but they seek to do so by adding to the standard model rather than fundamentally changing it:

> This approach remains open to the views of professional practitioners but seeks to focus on issues which may create tensions for them. It also recognises these tensions within Journalism education itself and seeks to develop new learning models which are sustainable in a changing context. In more practical terms, it seeks to add elements or activities to the standard model rather than remove or modify, hence the use of the term J.Ed+. (Solkin, 2020, p. 452)

In contrast to the reformist J.ED+ model, Solkin wrote that the "radical model" rejects the underlying assumptions of the standard model and is more oriented to diversity and critical media perspectives, including changing relationships between journalists and audiences. Solkin observed that the radical model represents the strongest challenge yet to the standard model and recognizes journalism education should operate in many ways and can serve many communities and their unique needs. This model emphasizes experimentation in teaching and learning, sometimes with political and educational entities outside of journalism, and "deprivileges" the role of the journalist in favor of serving the needs of communities rather

than newsrooms. In other words, according to Solkin, the radical discourse of liberation from the constraints of legacy newsrooms is a discourse not all journalism educators are fully prepared to embrace. Solkin ultimately concluded that there is simply not enough research to warrant full devotion to the "radical" approach:

> Replacing the rather amorphous 'service to the public' with the more concrete engagement with the community does not, however, solve the problem of relationships or identity. Exchanging one set of referents for another without critically exploring the consequences could be calamitous. Not least, because the potential abandonment of objectivity seriously challenges the dominant construction of being a journalist. De-privileging the journalist, through education, is at odds with both the industry standard model and the market-driven reformist approach, both of which rely on professionalism as a bulwark against the influence of others. (Solkin, 2020, p.456)

While Solkin argued that abandoning "tried and trusted" models of teaching and learning journalism is too risky, other scholars maintain it would be too risky to for journalism educators to *ignore* the urgent need to create "new norms" that reimagine journalists' relationships with audiences and prioritize diversity and inclusion. At Howard University's Center for Journalism and Democracy 2022 summit, attendees received a printed mission statement that read: "The American Press must create new norms that value truth over neutrality, that challenge power rather than mirror it, and realize a multiracial democracy must be served by a multiracial press" (Jones, 2022). At a minimum, Robinson (2017) argued, journalism educators can play a role in improving society by teaching students to think critically about how institutions – including the news media – have long privileged Whites and perpetuated institutional racism and individual

stereotypes: "Today's journalists must be trained to understand their complicities in what can be toxic structures, and they must be given the knowledge to help rebuild them" (p. 304). Robinson argues that rebuilding can begin through pedagogical strategies such as community-based service learning and experiential learning "aimed at better aligning the journalism profession with more inclusive democracy" (p.303). In the next two sections of this chapter, I examine how some of the standard approaches to journalism education have contributed to those so-called toxic structures, and then I will review the extent to which new collaborative pedagogical strategies are seeking to address them.

2.2 Reckoning with mistakes and missed opportunities:

Among the first lessons in any college-level introduction to reporting class is a generally routine review of "What is news?" The professional socialization of student journalists begins when their instructors (typically current and former journalists themselves) explain traditional routines and norms, including standard definitions of news, the types of stories students should cover, and how they should cover them (McDevitt, 2002). In his article *Textbook News Values: Stable Concepts, Changing Choices*, Parks (2019) notes that factors in conceptions of news such as timeliness/immediacy, proximity, prominence, unusualness, conflict, human interest, and impact have been taught consistently since the early 1900's and remain staples of journalism textbooks today. Researchers have found that student journalists carry these learned normative news values into their professional careers as they make gatekeeping decisions about what's news and what's not news (Parks, 2019; McDevitt, 2002; Weaver & Wilhoit, 1996). Parks (2019) describes these values as "a key constituent of journalistic identity and

practice," but he adds that they do not generally lead to "well-considered or socially desirable journalism" (p.803). Research shows such narrow - yet widely used - definitions of news often result in over- dramatized, distorted, and sensationalized coverage that damages journalistic credibility, alienates audiences, and increases political polarization (Weston, nd.; Gallup – Knight Foundation, 2020). Among the problematic practices that emerge from these "commonsense" news values: The constant pressure to cover late-breaking news contributes to cynicism about reporters who parachute in to communities and deliver incomplete – even exploitative - reports that lack context and follow up. The emphasis on news and opinions that are only close to home too often leads to ethnocentric coverage that ignores global and regional perspectives and exacerbates cultural misconceptions and stereotypes. The over-emphasis on conflict often leads to over-simplified, horse-race coverage that can be polarizing and divisive and generally unhelpful in civic discourse and decision-making (Haas, 2000; MacDonald, 2006). The demand for characters of prominence in news stories results in less diversity of sources and the elevation of celebrity and elite voices in discourse while ignoring or marginalizing "real people" directly affected by issues (Gans, 2003; Parks, 2019; Haas, 2000).

The regular return to familiar "expert" and "elite" sources has long been a source of criticism of traditional news values because it means, as Haas (2007) noted, that journalism cannot work as a political institution for everyone but, rather, only for a privileged few. He wrote, "implicit in this argument is that the increasing professionalization of journalism with its virtually exclusive focus on agendas and perspectives of elite actors has distanced journalists from the concerns of ordinary citizens" (Haas, p.6). Carey argued that journalists should act as

facilitators of "public conversation" rather than "disseminators of expert information" (Carey, 1999; Haas, 2007).

Even the Society of Professional Journalists has criticized news organizations for too often relying on elite sources at the expense of accurate reporting. In an article on its website titled "Diversity is Accuracy," SPJ national diversity chair Sally Lehrman wrote:

> Some journalists balk at the idea of deliberately adding underrepresented voices to the news. They think of it as pandering, or at least distortion. But in fact, what's off the mark is most news coverage today. It overemphasizes the ideas, opinions and prominence of one particular group: usually white, upper-class males. Sometimes, studies show, other demographic slices get undue emphasis — particularly in stories about crime or poverty. (Lehrman, n.d.).

Another problematic part of the professional socialization of student journalists is the indoctrination into what journalist Jody Santos refers to as a "kind of civic celibacy" – the concept that journalists must assume the attitude and role of cool outside observers and refrain from feelings and attachments to issues and sources (Santos, 2010). In a lecture to journalism PhD students at the University of Maryland, Silvio Waisbord (2016) explained that the teaching of detachment, neutrality and objectivity as professional journalistic values has become so entrenched in journalism education, it has become what he calls a "zombie reality" (meaning that it's something dead with no soul that keeps "living" and doing harm). Schudson (1999, 2001) explained that journalists embraced the role of neutral outside observer in the early 20th century as part of an effort to gain professional credibility and audience trust, but this practice of objectivity has too often resulted in journalists "naively" trusting and reporting

statements of government officials. The professional expectation of objectivity has also created barriers between the press and the public. Haas and Steiner (2006) found that objectivity has forced journalists to avoid developing close relationships with sources out of worry those relationships could lead to accusations of bias (also cited in Ferucci, 2020). Public journalism advocates, and more recent proponents of "engaged journalism" have argued that deeper relationships with sources and dedicated community engagement is critical to creating context-rich, solution-oriented, accurate news that that is most relevant and helpful to the public (Min, 2020).

As part of the debate about how to move forward in journalism education, critics of the objectivity norm maintain it prevents student journalists from embracing an ethic of empathy and care in their emerging journalistic identity (Blank-Libra, 2016; Clark, 2013; Rosen, 1999, 2010). Such a compassionate disposition is critical for journalists to connect deeply with sources and develop stories that are rich and complex, according to Blank-Libra (2016), who also argued that the dominant approach of objectivity and avoiding bias often leads to stories with stereotypical representations and distortions of truth. Rosen (1999) challenged journalists to embrace their role as citizens and move beyond the limits of working as detached neutral observers to become more engaged in the communities they cover. He referred to the "soul of the craft" in asserting: "Journalists need ideas and convictions to guide their search for news" (p. 29).

While traditional values and norms have played a consistent role in the so-called professional socialization of journalists, reform advocates say those standards have, in many cases, done more harm than good by perpetuating practices that cause public cynicism and

apathy and widen gaps between journalists and audiences (Clark, 2013; Rosen, 2010). Such criticism (much of it from those aligned with the public journalism movement) along with the escalating news crisis, has prompted journalism educators to seek solutions beyond traditional newsgathering and reporting strategies. Mensing (2010) argued journalism educators must take the lead in expanding definitions of journalism and move to a more community-centered model of teaching and learning,

> Instead of transmitting predetermined professional standards and practices to waiting students, the role of the faculty would be to understand the dynamics of community more thoroughly and to challenge themselves and their students to develop journalism and journalism scholarship aimed at renovation and renewal of public life. (Mensing, 2010, p.517)

Predictably, proposals for change that reimagine how journalism students define and produce news and engage with and in communities have received a mixed reception among faculty and administrators in college and university journalism programs, but with so much transformation and upheaval in the journalism industry and in society, Mensing (2010) rightly observes it will become increasingly difficult for journalism programs to justify the status quo. In the next section of this chapter, I offer a summary and assessment of scholarship about the ways in which journalism educators have experimented with innovative and collaborative models of teaching and learning, including the "teaching hospital model" and critical service learning.

2.3 *Refocusing* on collaborative and innovative journalistic projects

Journalism educators are increasingly turning to innovative, collaborative models of teaching and learning to respond to the crisis in journalism. This section of my literature review focuses on two of the most dominant approaches: the teaching hospital model and critical service learning. While more research is needed about how such approaches are defined and operationalized, and the extent to which they are implemented, educators and administrators in small and large journalism programs seem to be responding to calls for change with new consideration of how journalism students define and produce news and engage with and in communities through these models. In section 2.3.1, I explain the growth and impact of the teaching hospital model. In section 2.3.2, I examine the theory and practice of critical service learning.

2.3.1: Learning by Doing: The growth and impact of the Teaching Hospital Model

A promotional article from Stonybrook University's School of Journalism described how journalism students produced a series of reports about the Long Island Pine Barrens in collaboration with a local public radio station WSHU. One of the faculty leaders on the project, Karen Masterson, described students' "learn by doing" approach:

> They went to Pine Barrens Commission meetings and town hearings. They explored the woods with ecologists. They spent time with scientists and water experts. Knocked on residents' doors. Hired a drone. Interviewed developers and environmentalists — often getting the runaround from both. They stuck to it long enough to understand the political game at play and produced fair and balanced stories. You can't teach this stuff in a classroom. (Stonybrook Journalism, 2019)

The school touted the project as part of its teaching hospital model of learning that emphasizes in-depth coverage by students of communities underserved by traditional news outlets. Stonybrook's journalism students conducted interviews and produced video and print stories for WSHU's website, while the station's news director oversaw and edited the series of reports. That type of collaborative experiential teaching model has brought significant outside funding and industry awards to many of the journalism programs that have implemented it since the teaching hospital metaphor was introduced by Columbia Graduate School of Journalism Dean Nicholas Lemann in 2009 (Lemann, 2009; Olsen, 2020). In this section of my literature review, I will show strong evidence that collaborations in journalism education, specifically through the teaching hospital model, are providing valuable investigative and local news reporting, support to struggling and emerging news outlets, experiential learning and networking opportunities for students, new opportunities for innovation in news gathering, community-engagement, and storytelling, and a reputation boost for journalism programs. These successes in themselves provide fuel to energize the news ecosystem, but researchers have also found significant challenges in carrying out these models, and prospects for the continuation and expansion of journalism education reform initiatives centered in newsroom/classroom collaboratives hinge on how journalism programs resolve practical and theoretical concerns.

In 2012, a senior advisor to the Knight Foundation, Eric Newton, delivered a speech to journalism educators promoting the teaching hospital model and calling on schools to take these four steps to remain relevant in the future: expand their role as community content providers; innovate; teach open and collaborative methods; and connect to the whole

university (Newton, 2012). Such rhetoric about experiential, collaborative, community-centered and practice-based learning has attracted interest from journalism educators as they look to reimagine the future of journalism and debate the best approaches for how journalism is taught and studied. In her typology of work-integrated learning methods, Valencia-Forester (2020) observed that the teaching hospital method has been slow to take hold but is gaining traction. She reported that journalism programs at the University of Arizona and the University of Maryland are two of the most recognized programs to carry out this model. Both have created innovation labs and investigative reporting units that pursue projects in collaboration with community partners and professional news outlets, covering in-depth issues in the public interest. Among other projects launched by colleges through the teaching hospital model: students enrolled in the City University of New York (CUNY) Graduate School of Journalism started their own news service to help local ethnic news outlets expand their coverage, The University of Alabama Graduate School of Journalism partnered with a small town newspaper to expand their "community journalism" mission, and The University of Southern California's Journalism School has launched more than a dozen reporting initiatives, including a community news site, to serve a South Los Angeles neighborhood, home to many low-income African-Americans and Latino immigrant residents (Francisco, Lenhoff & Schudson, 2012). Since 2014, The Online News Association has awarded more than $1.7 million in "micro-grants" to 48 university-based projects through its Challenge Fund for Innovation in Journalism Education (ONA website, N.D.). The ONA website states the goal of the Challenge Fund "is to hack the journalism curriculum using customized versions of the teaching hospital model" that offer

experiments focusing on diversity, technology, civic engagement and building trust. In announcing the 2020 winners, an article on the ONA website said,

> Each winner will receive a $20,000 micro-grant to carry out their experiments, including projects focused on engaging community members in telling their own stories, detecting bias in local coverage of Black communities and neighborhood-level efforts to improve voter turnout and availability of health data. (Rabarison, 2020)

The teaching hospital model has even been deemed potentially lifesaving to professional reporting through its increased public affairs reporting and service to underserved/disconnected communities (Olsen, 2020; Newton, 2012). In *Newsroom-Classroom Hybrids at Universities: Student Labor and the Journalism Crisis*, Olsen (2020) explained that journalism programs at colleges and universities are not only grappling with how and what to teach students in the new media landscape, they are also facing high stakes questions about whether their students and faculty can and should play an active role in "saving the profession." Olsen noted that while journalism students had been collaborating with professional media organizations in the production of news before Lemann's 2009 speech, the concept – launched at the height of a recession and massive newsroom layoffs – was introduced as a new solution to the journalism crisis. Olsen observed the concept was promoted as a "win-win" strategy that would provide communities with the journalistic work of more than 200,000 journalism and mass-communication students in the United States while teaching them to become professional reporters. Yet, as is see in some of the criticism later in this section, this approach might not always deliver for students or the audiences they are serving.

Olsen's study of newsroom/classroom hybrids focused on whether four university-based investigative reporting centers were able to fulfill their newsroom role and their classroom role at the same time. She found that while they were reliant on funding from philanthropic sources which could threaten their autonomy, they were successful in providing the quality reporting they aimed to produce. Through a content analysis of stories, Olsen found the typical story produced by these newsroom/classroom investigative centers was a "hard news" story, defined as being politically relevant, reported in a thematic way, focused on the societal consequences of events, and was impersonal and unemotional in style (Olsen, 2020, p. 112). She also found the typical story was built on more than 30 sources, reached large audiences, and covered socially relevant issues such as politics, business and the economy. She wrote:

To them, responsible and engaging community journalism, providing democratic relevant information and testing the liability of the powerful, equals quality. In contrast, non-original, commercial-oriented reporting is described as 'crap' or 'noise'. (Olsen, 2020, p.182).

However, Olsen also found that the University-based newsroom/classroom hybrids she studied favored male, elite sources – an indicator, she says, of low-quality journalism. She defined "elite" sources as politicians, leaders, experts/professionals, and other persons at the top of their field. She defined "ordinary" sources as other sources used in stories, usually consumers, activists, family members, relatives, witnesses, and victims. She broke down her analysis of sources as follows:

- Of the total, 64 percent were men and 36 percent were women. Three sources were children.

- Of the total number of men who were sources for stories, 72 percent were elite sources and 28 percent were ordinary sources.
- Of the total number of women who were sources for stories, 48 percent were elite sources and 52 percent were ordinary sources.

While Olsen described most of the reporting at the university-based collaboratives as containing indicators of high quality, she cited research that an elite focus is an indicator of low-quality reporting because such an orientation limits the range of opinions to which the public is exposed, often promotes private interest over public interest, and makes it harder for journalists to act as an independent "fourth estate" (Olsen, 2020; Schudson, 2008; Kovack & Rosenstiel, 2007, p.52-53).

In 2021, Salahi and Smith examined the value of news-academic partnerships as an emerging collaborative journalism business model. They conducted an online survey with 36 journalism faculty members and newsroom employees involved in news-academic partnerships. Their survey participants said the collaboration was beneficial to students because of the opportunity for professional experience, and beneficial to the academic institution because it provided an opportunity to promote the institution to the public and "extend the brand" of the institution in the eyes of the news organizations. Participants who worked in newsrooms also said the partnership was extremely beneficial to them because it provided added personnel and supplemental news coverage, increased community engagement, and in some cases – provided innovative storytelling methods with new technology that they normally didn't have the time, staffing or budget to try. Salahi and Smith wrote:

> Local newsrooms have struggled for years because of revenue declines and increasing digital competition. To help combat the hardships, local news organizations across the nation are turning to nearby academic institutions to form news-academic partnerships to collaborate on news production – providing news outlets with additional staff and technological resources while helping colleges and universities provide their students with experiential learning opportunities not available in classrooms. The most prominent partnership structure reported was one that involved a single news organization collaborating with students within the premise of an academic course. (Salahi-Smith, 2021, p.19)

Salahi and Smith's study also found several perceived challenges with news-academic partnerships including misaligned expectations and goals and differences in perceived cost-benefits. In some cases, student work did not meet professional standards. Students had varying levels of engagement in the projects (often because they were juggling other work and classes). Most of the students working on the projects were unpaid – even though they are doing the same tasks as an entry-level reporter. Faculty members also reported the work was very labor intensive for them, and they faced the risk of "faculty burnout." However, Salahi and Smith ultimately determined that their findings suggested overcoming those challenges could "theoretically" position news organizations and academic institutions to work tother to build a sustainable business model in journalism.

Critics of the teaching hospital model argue it should be "approached with caution" because of its potential to exploit students as unpaid labor while setting students up for insecure jobs in a flailing industry (Picard, 2015, p. 8). Contrary to Salahi and Smith's finding that the news-

academic partnerships were extremely beneficial to students, Olsen's (2020) interviews with faculty and students found newsroom-classroom hybrids are ultimately more successful in their *newsroom* role than in their *classroom* role. Olsen found that while all students learned something, some - especially those assigned to research tasks alone – seemed to learn very little. She wrote:

> In order to produce some of the quality reporting they find endangered, these centers intentionally give production precedence over teaching and learning. The conviction seems to be that as long as their students are part of a reporting process, they will learn. This is however only partly true. (p.183).

The prospects for the continuation and expansion of journalism education reform initiatives centered in newsroom/classroom collaboratives hinge on how journalism programs resolve practical and theoretical concerns. Many of these concerns seem so significant, that combined with the history of division in the journalism academy, they threaten the likelihood of real, substantive change in programs and paradigms in journalism education and in the future of journalism. Concerns about desired student outcomes and allocation of resources, as well as faculty qualifications and commitments have already slowed – and even halted – implementation of new teaching and learning models in some journalism programs (Valencia-Forrester, 2020; Olsen, 2020; Newton, 2012; Francisco, Lenhoff & Schudson, 2012).

Debates about desired student outcomes often revolve around professional norms and values and the time commitments required of students. For example, some critics argue students compromise journalistic professionalism and autonomy by working closely – sometimes collaborating with – with community partners. They also question the value of

teaching students a "strengths-based" reporting strategy that seeks to redress negative media portrayals of vulnerable populations through focusing on strengths, instead of "perceived stereotypical deficits" of those populations (Valencia-Forrester, 2020, p. 705). In her critique of the teaching hospital model, Mensing (2013) advocates a model less focused on producing news content and more committed to fostering community relationships and civic engagement. She worries the teaching hospital model could actually slow the response to change: "Rather than creating conditions for students to help re-think journalistic practices, the teaching hospital model reinforces the conviction that content delivery is the primary purpose of journalism. Put simply, it makes it hard for students to think differently" (p.27). I agree with Mensing's concerns, however, it seems that there is both a valuable role to play for journalism programs through news production to help serve information needs in communities, while also experimenting with new approaches to community building and civic engagement.

Other critics of the teaching hospital model and other forms of community-engaged learning worry students are not equipped to deal with negative - sometimes threatening - reactions from sources, community partners and audiences to their reporting and other outreach efforts. Critics have also raised concerns about too much pressure on students who can't afford to commit sometimes 35 to 40 hours a week on reporting and community-engagement projects, while also taking other courses and working to pay for college (Olsen, 2020; Francisco, Lenhoff & Schudson, 2012).

Debates about faculty qualifications and workload also threaten implementation of new teaching and learning models. In a stern message to college presidents, funders supporting the teaching hospital model demanded they hire more "top professionals" to carry out reforms.

Eric Newton of the Knight Foundation said in 2012, "This digital model requires top professionals in important positions in academia, treated equally with top scholars. Having more top professionals around would, for most schools, be a big change." He added, "Universities must be willing to destroy and recreate themselves to be a part of the future of news" (Newton, 2012). His letter – not surprisingly – sparked an outcry from scholars nationwide who deemed his message anti-intellectual, short on real change, and adopting an unnecessarily threatening tone.

Using Solkin's criteria discussed earlier in this chapter, a more "radical" approach to teaching and learning in journalism education is critical service learning. This model also relies on community-based experiential learning but is more focused on collaboration and cooperation with community partners and civic organizations and does not always involve the production of news and the "privileging" of journalists. Critics have argued that such partnerships could threaten the teaching of journalistic autonomy and objectivity. In the next sub-section of this literature review, I examine the theory and practice of service learning in journalism education.

2.3.2 Service learning in journalism education: theory and practice:

The Association of American Colleges and Universities has designated service learning as a high-impact practice that gives students "direct experience with issues they are studying in the curriculum and with ongoing efforts to analyze and solve problems in the community" (Kuhnhenn, 2008). Campus Compact, a coalition of more than 1,100 colleges and universities dedicated to building democracy through civic education and community development,

promotes service learning as “a form of experiential education in which students engage in activities that address human and community needs, together with structured opportunities for reflection designed to achieve desired learning outcomes” (Jacoby, 1996).

The concept of learning through service-based activities is rooted in John Dewey’s educational philosophy that emphasizes experiential learning, inquiry and reflective thinking, and his social philosophy that encourages democratic participation and active community involvement (Giles & Eyler, 1994). In *Democracy and Education, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education* (1923), Dewey stressed that the acquisition of knowledge comes from ongoing experience, rather than what is “stored” in books. He wrote, “No matter how true what is learned to those who found it out and in whose experience it functioned, there is nothing which makes it knowledge to the pupils. It might as well be something about Mars or about some fanciful country unless it fructifies in the individual's own life” (Dewey, 1923, p.398).

For Dewey, learning through experience also required a reflective disposition, including open mindedness, careful consideration of the consequences of actions, and “wholeheartedness” (Zwozdiak-Myers, 2018. p.5). Dewey wrote, “a genuine enthusiasm is an attitude that operates as an intellectual force” (Dewey, 1933, p.30). This reflective disposition has become a core part of the service-learning curriculum, usually in the form of students writing regular structured reflections and participating in reflective discussions throughout their service experience. (Jacoby, 2014) The theoretical foundations of the “service” aspect of service learning are also found in Dewey’s philosophies about community, citizenship, and democracy. According to Giles and Eyler in *The Theoretical Roots of Service Learning in John Dewey* (1994),

one of Dewey's major critiques of American public school philosophy and pedagogy was that it had not led to the development of a "humane and moral" society (p.82). He advocated that students experience the "mutuality" of social life and embrace their role as citizens in a democracy through participation in community and service (Giles & Eyler, 1994).

Journalists and journalism scholars have also been inspired by John Dewey's writing about community, citizenship, and democracy to develop approaches that situate journalists and journalism students within communities as a method of understanding civic life and playing an active role in improving it (Robinson, 2017). In her call for including service learning in the journalism curriculum and adopting a "Deweyan approach," Robinson wrote: "The journalism educator, then, is in a unique position to help improve society. That person helps shape the profession of the press by influencing those who will steer its future and will affect the path of democracy in the process"(Robinson, 2017, p.303). Such calls have much in common with the Dewey-inspired public journalism movement, which also includes appeals to teach journalism aimed at invigorating bonds connecting journalism, citizenship, and democracy (Carey, 1987; Lambeth, 1998; Rosen, 1999; Haas, 2000; Rosenberry, 2017). As James Carey put it, "The core of humane learning is the possession of a common culture with enough durability to transform today's students into tomorrow's leaders, persons who feel a sense of care and responsibility for their fellow citizens and for the noblest of our democratic traditions. That is still the essence of university life and any humane program of education even in the age of high-tech" (Carey, 1987, p.198).

Researchers seeking such a "humane program of education" have also identified service learning as a practice that could provide a framework for the development of what Brazilian

educator and philosopher Paolo Freire called conscientização, or critical consciousness (Rosenberger, 2000, Cipolle, 2007). In Freire's landmark critique of education methods and approaches, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, he declared that educators are guilty of "narration sickness"; Freire accused teachers of relying on a "banking concept" of teaching in which they "deposit" narratives of their choosing and the student is the depository who passively receives information (Freire, 1970, 2018, p.72). In that conceptualization, students accept the teacher's narrative without challenge, and generally refrain from creative thinking and problem solving.

As a solution (and revolution), Freire advocated for a more "dialogical" approach, a "problem posing education" in which teachers and students engage in critical thinking and discussions that work toward overcoming oppression and false perceptions of reality (p.86). At the time of publication, Freire's praxis was aimed at oppressed populations in third world countries. Fifty years later it has been applied across classes and disciplines to facilitate the development of "critical consciousness," a process of learning to perceive societal inequities and become an agent of social change (Barrera, Willner, & Kukahiko, 2017). Jacoby (2014) embraced the inclusion of Freire's social justice orientation in her manual *Service-Learning Essentials*. She explained the inclusion of a social justice mandate in service learning is in some cases referred to as critical service learning. "Critical service-learning reflection should address issues of power and privilege, race, class and oppression," she wrote (p.238).

In their qualitative study about Latina/o youth empowerment through a service learning project, Vargas and Erba (2017) pointed out that Dewey and Freire's philosophies share many common tenets: dialogue and experiential learning, a link between reflection and community action, and the social change potential of education. But Vargas and Erba argue Freire's unique

theoretical contribution to the foundations of service learning is based on his desire to transform conditions that lead to oppression. They wrote: "The political commitment inherent in Freirean pedagogy makes it especially pertinent for scholars theorizing service learning with working-class racial/ethnic communities" (Vargas & Erba, 2017, p. 204). Thus, applying Freire's pedagogy to service learning in journalism education not only could facilitate critical thinking about social inequities and power structures, but it might also help prompt students to identify news media practices that are "oppressive" and unjust to immigrant communities and to take action aimed at disrupting such practices.

While research is limited, studies show that service learning can be an effective pedagogical strategy for journalism educators to bridge gaps between theory and practice and ready students to become more competent and reflective citizens and professionals. Studies have found that participation in critical service-learning courses enabled journalism students to critique existing systems of power and develop a globally sensitive worldview (Clark, 2013), cultivate "investigative" reporting skills (Flournoy, 2007), engage with social and political networks in communities while developing deeper understandings of community problems, including in one case that "increased sensitivity to children at risk and the beginnings of a sense of commitment to the welfare of youth" (Novek, 1999), and re-think traditional norms of journalism (Robinson, 2017).

In 2017, the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) recognized teachers who facilitated a range of service-based learning opportunities for journalism and mass communication students. The winning entries for the "Best Practices in Teaching" award included projects that enabled journalism students to mentor K-12 students in

diverse communities, work with vulnerable populations in Malawi, interview notable journalists to create an oral history of newspapers, and partner with community leaders, scientists and activists to create a theatrical performance, virtual reality stories, and digital narratives about the impact of climate change. Instructors for those courses reported students developed deeper problem-solving skills, broke down "silos in their respective disciplines," and worked as teams, learned about community histories, and how to collaborate with community partners (AEJMC, 2017).

Despite the success stories, service learning appears to be under-practiced and understudied in journalism education. Panici and Laskey's 2002 study of how journalism and mass communication (JMC) educators defined and implemented service learning is the only comprehensive study that measures how many JMC educators used service learning, how they did it and what they thought was the impact of the experience on students. Panici and Laskey found just 52% of schools responding to their survey had integrated service learning into their JMC programs. Participants defined service learning primarily as an experiential, holistic practice for "establishing community" and connecting students with people in the community through service-based projects (Panici & Laskey, 2002).

More recently calls are intensifying across academic disciplines to "embrace education for civic learning and action" and more colleges and universities are offering service learning in the curriculum (Jacoby, 2014); but there does not appear to be any available data showing the extent of those offerings in journalism programs today. Some critics have said service learning is ultimately of little value to students or communities and has survived on a "plethora of anecdotal results" and "impassioned claims of service-learning advocates" (Butin, 2003). Butin

(2010) also complained about the methods for measuring and assessing student outcomes. He proposed service learning would have a more appropriate "academic home" framed as an intellectual movement where academic development becomes the key measure of success, rather than community engagement and development. Supporters of service learning acknowledge there can be harmful consequences of poorly planned and implemented projects, and in some cases such efforts can reinforce negative stereotypes and deepen distrust when communities are "misused" as learning labs (Jacoby, 2014). In *Problematizing Service Learning, Critical Reflections for Development and Action*, Stewart and Webster (2010) appropriately urge educators to question and critique their own principles and practices, including critical assessment of how respectful community partnerships are formed and maintained, how much "voice" students should have in the projects, and how race, gender, age, sexual orientation, physical challenges and other factors influence development of service learning projects.

Some journalists have also questioned whether it is appropriate for journalism educators to facilitate community partnerships and service, especially aimed at the advancement of social justice because it could be construed as activism, charity work, or a violation of objectivity norms. Similar questions have dogged the pursuit and practice of public journalism; likewise, as Haas and Steiner (2006) reported, journalism students can struggle to reconcile the focus on citizen's concerns with the professional ideal of journalistic autonomy. Supporters of service learning argue that tension provides journalism students with an opportunity for critical thinking and inquiry about the roles of journalists and how they cover diverse communities, and what, if any, action they should take to challenge the status quo. Clark wrote, "There are other choices beyond serving and pandering, and these involve

engaging in exchanges that enable journalists and future journalists to both teach and to learn from their publics in ways that may be transformative for both publics and for the journalists themselves" (Clark, 2013).

Community-based teaching and learning also requires a significant amount of work to build and maintain community partnerships and coach students to effectively navigate those relationships, work that is usually undertaken by women at the lower end of the academic hierarchy who must put their own academic research – and prospects for promotion - on hold (Francisco, Lenhoff & Schudson, 2012; Valencia-Forrester, 2020, Bates, 2011).

The commitment to carry out community-based collaborative experiments in journalism education can seem overwhelming, but dedicated reformers argue it is worth it. As one faculty leader at Youngstown State University explained about his collaborative project, The News Outlet, "The program relies on generous donors, enthusiastic faculty, passionate students, and media partners open to new practices and new ideas—and with all of this, it is producing better news for communities" (Francisco, Lenhoff & Schudson, 2012). At the heart of both teaching models - the teaching hospital model and critical service learning - are collaboration, innovation, and experiential learning. As I will explain in the methods and findings chapters of this dissertation, my typology of j-school collaborations reflects the goals and functions of these innovative reform-oriented teaching and learning models, by identifying projects in terms of the following categories: coverage expanding, citizen informing, civic discourse facilitating, co-cultural connecting, critical consciousness raising, community building, cutting edge experimenting, cross training, and credibility boosting. In the next section of this literature

review, I examine scholarship related to how collaboration is conceptualized and carried out in journalism and journalism education.

2.4 Conceptualizing and analyzing collaboration in journalism and journalism education

In a major study about models of collaborative journalism, the research director for The Center for Cooperative Media (CCM), Sarah Stonebely wrote that collaborative journalism is now being practiced on a scale "that constitutes a revolution in journalism" (Stonebely, 2017, p. 19). She explained that in the past when journalism profits were large, it made sense for news outlets to see each other as competitors. However, now, with lean profits and depleted staffs, news outlets are increasingly using new digital resources to collaborate for the purposes of covering more news and reaching larger audiences (p.17). In the report, Stonebely explained how CCM conceptualizes collaborative journalism:

> We define collaborative journalism as a cooperative arrangement (formal or informal) between two or more news and information organizations, which aims to supplement each organization's resources and maximize the impact of the content produced. Collaborative journalism is not to be confused with "citizen-," "participatory-," "engaged-", "public-," or other types of journalism that solicit information from the public or consider interaction with the public a cornerstone practice (though an engagement element may be part of a collaborative project)" (Stonebely, 2017, p. 14).

For this dissertation, I am considering a more expanded and inclusive definition of journalism collaboration in the context of journalism education to include those more participatory and engaged types of journalism initiatives with partners such as community and

civic groups, other colleges, and journalism associations and organizations. Journalism reform advocates have emphasized that journalists can better serve diverse publics in a pluralist society by reimagining and developing stronger, more cooperative relationships with audiences, including community and civic organizations (Gans, 2003; Schudson, 2013; Rosenberry, 2019). As I will explain further in the findings chapter, most of the journalism educators I interviewed have demonstrated how those types of partnerships and cooperative relationships have better positioned them to respond to the news crisis and act as democratic stewards. In a 2018 Tow Center for Journalism report, *Collaboration and The Creation of a New Journalism Commons*, author Carlos Martinez de la Serna also offered such a broader, more inclusive view of "the collaboration age" in journalism:

> The distinct feature of the ongoing phase of collaboration, often labeled as collaborative journalism, is the development and open embrace of cooperative production arrangements between news organizations and others, including journalism schools and the public, to generate content that is greater than what any individual journalist, newsroom, or organization could produce on its own. (de la Serna, 2018, p.4)

The report traced the beginning of *the collaborative age* to the development of digital media in the mid 1990's that eventually led to networked activities and new alliances, especially in investigative reporting. He said the most successful collaborative journalism projects have often involved a departure from past practices and mindsets:

> Perhaps the most illustrative and well-known project of this kind was the Independent Media Center (Indymedia), a collective that grew out of the 1999 World Trade Organization protests in Seattle. This network was built around a set of tools and a

> decentralized structure to empower on-the-ground observers and 'give voice to the voiceless.' It used its own servers and open source content management systems. Local chapters negotiated their own editorial line and code. The interweaving of political activism, a new technological infrastructure, cooperative production, and a decentralized structure represented a radical alternative to the legacy, hierarchy-based production of news" (de la Serna, 2018, p. 19).

The appearance of Wikileaks around 2007 – an online organization that provided secure ways for people to anonymously submit information and share it globally - also prompted new collaborations between "professionals and amateurs, journalists and activists, news professionals and citizen whistleblowers" (Benedetta cited in de la Serna, p. 26).

The Tow Center report also identified three core themes that have emerged from the current phase of collaboration in journalism: the notion of collaboration as field repair; collaboration as shared resources for journalism; and the expanding role of journalism schools, nonprofit organizations and other players in journalistic collaborations. The idea of collaboration as field repair was proposed by Graves and Konieczna (2015), who defined field repair in journalism as "self-conscious efforts to respond to the ongoing crisis in journalism – directly, by providing the kinds of public affairs coverage that seems to be lacking, and indirectly, through institution-building meant to promote such coverage in the news industry as a whole" (p.1968). Their field repair approach relies on the concept of "field" introduced by French sociologist and philosopher Pierre Bourdieu (2005), who conceptualizes fields as semi-autonomous sites of struggle where occupants seek to "valorize" their economic and cultural capital (Benson, 2006, p. 160). In the case of journalism, field repair "highlights journalistic

failure in order to ratify new alternatives" and "protect journalism by changing it and legitimizing new approaches to or definitions of professional, objective reporting" (Graves and Konieczna, 2015, p. 1969).

As part of their examination of journalistic collaboration as field repair, Graves and Konieczna studied news sharing practices at two investigative news non-profits (The Center for Public Integrity and the Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism (WCIJ)) and two national fact-checking groups (FactCheck.org and Politifact). The researchers conducted hundreds of hours of participant observation in the newsrooms, carried out dozens of in-depth and informal interviews, and participated in newsroom meetings and training sessions. Graves and Konieczna found the practice of sharing resources and stories in partnership with other news outlets challenged traditional reporting norms that valued competition, in favor of collaboration for the sake of preserving and advancing journalism's watchdog role and holding officials accountable for false claims. Graves and Konieczna concluded the collaborative work of the news organizations they studied reflects "a critique of conventional political reporting that simply transmits official claims" and an "appeal to the democratic mission of journalism, highlighting ways news organizations must work together to address the field's failures and face its threats" (p. 1977).

While Graves and Konieczna do not specifically mention journalism schools as a part of the field of journalism, they emphasize that the center of the field is serious public affairs reporting that builds professional status – of which journalism programs are increasingly contributing. Thus, their research is highly relevant to this dissertation as it sets a framework for analyzing collaborative work in the context of problems facing the field.

The Tow report also explained that a key differentiator between the current phase of collaboration and earlier efforts at convergence has involved the critical role of diverse partners including journalism schools and non-profits in funding, developing, and sustaining projects:

> The diffusion of collaboration is related to another transformative phenomenon: the creation of a new commons for journalism, or a collection of intricate, shared resources reshaping the material and cultural conditions of newswork as a social practice subject to vulnerabilities that require collaboration. (de la Serna, 2018, p. 10)

During the 2022 Collaborative Journalism Summit, keynote speaker Marina Walker Guevara put collaborative work in the context of responding to threats to democracy by asking if journalists were collaborating enough. She said, "I am counting on this community's journalistic ingenuity and courage to give us a sharper image of our dwindling democracy, a deeper conversation about the enduring legacy of racism in our country, and bolder ideas on how we might create a more equitable, inclusive, and sustainable media industry" (Guevara, 2022). Such questions are hardly new but have taken on new urgency in newsrooms and in journalism schools. In the next section of this literature review, I explore the concept of democratic stewarding in journalism education, including existing research and proposals from journalism scholars, educators, and pro-democracy organizations to orient journalism education toward safeguarding and improving democratic life.

2.5 **Conceptualizing journalism education as democratic stewardship**

I am completing this dissertation at a time when it seems journalists and educators - including me - are in a mad scramble to try to say and do the right thing to not just save

journalism, but also to save democracy. The urgency is prompted by the rise of authoritarianism around the world, efforts to overturn to the 2020 U.S. election through an insurrection in favor of Donald Trump, threats to voting rights, growing public distrust of institutions (including journalism), attacks on journalists, and the proliferation of disinformation and political polarization (Pearce, 2022). While newsrooms across the country are launching "democracy beats" to cover issues such as ballot access and election integrity, journalism colleges are revamping curriculums, adding new classes, experimenting with more inclusive approaches to reporting, and launching innovative programs to research and teach about the connections between journalism and democracy. In 2022, The *New York Times* formed a democracy team and declared that journalists cannot be "agnostic" about democracy, while the Associated Press recently hired a democracy editor to track and cover threats to democratic institutions (Pearce, 2022). Also in 2022, Howard University opened its Center for Journalism and Democracy, and Syracuse University launched its new Democracy, Journalism and Citizenship Institute in Washington, D.C. to promote civil discourse and nonpartisan research while working to restore trust in government, the nation's political system, and journalism (Weiner, 2022). In June 2020, a coalition of journalism school deans reacting to increases in attacks on journalists issued a statement reaffirming their belief that journalism is critical for a functional democracy.

Through this dissertation, I want to advance conceptualizations of journalism educators as democratic stewards, or facilitators of a stronger, more inclusive democracy. The American Association of State Colleges and Universities has called on universities to embrace the role of democratic stewards by educating students for a diverse democracy and empowering

graduates as "civic agents ensuring America delivers on its promise for everyone" (AASCU, 2021). AASCU announced its Stewards of Democracy initiative in 2021 on its website:

> U.S. democracy is under siege, pummeled by external and internal forces; marred by not establishing inclusive democratic structures, practices, and values; and abandoned by generations who don't think democracy is worth saving. *Stewards of Democracy* will be a catalyst for deploying the powerful resources of public colleges and universities to address this crisis by reframing civic learning and democratic engagement as an integral, necessary part of every aspect of the baccalaureate degree, thus empowering all students to be positive change agents. (AASCU, 221)

AASCU's Stewards of Democracy initiative includes a national conference, workshops, research projects, and resources for educators. The initiative calls on colleges and universities to invest in four "change levers:" to "galvanize leadership, activate student agency, integrate civic learning though the student experience, and invest in generative campus-community partnerships" (AASCU website).

Journalism programs are in a unique position to embrace these practices and initiatives. As Herbert Gans wrote in *Journalism, Journalism Education, and Democracy*, journalists are essential to the survival of democracy and have long seen it as their responsibility to contribute to an informed citizenry: "As they see it, democracy rests on an informed citizenry, and journalism's job is to do the informing" (Gans, 2003, p.10). Beyond teaching students how to produce citizen-informing news and analysis, Gans also called on journalism educators to rethink how journalism can improve democracy and get citizens more involved. He proposed six reforms: to encourage students to engage in experimenting to address journalism's

shortcomings; to develop courses that encourage thinking about how journalists can improve democracy; to encourage students to develop expertise on substantive beats; to teach students to produce analysis and explanatory reporting; to encourage students to reimagine the journalist-audience relationship and learn strategies for better informing and connecting with audiences; and to figure out how to operate outside the profit imperative.

Sociologist and journalism scholar Michael Schudson (2013) argued that the concept of democratic stewarding is awkward for journalism because journalists believe "democracy makes citizens their own stewards" (p.150). However, in his 2013 article *Reluctant Stewards: Journalism in a Democratic Society*, Schudson makes a powerful case for a more innovative and sophisticated approach to democratic stewardship for journalists beyond providing objective information to help people make political decisions. First, he identified functions of journalism in a democracy that included: "providing citizens information-centered political news, offering political analysis, undertaking investigative reporting, presenting "social empathy" stories that – often in a human-interest vein – inform citizens about neighbors and groups they may not know or understand, providing a location for public conversation, attending to how representative democracies work, and mobilizing citizens for political life by advocating candidates, policies, and viewpoints" (Schudson, 2013). Then, he identified some ways that journalists have innovated or could be innovating in the face of new threats to democracy. He cited some of the more recent initiatives: to police truthfulness in political discourse through fact-checking initiatives on sites like Factcheck.org, Politifact and Washington Post Fact Checker; to construct new communities of investigative reporting through non-profit collaboratives; to reinvent local news coverage on digital platforms to focus more specifically

on local politics and business; to add more in-depth explanatory and analytical reporting, or "reporting with a longer shelf life"; and to collaborate with non-journalism accountability organizations, such as groups like Human Rights Watch. He also proposed that more journalists should incorporate "crowds" in their reporting, as in crowd-sourcing information and incorporating more user-generated content:

> [T]here is increasing acceptance of the idea that stewardship can be practiced in concert with, not merely for the benefit of, media audiences. The shepherd's flock may be co-shepherds; the management's charges may be enlisted as co-managers; and for journalists, the "people formerly known as the audience," in media critic Jay Rosen's memorable phrase, can produce news content themselves. (Schudson, 2013, p. 169)

In a passage that I found one of the most inspiring among everything I've read for this dissertation, Schudson explained the importance of innovators who have launched new efforts to hold journalism to a higher standard:

> The innovators are, if you will, practical philosophers, inventing notable responses to a crisis of journalistic legitimacy that is shaking the profession they thought they were a part of or hoped to enter. The result, although it has not yet stood the test of time, may be a pluralistic set of stewardships that are healthier, as a team, than "traditional" journalism proved to be in its single-minded – and stale – style of reluctant stewardship. (Schudson, 2013, p. 169)

To me, this passage applies to every person I interviewed for this dissertation, as I view them each as "practical philosophers" who seem to have pushed themselves (and their

journalism programs) out of their comfort zones to try new, more inclusive, and collaborative approaches to respond to the news crisis and to try to repair and revitalize news.

With regard to innovations in journalism education in the face of threats to democracy, The Kettering Foundation convened a "learning exchange" among journalism educators to discuss how to reset journalism with curricular innovations that create student mind-sets and skill sets oriented to addressing the problems of democracy (Rosenberry, 2019). The learning exchange comprised 30 journalism educators who answered a series of questions about how journalism practices and journalism education should change to better serve a citizen-centered democracy. Ultimately, the learning exchange members advocated creating a system of teaching and practicing journalism that prioritized more collaboration between journalists and citizens:

> Journalism educators learning exchange members who responded to the queries held the view that journalism must be more closely attuned to community concerns if it intends to serve the needs of citizens in a democracy more effectively. The journalistic system they envisioned would accomplish this by having journalists collaborating more closely with citizens. Involving citizens in all phases of the journalistic process, notably story development and reporting, could reconceptualize the role journalism plays vis-à-vis citizens and communities, thereby creating more favorable conditions for citizens to collaboratively address those concerns. (Rosenberry, 2019, p. 9)

This dissertation builds on these ideas by collecting data from journalism educators about their innovative, collaborative projects and analyzing them through the lenses of field repair and democratic stewarding. To be democratic stewards, I argue that journalism faculty

must first educate and inspire students to fully participate in America's democracy as citizens who are working to understand and improve their communities. I have leaned heavily on Schudson's functions of journalism in a democracy and his recommendations for innovative responses to the news crisis, as well as recommendations from Gans and The Kettering Foundation that are more specific to democratic stewarding in journalism education in this dissertation's typology of ideal-type functions j-school collaborations, that will be explained in detail in Chapters 3 and 4.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

To understand the perspectives and experiences of journalism faculty members regarding innovative journalistic collaborations in their college and university programs, and the extent to which they view those endeavors as models for repairing and revitalizing news, I conducted a qualitative study using a constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2006, 2014). According to Creswell and Poth's book *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design* (2018), grounded theory researchers generate or "ground" a theory in the views and experiences of their study participants.

In section 3.1 of this chapter, I will explain the grounded theory approach, why I chose to use it, and how I applied it to this dissertation. This section also discusses how grounded theory has been used in journalism studies and in studies related to faculty perspectives. In section 3.2, I explain how I selected and recruited participants for this research. In section 3.3, I discuss my process of data collection and analysis, and why I chose to use qualitative interviewing to collect data. This section also includes the questions I used to guide my interviews. In section 3.4 I explain how the data from interviews led me to identify nine primary and overlapping functions of collaborative projects in journalism education and conceptualize a grounded theory typology of those functions. I will also explain how my typology provides a framework for theorizing about collaboration as a strategy for responding to the crisis in journalism and promoting democratic stewarding in journalism education. In section 3.5, I introduce the 20 faculty members interviewed for this project, including information about the

type of collaborative projects they have launched. I offered confidentiality and opted to use pseudonyms for my interview participants so they would feel more free to express their perspectives and avoid going through any potential administrative approval process in their programs for speaking "on the record" in-depth about their projects.

3.1 The grounded theory approach

The grounded theory research approach developed by sociologists Glaser and Strauss in 1967 seeks to generate a general explanation of a process or action as its shaped by the views of those involved (Charmaz, 2006, 2014; Creswell & Poth, 2018). Instead of using research to verify or test pre-existing theories, Glaser and Strauss advocated for "systematically discovering and interpreting empirical data to generate theory" (Rakow, 2018, p. 11). More recently, one of their former students, Kathy Charmaz (2006, 2014) offered a constructivist and interpretivist approach to grounded theory that allows for the researcher and the participant to play a role together in the construction of meaning (Martin, 2018) as well as more flexible, responsive GT methods that consider "diverse, local worlds, multiple realities and complexities of particular worlds, views and actions" (Creswell & Poth, p. 134). In her "invitation to grounded theory" at the beginning of her book *Constructing Grounded Theory* (2004), Charmaz delivers an appealing call to GT and its methods:

> Grounded theory methods will help you get started, stay involved and finish your project. The research process will bring surprises, spark ideas, and hone your analytic skills. Grounded theory methods foster seeing your data in fresh ways and exploring your ideas about data through the early analytic writing. By adopting grounded theory

> methods, you can direct, manage, and streamline your data collection and moreover, construct an original analysis of your data. (Charmaz, 2004, p.2)

Charmaz itemized the defining components of grounded theory proposed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) as simultaneous data collection and analysis, the construction of codes and categories from data, the use of a constant comparison method of analyzing data during each stage of collection and analysis, conceptualizing theory during each stage of data collection and analysis, in-depth memo-writing to identify and elaborate categories from the data (finding gaps and connections), and conducting a literature review after analysis (Charmaz, 2004, p. 6; Charmaz, 2015). She wrote that her version of constructivist GT advanced those early conceptions by emphasizing flexibility and compatibility with other qualitative and quantitative methods; she emphasizes accounting for the role of the researcher, specifically urging researchers to acknowledge their position in the world they study and their role, along with their participants, in the reality they construct (Charmaz, 2004, p.10). Throughout this dissertation data collection, analysis, theorizing, and writing, I have used Charmaz's 2004 book *Constructing Grounded Theory* as a roadmap, companion, and even as a motivational tool to reach the finish line.

A constructivist grounded theory approach has been used by other scholars to understand faculty perspectives in higher education, especially related to change and innovation. For a study of faculty perspectives related to general education curriculum change, Hachtmann (2012) conducted 29 in-depth interviews with faculty members across disciplines using constructivist grounded theory methods: he analyzed the interview transcripts using open coding to develop categories of information about undergraduate education reform; axial

coding to connect the categories; and selective coding to create a "storyline" that connected the coding and categories. Through the grounded theory processes of "memoing" and "constant comparison" of the data, he developed new theoretical propositions to explain how and why change occurred in a general education curriculum. In another study that used constructivist grounded theory, Venance et al (2013) studied faculty perspectives after a curriculum change in an undergraduate medical education program. In-depth interviews with 16 faculty members led to conceptualizing curriculum reform as a staged process in which individuals navigate discrete phases of curricular change (Venance et al, 2013). Their study noted the usefulness of the grounded theory methods: "Consistent with the iterative nature of grounded theory research, data analysis occurred alongside and informed data collection; interview probes were modified as analysis proceeded to explore more fully the emerging themes" (Venance et al, p. 1000). In my dissertation, grounded theory has similarly helped me conceptualize a phenomenon in journalism education. As I will explain later in this chapter and in the findings and analysis, in-depth interviews with faculty members led to conceptualizing collaborative initiatives in journalism education as a strategy for responding to the crisis in journalism and a way to promote democratic stewarding in journalism education.

Creswell and Poth (2018) advocated using grounded theory when no theory is available to explain or understand a process, as was the case in the two studies described above. Here, while I intend to utilize Graves and Konieczna's concept of collaboration as a process for field repair in journalism, they did not address the variables or the category of journalism education nor did they consider the views of journalism faculty. A grounded theory developed through

this dissertation provides a more specific and appropriate framework for understanding collaboration in journalism education.

In a 2018 *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly* forum titled "What is Grounded Theory Good For?" Vivian Martin, who used GT to develop her theory of "purposive attending" in news, contended that while GT has been widely used in disciplines such as nursing, information systems and education, it has been misused and misunderstood – and even considered subversive - in journalism and mass communication studies. Yet, Martin argued GT is useful for generating theory that links ideas not previously connected across research silos and disciplines (Martin, 2018). In the same forum, other scholars expressed optimism about GT for its potential to excite new inquiry "through explorations of social life" (Durham, 2018) and for its "range of particular methods that can be combined profitably for an array of purposes" (Scott, 2018, p. 16).

3.2 Selection and Recruitment of Participants

This research has been guided by a purposeful maximum variation sampling of full-time journalism faculty at colleges and universities in the United States to gain a wide range of perspectives and experiences related to journalistic collaborations. I cast a wide net to connect with journalism faculty working in different capacities at small, medium-sized and large programs to understand how those involved in teaching journalism view and experience the trend toward collaboration during a time of upheaval and transformation in journalism education. Lindlof and Taylor (2002) explained that purposeful maximum variation sampling is appropriate when the researcher wants to explore a wide range of characteristics and build a conceptual understanding of a phenomenon, in this case the trend toward innovative

journalistic collaboration in college and university journalism programs. They wrote: "Maximum variation sampling is most useful at addressing these kinds of questions: What different forms does this phenomenon take? Do communicative performances vary in terms of setting or time periods? What themes emerge when different participants discuss this text, genre, relationship, issue, or dilemma?" (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002, p. 123).

I recruited participants through email and social media, and at a national collaborative journalism conference. I also directly emailed faculty members at colleges and universities that have implemented innovative pedagogy in journalism education, as seen by the fact that they won support from the Online News Association (ONA) Challenge Fund for Innovation in Journalism Education. Most of the Challenge Fund for Innovation recipients' names, email addresses, and Twitter account names are publicly available on the ONA website, along with descriptions of their winning projects. There have been 48 recipients of the award since 2014. I also requested that those faculty members share the interview request with other eligible faculty members. In all, I sent emails requesting interviews to more than 60 faculty members from more than 40 different universities starting in June, 2021. Ultimately, I conducted 20 interviews with journalism faculty members (including 10 women and 10 men) from 16 different colleges and universities over a 16 month time period from July 2021 to November 2022. I didn't ask specifically about the race of my interview participants. However, as I will explain below, one of the questions I posed in my interviews involved how the participants' backgrounds and experiences shaped their projects. Two of my participants who are Black described their interest in supporting diversity in journalism education, specifically promoting the education and employment of more Black journalists. Two other faculty members described

how their Hispanic heritage inspired their work in community engagement in Hispanic communities. Interviews ranged in length from 35 minutes to 90 minutes. The average interview length was 45 minutes. All interview participants had professional journalism experience, eight of them had earned a PhD, and nine of the interview participants worked as directors of programs or departments in their colleges. I conducted all the interviews on Zoom or by phone and recorded them on the transcription app Otter. I imported the transcriptions into MAXQDA software for the purpose of coding and analyzing the data.

3.3 Data Collection & Analysis

One of the most useful features of constructivist grounded theory is that data collection and analysis are carried out at the same time. Charmaz (2014) wrote, "The logic of grounded theory guides your methods of data-gathering as well as of theoretical development" (p.16). Creswell and Poth (2018) wrote, "The data and analysis procedures are undertaken simultaneously and iteratively. The primary form of data collection is often interviewing in which the grounded theory researcher is constantly comparing data gleaned from participants with ideas about emerging theory. The process consists of going back and forth between participants, gathering new interviews, and then returning to the evolving theory to fill in the gaps and elaborate on how it works" (p.131).

Data collection for this research primarily involved in-depth interviews of journalism educators about their perspectives and experiences. Charmaz (2006) wrote that in-depth interviews allow participants to interpret their own experiences and reflect on them in ways that might not have occurred to them outside of the interview setting. She added that intensive

qualitative interviewing is helpful for grounded theory research because "both grounded theory methods and intensive interviewing are open-ended yet directed, shaped yet emergent and paced yet unrestricted" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 28). In-depth interviews for grounded theory research are supposed to explore, not interrogate and be flexible enough to follow emergent themes (Charmaz, 2006), so I generally pursued open-ended and semi-structured questions for this research. These are the questions that guided each interview:

1. What kinds of collaborative projects have you launched or been associated with as a journalism professor?
2. How do you make decisions about selecting collaborative partners and projects? What have you found are the opportunities and challenges associated with different types of partnerships and projects?
3. To what extent do you seek to situate collaborative projects within diverse communities? What is the logic behind this?
4. What are the news values and reporting strategies that you prioritize and teach in the development and execution of your university-based journalism collaborations? To what extent do you consider approaches innovative as opposed to more traditional.
5. Do you view your collaborative projects as a response to the ongoing news crisis, and if so, what do you see as the crisis in news and how is your project a response to it?
6. How do you define success in their collaborative projects? To what extent do you consider your projects successful?
7. What's the value for your students who participate in your collaborative projects? What do you want them to get out of the experience?

8. How have your experiences and background shaped your interest in these projects and in teaching journalism?

Following the systematic structure of grounded theory research, I transcribed the interviews and engaged in the process of qualitative coding as I continued to conduct more interviews and to gather data. Qualitative coding involves categorizing each segment of interview data in a way that summarizes its meaning and sorts it apart from other codes. According to Charmaz, grounded theory coding emphasizes action and processes; through coding we can define what is happening with the data and begin to grapple with the meaning (Charmaz, 2006 p. 45 – 48). For this research, my first round of coding involved getting a grasp on the nature of each collaborative project and the goals of the faculty members involved. I created labels and then and coded the following 16 categories: the types of partners involved in a project; processes for developing partnerships; challenges with different partners; opportunities/benefits of different types of partners; the type of product of the project (such as a news story, a digital news site, a workshop, or new technology); goals for the project; purpose of collaborating instead of going it alone; traits and goals of individual faculty members; perceived value of the project for students, school, and community; participant's view of "news crisis," journalism "problems" addressed by a specific project; the value of the project to the field of journalism; topics covered by the project; accomplishments and challenges during the project; how faculty members defined success; and the extent to which they viewed their projects as successful.

3.4 Conceptualizing a grounded theory typology

Following the construction of labels and categories from the data, I followed a constant comparison method of analyzing data. I have attempted to conceptualize a theory during each stage of data collection. As Charmaz (2004, p.6) explained, the process of in-depth memo-writing also helps identify and elaborate categories from the data and lead to new discoveries and theoretical conceptualizations. I listened to each interview a minimum of four times and immersed myself in each faculty member's discussion of their goals, struggles, and successes. Through this immersive process, I also engaged in a constant comparison of each faculty member's experiences, and I wrote informal memos to begin to form the basis of my theoretical analysis. Charmaz explained that memos are informal analytic notes that "catch your thoughts, capture the comparisons and connections you make, and crystallize questions and directions for you to pursue." My notes led me to familiar territory for a former journalist – examining and comparing the who, what, when, where, how, and why of j-school collaborations.

Through the memo writing and constant comparison process, I began to see themes or similarities in faculty perspectives and experiences, as well as their goals, methods, challenges, and outcomes related to specific projects. By grouping similar faculty descriptions of project processes and goals, I was able to identify *nine primary and overlapping functions of collaborative projects* that make up my typology of j-school collaborations. According to Stapley (2021), a typology is formed by grouping cases or participants into different types on the basis of their common features. Doty and Glick (1994) proposed that while a "classification scheme" or "taxonomy" involves classification systems that categorize phenomena into mutually

exclusive and exhaustive sets with a series of discrete decision rules, typologies are more abstract and conceptual interrelated sets of ideal types. They wrote: "typologies identify multiple ideal types, each of which represents a unique combination of the organizational attributes that are believed to determine the relevant outcome(s)" (Doty & Glick, 1994, p. 232). As I will explain below, I am identifying nine ideal types of functions of j-school collaborations that individually or, ideally in combination, are hypothesized to help respond to the news crisis and promote journalism schools as democratic stewards.

The concept of "ideal type" was introduced by German sociologist Max Weber more than 100 years ago, and scholars have been debating its meaning and usefulness ever since (Swedberg, 2018; Stapley, 2021). According to Stapley (2021) in the American Psychological Assocation's *Essentials of Ideal-Type Analysis*, Weber's ideal type is "a description derived by a researcher from their observations of an empirical reality or a social phenomenon, as a first step in their analysis of a little-known or little-explored topic" (p.6). In other words, it should represent a hypothesis or generalization about that phenomenon, that the researcher can then use to analyze and compare with real world cases or examples. Swedberg (2018) explained that once researchers have constructed the ideal type, they should compare it to the phenomenon they are interested in analyzing, or "confront the ideal type with reality" (p.188). Britannica offers this definition of Weber's ideal type:

> A common mental construct in the social sciences derived from observable reality although not conforming to it in detail because of deliberate simplification and exaggeration. It is not ideal in the sense that it is excellent, nor is it an average; it is,

rather, a constructed ideal used to approximate reality by selecting and accentuating certain elements, (Britannica, n.d.).

In conceptualizing ideal types of collaborative projects in journalism education, I also followed the guidance from Martin's study that grounded theory must involve the identification of a "core concept" – "through which other categories and related properties are integrated" (Martin, 2008, p. 77-78). I identified *democratic stewarding* as the core concept. Through the core concept of *democratic stewarding,* other categories were integrated and considered. In other words, I'm considering the ways in which each "type" of collaborative project might serve the concept of *democratic stewarding* in journalism and journalism education. The American Association of State Colleges and Universities has called on universities to embrace the role of democratic stewards by educating students for a diverse democracy and empowering graduates as "civic agents ensuring America delivers on its promise for everyone" (AASCU, 2022). I also applied Schudson's definition of *democratic stewarding* to analyze how collaborative projects in journalism education might promote journalism that serves a participatory and inclusive democracy. Schudson described democratic stewarding in journalism as providing citizens information-centered political news, offer political analysis, undertaking investigative reporting, presenting "social empathy" stories, providing a location for public conversation, attending to how representative democracies work, and mobilizing citizens for political life.

The nine categories in my typology of j-school collaborations reflect those *democratic stewarding* functions, as well as how faculty members describe the function of their project and their goals for responding to the crisis in journalism. Each category represents a core function

of the journalistic collaboration as explained by the faculty members involved in it. The categories in this typology are neither exhaustive nor mutually exclusive, and are often overlapping. Many projects fit into several types simultaneously. *I will argue that the more of these categories that a journalism education collaboration fits into, the more inclusive, innovative, and impactful it could be.*

I identified each "ideal type" in this dissertation's typology with a descriptive phrase that begins with the letter C to try to make the concepts more memorable for readers of this dissertation, and for journalism educators who want to use the typology as a tool for developing their own projects to meet specific goals. Glaser (1978) used a similar alliteration strategy in establishing his six C's of axial coding (causes, contexts, contingencies, consequences, covariances, and conditions). Researchers have found that alliteration is a mnemonic device that has the potential to foster the recollection of multi-word phrases (Boers, 2005).

What follows is an overview of the typology that I call the *Nine C's of J-School Collaborations: a grounded theory typology of functions of collaborative projects in journalism education.* (In the next chapter, I will use this typology as a framework to analyze how journalism educators have carried out their collaborative projects and the extent to which they are responding to the crisis in journalism and promoting journalism schools as democratic stewards).

1. **Coverage expanding**: News and resource sharing collaborations with other schools, newsrooms, and community groups to produce news, create digital content, and expand audiences. The ideal type of *coverage expanding* collaboration involves the

production of news about issues that have historically been ignored or undercovered to and for communities that have limited or no access to news about those topics and other issues that affect their daily lives. Examples: collaborative projects that involve the production and distribution of news and information; collaborative development of innovative news platforms and news gathering tools & technology; and supplementing staff and sharing of resources with struggling news outlets. *Note: This is the most common type of collaborative project. Almost every faculty member I interviewed was involved in at least one coverage expanding collaborative project.

2. **Citizen informing**: Partnerships with professional newsrooms, investigative news centers, other departments and colleges, and civic groups to produce and share original research-based reporting. The ideal type of *citizen informing* collaboration involves experimenting with innovative and inclusive approaches to producing and sharing information-centered political news, investigative reporting, political analysis, and other news and guidance that informs civic life. Examples: major investigative projects; new digital platforms focused on public affairs and investigative journalism, and information for citizens to make everyday decisions; partnerships to carry out specific types of reporting, i.e., local government, and state capital coverage.
3. **Civic Discourse Facilitating:** Engagement and partnerships with schools, and other civic and governmental organizations, and professional news outlets for the purpose of facilitating civic discourse – either in person or online. The ideal type of *civic discourse facilitating* collaboration involves researching, developing, and carrying out inclusive opportunities for citizens to engage with each other and civic leaders for the purpose of

improving public life. *These collaborative projects do not always involve the production of news, but can serve as useful and important sources and resources in story development.* Examples: organizing a mayoral debate or town hall meeting, hosting a workshop in conjunction with civic leaders about a local problem, connecting citizens with civic leaders and government resources, development of an app to help citizens identify their government representatives.

4. **Co-Cultural connecting**: Partnerships with people and groups in diverse, underserved populations for the purpose of developing mutual understanding and relationship building. The ideal type of *co-cultural connecting* collaboration involves cultural competence training for students to communicate with and learn about people from diverse backgrounds and opportunities for students to engage in creative and inclusive community engagement and service-learning work. *These collaborations do not always involve the production of news.* Examples: hosting media/news literacy workshops in inner city/rural community centers, j-school students participating in service learning and civic media production, j-schools students hosting "listening sessions" and other outreach to learn about communities they are covering.
5. **Critical consciousness raising**: Partnerships with professional newsrooms, faculty from diverse backgrounds, advocacy groups, civic leaders, people from underserved populations to produce stories that raise awareness about and redress negative stereotypes and harmful coverage. The ideal type of *critical consciousness* raising collaborations involves educating student journalists about how systemic problems in newsrooms have led to harmful and often inaccurate coverage of minority communities

and provide opportunities for students to be involved in the production of news or other activities that redress those harmful portrayals. Examples: collaborative coverage of past racist coverage in white-owned newspapers, Solutions journalism collaborations, j-school students helping prisoners create their own newspaper, training "citizen reporters" in underserved neighborhoods to cover their own communities.

6. **Community building:** Engagement and partnerships with local, regional civic organizations and other groups to develop and enhance relationships within the community and with the college/university. The ideal type of *community building* collaboration involves journalism students engaging in activities that play a role in improving civic life for citizens in communities near their campus. *These collaborations do not always involve the production of news, and, ideally, also occur as co-cultural connecting and civic discourse facilitating collaborations.* Examples: partnerships with local civic groups to mobilize community action, partnering with K-12 schools and other civic organizations for events, workshops, and campus tours.
7. **Cutting edge experimenting:** Partnerships with tech companies and other journalism innovators, as well as newsrooms and community groups to develop and/or test new technologies and approaches to news gathering, engagement, storytelling, and distribution. The ideal type of *cutting edge experimenting* collaboration involves the production of news using new technologies and other innovative or novel approaches to promoting diversity and inclusion in news gathering, audience engagement, storytelling, and news distribution. Examples: an investigative project that required students to build air pollution sensors; a project that trained diverse populations to use technology such

as AI, drones, and 360 video to tell their own stories; partnerships to develop an app to help people geolocate local news.

8. **Cross training**: J-school students and faculty sharing/teaching skills and knowledge they've learned with diverse professional news outlets or community groups, while at the same time learning about working in those in newsrooms or community settings. The ideal type of *cross training* collaboration involves mutually beneficial opportunities for students and collaborative partners to learn from each other while responding to the crisis in journalism and promoting civic engagement. Examples: j-school students teaching digital skills to veteran reporters with low tech knowledge in rural newsrooms; j-school students teaching mobile journalism skills at local high schools; j-schools experimenting with AI and other technology and sharing with news outlets to gather and produce news.
9. **Credibility boosting:** Partnerships with professional newsrooms, civic groups, schools, charitable foundations to teach and promote the value of journalism, fact-checking, dangers of disinformation. The ideal type of *credibility boosting* collaboration involves activities that promote the value of journalism in a democracy and provide public resources and training related to assessing accuracy and credibility of news and information. Examples: partnerships with professional news organizations or civic groups to host workshops promoting local news, partnerships with philanthropic foundations or non-profit institutes such the Trusting News project and First Draft News

Ultimately, this typology provides a framework for theorizing about collaboration as a strategy for responding to the crisis in journalism and promoting democratic stewarding in

journalism education. Journalism educators can use the typology to reimagine their own approaches to teaching and learning or expand existing projects to be more inclusive or responsive to the crisis in journalism. In a hypothetical example, a faculty member leading a project that partners students with professional journalists to produce investigative (coverage expanding and citizen informing) reporting might use the typology to inform how the project could potentially be made more co-cultural connecting and community building by collaborating with civic groups, or other partners.

3.5 Interview participants

To protect the confidentiality of interview participants, I have assigned pseudonyms for each faculty member. Confidentiality was ensured for the participants, per the guidelines of the University of Maryland's Institutional Review Board (IRB), which approved human subject research for this project. Each participant signed a consent form approved by the UMD IRB. I ensured confidentiality for the interview participants so they would be able to speak freely about their projects and avoid any bureaucratic hurdles in their departments to speak "on the record." While none of my participants requested confidentiality, several of them expressed gratitude during the interview that they would not be identified.

The chart below provides each faculty member's pseudonym and explains the faculty members' roles in their projects. I hope this chart will help readers follow the narrative of their projects and experiences.

Pseudonym chart:

Pseudonym	Specialty/Area of Expertise	Type of University	Types of collaborations
Alana	Professor	Large Southern public research university	***Civic discourse facilitating/co-cultural connecting**: Partnerships with statewide cooperative extension service to facilitate student contacts with local officials, residents, business owners. *__Cutting edge experimenting/cross training/coverage expanding/civic discourse facilitating__: College journalism students develop lesson plans to train small newsrooms on digital skills and community coverage needs, and then help news outlets launch a digital strategy that includes more audience engagement.
Andrea	Lecturer – online news editor	Small private Northeastern university	**Coverage expanding/citizen informing:** partnership with national news network that provides a local digital news platform
Annie	Lecturer	Private Northeastern university	**Cutting edge experimenting/coverage expanding/citizen informing/co-cultural connecting –** Annie and her students collaborated with national news audience engagement organizations and a local newspaper to use billboards, texting services, and community listening sessions to connect with people who were experiencing food insecurity issues. The students connected people in the community with resources, and reported on the problem for a local newspaper
Angela	Professor – College of Journalism	Large West Coast public research university	***Cutting edge experimenting/coverage expanding/citizen informing/co-cultural connecting/community building:** Angela and her students collaborated with an investigative reporting outlet, science faculty members, public health officials, and community groups to develop air pollution sensors, deploy them in diverse communities, and report on the findings. She also collaborated with science faculty to create a curriculum for high school journalism teachers to teach student journalists

			to use environmental sensors in their reporting. ***Cutting edge experimenting/citizen informing**: collaboration with computer science faculty, students, and community focus groups to create an app that geo tags and geo locates local news for users. ***Community building/civic discourse facilitating/cross training**: collaboration with first responders, journalists, science faculty, and students for a workshop to share information and run through exercises related to covering wildfires.
Brad	*Media innovation director - School of Communication *Manages student broadcast	Small Southwestern public university	***Co-cultural connecting/cross-training/coverage expanding**: Partnerships with Navajo reservation and native American cultural center teaching civic journalism/collaborating on news stories. Brad wants to create a Native American Journalism Center at the college. ***Civic discourse facilitating**: partnerships with city officials to host mayoral debate and facilitate engagement with city Public Information Officers
Brice	Professor - Investigative reporting	Large Midwest public research university	**Cutting edge experimenting/coverage expanding/citizen informing**: Brice developed a watchdog and public affairs news website that includes "data heavy" and "data driven" community news.
Daniella	Professor – College of Journalism	Large Southwest public research university	***Coverage expanding/citizen informing/civic discourse facilitating**: Partnership with public radio and TV and local newspapers to create a statewide news alliance through which students would provide coverage of public affairs issues and the state legislature. ***Coverage expanding/citizen informing/co-cultural connecting**: statewide media alliance evolved to become more bilingual focused and improve coverage in Spanish-speaking communities. ***Community building/credibility boosting/civic discourse facilitating/citizen informing**: the college partnered with

			professional/public news organizations to host a public forum about local news. The alliance has continued to work on solutions to the local news crisis.
Diego	Professor of Practice	Large Southwestern public research university	**Coverage Expanding/citizen informing/co-cultural connecting: s**tudents in his class cover issues related to the Border, publish them on a news website, and share stories with a collaborative of news outlets in the State. The collaborative is supported by a major tech company.
Iris	Department Chair – Dept. of Media & Journalism	Private R2 Mid-Atlantic HBCU	***Community building/co-cultural connecting/credibility boosting:** journalism/media students leading journalism workshops/summer programs with K-12 students ***Coverage expanding/citizen informing:** students cover Capitol Hill, White House, political conventions for the community news outlets, most often Black press
Jane	Department Head – College of Journalism	Large Southern public research university	***Community building/co-cultural connecting/coverage expanding/cross training**: partnerships with high schools in underserved communities to teach HS students to cover sports. ***Credibility boosting**: partnerships with "First Draft" and "Trusting News" to learn about and implement fact-checking strategies and debunk misinformation. ***Co-cultural connecting/coverage expanding**: partnership with the Associated Press to send journalism students to cover Special Olympics
Karen	Program director: Investigative journalism	Large East Coast public research university	***Coverage expanding/citizen informing/cutting edge experimenting**: partnerships with professional news outlets and other universities to share data and information and produce and distribute multi-media investigative stories. ***Critical consciousness raising/co-cultural connecting**: partnerships with other universities, including Black editors and students from HBCUs to investigate past racist coverage in white-owned newspapers.

Kevin	Program director – College of Journalism Innovation Center	Large Southeast public research university	***Coverage expanding/career prepping**: partnership with business journalism association to train students to cover business/financial news. ***Co-cultural connecting/citizen informing/critical consciousness raising/coverage expanding** partnership with a major journalism foundation and local newspapers to expand and improve coverage of issues related to poverty. This project also includes a collaboration with the university's school of social work to create a covering poverty toolkit. ***Credibility boosting**: collaboration with the News Literacy Institute to offer a certificate in news literacy open to all students.
Luke	Professor – College of Journalism	Large Upper Midwestern public university	***Community building/co-cultural connecting/cross training/coverage expanding/citizen informing/civic-discourse facilitating**: Created community/university collaborative news website – it started by training community "citizen" journalists, but it evolved to be more focused on student reporters and editors collaborating with citizen advisory councils to report on "undercovered issues"
Mark	Professor of the Practice	Large Southwestern public research university	**Coverage expanding**: created a student-run digital news platform that is also a hub for collaboration with local public tv and radio stations and other community media outlets.
Peter	Professor/Assistant Dean	Small Northeastern private college	**Community building/ co-cultural connecting/critical consciousness raising:** Students work with community stakeholders to help them solve problems. **Coverage expanding/co-cultural connecting**: partnership with city institute for non-profit journalism to engage citizens in coverage of gun violence.
Reese	Associate Professor	Small Private Northeastern university	**Coverage expanding/citizen informing:** partnership with national news network that provides a local digital news platform
Rick	Professor the Practice	Large West Coast private research university	**Cross training/citizen informing/coverage expanding/ co-**

			cultural connecting/cutting edge experimenting: "community-collaborative storytelling" with immersive technology –students use new digital tools to train people to creatively tell their own stories - "we've done that with the housing insecure youth in foster care, survivors of domestic abuse. And right now, we're in post-production on reentry of formerly Incarcerated folks." **Cutting edge experimenting/coverage expanding/citizen informing** – Students worked with Pulitzer Prize winning investigative outlet - using VR to report about impact of climate change. Rodrigo had to pay for travel and equipment himself and get reimbursed by national investigative outlet.
Robin	Program Director – College of Journalism Innovation Center	Large Southwest public research university	***Cutting edge experimenting/citizen informing/coverage expanding/civic discourse facilitating**: Robin and her students are contracted by local media outlets to conduct media research and create new digital tools, including a wildfire tracker system, 360 interactive video for border stories, and a geolocator app to help people identify their government representatives.
Ronald	Professor – College of Journalism	Large Southern public research university	**Coverage expanding/citizen informing/career-prepping:** By collaborating with larger universities on investigative projects, Ronald's students were able to get much more exposure for their stories. **Coverage expanding/citizen informing/credibility Boosting:** partnership with corporate, health, and journalism foundations to create a statewide news website and social media outreach about Covid cases, that included fact-checking official claims.
Terry	Teaching Specialist	Small East Coast public university	**Coverage expanding/civic discourse facilitating/citizen informing/critical consciousness raising/community building**: Terry leads a foundation funded collaboration that is focused on producing "restorative narrative stories" about a city that has

			historically received negative coverage for crime, corruption, and poverty.

In the following chapter, I connect my typology to the real work of journalism educators involved in collaborative projects and analyze the extent to which journalism educators are using their projects to respond to the crisis in journalism. I will describe the experiences of journalism faculty related to their different types of collaborative projects and their answers to key questions such as, how different projects were designed in response to the "news crisis" and specific problems in journalism, the opportunities and challenges with different types of projects and partnerships, and the extent to which faculty members situate projects in diverse communities. I discuss how different projects fit into my proposed typology of collaborations, and argue that the more of these categories that a journalistic collaboration fits into, the more inclusive, innovative, and impactful it could be. Schudson's views of "democratic stewardship" were evident in my interviews, as faculty members described how their collaborative projects not only served the field journalism through experiential and professional training of students to be journalists, but also tried to serve democratic society by innovating with ways to provide citizens with information-centered news, and to promote the values of inclusion, empathy, civic engagement, and community building.

CHAPTER 4: Findings - Responding to the News Crisis

This chapter presents my findings about the experiences and perspectives of journalism faculty members who have led collaborative projects at their colleges and universities; it examines the extent to which faculty members have developed those projects in response to problems in journalism and what they see as "the news crisis." As noted in the introduction and methods chapter, I conducted 20 interviews with faculty members from 16 different colleges and universities; they have led a total of at least 70 different projects involving collaborative partnerships with more than 140 different organizations. For the most part, the journalism educators I interviewed were involved in collaborative projects with news outlets in their communities, including local newspapers, radio and tv stations, and digital startups. In descending order, they were also involved in collaborations with community and civic organizations, other colleges and universities or other departments in their own college, journalism organizations, and national media outlets. While some projects were relatively small – for example, involving a single journalism class partnering with a local high school to teach media literacy - others were much more expansive involving collaborations between journalism programs from multiple colleges and professional news outlets to launch nationwide investigative projects. Through interviews with journalism faculty members, I sought to answer three key research questions:

RQ1: *What do faculty members see as problems facing the journalism field and to what extent are they pursuing specific types of partnerships and collaborative projects to address those issues?*

RQ2: *To what extent do journalism educators seek to situate collaborative projects within diverse communities? What is the logic behind this, for example, do they see such collaboration as a way of understanding civic life and playing an active role in improving it?*

RQ3: *How do faculty members describe the challenges and opportunities with developing and sustaining different types of collaborative partnerships?*

This chapter covers RQ1. The next chapter covers RQ2 & RQ3. In this chapter, I will use the typology of ideal type functions of j-school collaborations I detailed in the previous chapter as a framework for presenting data and analysis related to what faculty members see as problems facing journalism and the extent to which they are pursuing specific types of partnerships and collaborative projects to address problems in the journalism field. I created the typology by grouping themes or similarities in faculty perspectives and experiences related to the functions, goals, and outcomes of their specific projects. The typology categorizes nine ideal type functions of j-school collaborations as: coverage expanding, citizen informing, civic discourse facilitating, co-cultural connecting, critical consciousness raising, community building, cutting edge experimenting, cross training, and credibility boosting. Most of the projects described by the faculty members I interviewed fit into several categories at once. In this chapter, I will use subheadings to identify the ideal type category or categories and problems

facing journalism that the projects in those categories are trying to solve. For example, section 4.1.1 has the subheading: *Coverage expanding collaborations: Responding to news deserts and the collapse of local news*; section 4.1.2 has the subheading *Citizen informing collaborations: Responding to the need for public affairs, investigative, and watchdog reporting,* etc.

4.1 What do faculty members see as the "News Crisis"

As I noted in my literature review, several recent publications have used the word "crisis" to describe transformation, loss, and upheaval in the news industry and in the field of journalism. Olsen's book *Newsroom-Classroom Hybrids at Universities: Student Labor and the Journalism Crisis* (2020) explained that the "journalism crisis" is the culmination of three crises: "the economic crisis" involving newsrooms' collapsing business models and concerns about financial sustainability; "the professional crisis" involving questions about journalists' ability to maintain autonomy, journalistic expertise, and jurisdictional authority over news reporting; and a "crisis of confidence" involving the loss of public trust in the American news media (Olsen, 2020, p.54-61). More recently scholars and journalists have used the term "news crisis" specifically related to the shuttering of local newspapers, the decline in local news coverage, and the loss of local news reporting jobs (Finneman, 2022; Fischer, 2022; Patterson, 2023). Finneman used the terms "local news crisis" and "news desert crisis" to describe the loss of local news and information in more than 1,800 communities nationwide where newspapers shut down between 2005-2020 (Finneman, 2022; Abernathy, 2020). Finneman also expanded conceptualizations of "news deserts" beyond geographic locales affected by the crisis, to

include groups such as Native Americans and Black Americans, that have historically been and continue to be ignored or misrepresented in news coverage.

For this dissertation, I asked faculty members if they viewed their collaborative projects as a response to the "ongoing news crisis," and if so, what they see as the crisis in news and how their project is a response to it. While I used the term "news crisis" in my questions, none of the faculty members offered a definition of the crisis. Rather, this question led my interview participants to present their concerns about specific problems in news and journalism in the context of their own projects, rather than providing more broad explanations or definitions of the "news crisis." Every faculty member I interviewed said their collaborative projects are at least in part a response to some aspect of transformation and upheaval in the news industry. I used the singular "crisis" in my interview questions for this dissertation, however, like Olsen (2020), I agree the "news crisis" is made up of several crises involving economics, professionalism, and trust. In the next seven sections of this chapter, I will provide further explication and analysis of those problems that faculty members described as part of the news crisis. I will also explain and analyze how faculty members are attempting to address those concerns through experiments with innovative collaborations.

Faculty members cited as their top concerns shrinking newsrooms and collapsing business models resulting in the loss of local news and public affairs coverage; and low reporter pay and a shortage of jobs (including internships). In descending order, they also mentioned: the lack of rigorous, investigative, context-rich reporting; the loss of public trust and respect for journalism; the proliferation of disinformation and misinformation online; the perceived loss of interest in news by young people; the lack of diversity in newsrooms and news coverage; cuts

to ethnic media; the public's disengagement in local civic affairs; and the slow pace of innovation in many professional newsrooms. Every faculty member I interviewed said colleges and universities have the potential – and responsibility - to play a role in addressing the news crisis by supporting innovative and inclusive journalistic collaborations, although they acknowledged challenges related to quality, impact, and sustainability that will be detailed below.

4.1.1 *Coverage Expanding Collaborations: Responding to the News Desert Crisis and the Collapse of Local News*:

Several faculty members discussed their *coverage expanding* collaborative projects as a response to the news desert crisis and devastating cuts to local newsrooms and community media. In this dissertation's typology, I identified *coverage expanding* collaborative projects in journalism schools as those that involve news and resource sharing with other newsrooms, college programs, and community groups to produce news, create digital content, and expand audiences and coverage areas. The ideal type of *coverage expanding* collaboration would also expand news coverage about issues that historically have been ignored or under reported to and for communities that have limited or no access to news about those topics or other issues that affect their daily lives. News-academic partnerships that increase public affairs reporting and service to marginalized communities have been described as potentially lifesaving to professional reporting and democracy (Olsen, 2020; Newton, 2012). In *Newsroom-Classroom Hybrids at Universities: Student Labor and the Journalism Crisis*, Olsen (2020) explained that journalism programs at colleges and universities are not only grappling with how and what to teach students in the new media landscape, they are also facing questions about whether their

students and faculty can and should play an active role in "saving the profession" by providing a workforce of more than 200,000 student reporters and editors nationwide.

The faculty members I interviewed mentioned a number of ways of doing collaborations that I have categorized and labeled as *coverage expanding*. These included: creating and supporting new digital news platforms (websites and social media pages) in partnership with professional and public media outlets; providing supplemental staffing to news outlets; and producing public affairs news in university-based news bureaus to share with local and national news outlets. According to the faculty members I interviewed, these collaborations have increased reporting on issues important to diverse populations and provided opportunities for more reporters from diverse backgrounds to enter the field. Every faculty member I interviewed engaged in some type of collaboration that expanded news coverage in communities around their campuses, and beyond. Although not every collaborative project described by faculty members involved expanding news coverage - for example, some of them focused solely on community engagement and education. In this section, I present the experiences and perspectives of three of those faculty members who have launched *coverage expanding* collaborations with different types of partners – and outcomes - in response to news deserts and the collapse of local news.

In an example of an ideal-type *coverage expanding* collaboration, Iris, a journalism department leader at a historically Black Mid-Atlantic university launched a university-based news bureau in partnership with a trade association that represents Black newspapers, the National News Publisher's Association (NNPA). A 2019 Democracy Fund report found that the advertising cuts that have hurt mainstream newspapers, have hit Black newspapers particularly

hard and that many of them have either shut down or curtailed operations. Iris has an insider's knowledge of the ups and downs of news organizations, including ethnic news media. Prior to working in academia, Iris was a reporter and editor at several newspapers and held management positions at high profile news websites that served Black audiences. She said that in her role as a journalism department leader at an HBCU, she wanted to provide real world experience for journalism students and to supplement coverage in struggling community news outlets, including the Black press.

> We've lost a lot of journalists. We've lost a lot of Black Journalists. We've lost a lot of news organizations. News organizations on the local level are decimated and the reporting and the information is not getting out there. I see these collaborations as helping to strengthen the media ecosystem (Iris, personal communication, Jan.6, 2022).

Iris said the news service provides stories – produced by students – at no cost to more than 200 African American weeklies and other local news publications. The university's news service produced and shared their reporting with other news outlets in 2022 about a federal anti-lynching bill named for Emmet Till; the Supreme Court confirmation hearings for Ketanji Brown Jackson; and a visit to campus by Vice President Kamala Harris, among other stories. Iris said the collaborations have helped supplement coverage for Black newspapers and other community media outlets, while helping students develop reporting skills and build their professional networks.

> I see the collaboration is offering students a way to make a career in a field that's been called dead you know, since 2006, dead or dying. I think we have some students who really want to be in the career. They have to figure it out. And I think they can do it

through building collaborations and also through working with startups. (Iris, personal communication, January 6, 2022)

Iris said the collaboration is widely considered a success and has paid off in several important ways, including award-winning coverage of stories important to Black audiences and more Black reporters entering the field. She also noted that because of its location in the nation's capital, her department has been able to get press credentials for journalism students and partner news organizations which has led to greater access for Black reporters to the White House and Capitol Hill. Iris credits a cohesive faculty with a "collaborative spirit" and steady grant funding from journalism foundations, private donors, and civic groups with the success of their news bureau. While the news industry has a dismal record of newsroom diversity (as I'll explain in section 4.4), Iris said the progress of her news bureau and the strength of student reporting is starting to lead to more professional opportunities that have not always been available to Black student journalists in a White dominated profession:

> One thing I will say from African American perspective, we have struggled to get our students in those kinds of spaces. Even though we have the training and most of the faculty have had the major newsroom experiences, we have had problems getting our students out there because they're not always seen as competent and capable. So, we still have to work to overcome that. We know what the struggle is, and we want to make sure the students are aware they have to work to overcome those attitudes, as well as make sure that they're prepared when they get out there. (Iris, personal communication, January 6, 2022)

In one of the most impassioned quotes from my interviews, Iris declared, "We work really hard to get our students on the map, and we are reaping the benefits of that hard work" (Iris, personal communication, January 6, 2022).

Another university-based project that I have labeled and categorized as a *coverage expanding* collaboration launched in 2014 in the journalism and communications department of a large Southwestern public research university. An assistant professor in the department, Mark, told me he developed a student-run digital news site with the support of a one-year Online News Association grant in response to a "troubling report" about news in his state. The report found a precarious local news ecosystem that included disappearing media outlets, inadequate rural coverage, and public mistrust and dissatisfaction with existing news options. In response to those problems, Mark, a veteran journalist and former public TV newsroom manager, said he created the student-run digital news site as a platform for students to report and publish stories, while trying to address some of the problems identified in the local news ecosystem report. He said he envisioned the site as a collaborative hub where his students and local news outlets could collaborate to report news stories and share news content with each other and the public. He said the site has focused primarily on stories in the public interest on issues such as public health, the environment, children, and politics.

Mark said his students have produced important stories that might not have received coverage, especially about criminal justice, but he clearly grew frustrated in our interview when he discussed some of the ways in which the project has fallen short of his aspirations. Most disappointingly, Mark said partner news outlets have not used much of the content produced by his students and their news site has not grown into a collaborative hub. While the news

website provides a platform for students to publish their own stories and those stories are providing local news and information, they are not getting the exposure or having the impact they might have if other new outlets would partner with them and publish the stories more frequently. In his department, journalism students work with a paid student editor to produce stories for the news site and offer those stories to partner news outlets including local newspapers and public TV and radio stations. Mark said part of the problem is that the students are not getting enough support either from faculty or partner news outlets to coach them through their reporting, especially more investigative and in-depth reporting. Mark said it seems like newsroom staffers and his faculty colleagues don't have the time to devote to the collaboration.

> I'm like an army of one sort of making this happen. And I just expected my colleagues would jump on the bandwagon and say, hey, "I'll do this and I'll do that. And what about this?' They appreciate it. They love what I'm doing. But it's like, 'oh, that's [Mark's] thing.' Maybe I didn't do some proper groundwork there [to get more faculty members and newsroom colleagues involved]. (Mark, personal communication, Jan. 25, 2022)

Like many other faculty members interviewed for this dissertation, Mark has also struggled to find consistent funding to support his project. (I will describe the importance of grant funding to all of the faculty members in the next chapter). Because his department is a hybrid journalism and communication department, Mark said he has noticed some tension between the two sides: the journalism side isn't as powerful "politically" as the communications side of his department and lacks the staff to help the news innovation project reach its full potential. He said his department chair is verbally supportive but has not created a

budget line item for the digital news platform, so Mark is pursuing state funding along with grants. “I think we're just kind of groping around here trying to figure it out, but some new models are emerging...,” he said. Recently, a statewide news fund supported by a handful of local and national news and philanthropy organizations started contributing to the project’s $6,000 annual budget to pay for a student editor and maintenance of the website. But, Mark said, the university has a responsibility to do more:

> I'm at a big you know, public funded university. A lot of state resources are going in here. What are we doing to help, you know, mom and pop newsrooms? What are we doing to help, you know, entrepreneurial startups? What are we doing, you know? I think there's a lot more we can be doing to just help that whole system go well, and we need to help. (Mark, personal communication, Jan. 25, 2022)

Similarly, Reese, a professor in a school of communications at a private university, is focused on creating more sustainable local news with his undergraduate students in their small, mostly rural community on the East Coast. He and his project partner, Andrea, who also works at the college as a lecturer and has a news editing background, have contracted with a national franchise network that operates more than 90 independently owned local news sites. Their department paid a franchise fee of $5,000 a year and about $600 a month to the network for the couple to run a local news website on the network’s digital platform featuring their students’ reporting. Reese said the network promotes their news site on social media and distributes it through a free daily email newsletter. It has become more popular in their community, especially since the start of the pandemic in 2020, when people in their region

realized the site offered daily news without a paywall. On top of the increased readership, Reese said the site's stories had a direct impact health care in their region. He said:

> We had one student who really rose above and beyond. He was writing stories that caused the local hospital to change some of their policies, and the county health department to be more transparent. So that's success. (Reese, personal communication, March 9, 2022)

Reese said their students also covered stories that might not otherwise get covered in their politically conservative community. He cited as examples some Black Lives Matter protests and a controversy about a local middle school principal who was also evangelical pastor and had promoted anti-gay and anti-Islamist messages.

Reese explained that he became familiar with the news franchise network through a former colleague. He decided to pursue it because the efforts of the couple (i.e., with Andrea) to create their own WordPress news site with limited resources proved to be "clunky" and overly time-consuming. Reese and Andrea said in a joint interview that producing news for a franchise of a national network has allowed them to focus on helping their students develop news content, build sources, and boost audience engagement, without having to develop their own news platform infrastructure. However, Reese and Andrea both said the job still required an around-the-clock commitment on their part. They explained that they work late nights and weekends to edit stories and keep the site running, sometimes with just five students enrolled in their news reporting class and producing news content. They've even had to jump in to cover news themselves, "Our students laugh at us. We are in our sixties and recently covered a drive-by shooting," Reese said. They don't know if the site will continue after they retire. "I don't

know if the dean has thought about that. Perhaps they think we will be here forever," Reese said.

Iris, Mark, and Reese discussed how their projects have expanded news coverage to and for underserved communities by providing new digital news platforms, increased local news and public affairs reporting, and reporting on issues important to diverse populations. However, they have reported varied levels of success with the collaborative aspect of their projects. While Iris – a department leader - described a successful collaboration with a coalition of Black newspapers that produces award-winning coverage about undercovered issues and is well-supported by her entire department, Mark and Reese lamented their lack of staff and funding and expressed urgent worries about sustainability. These examples of *coverage expanding* collaborations demonstrate that the more organizational support and coordination (from colleges and partners), staffing, and funding they have, the more that university-based collaborations can provide sustainable journalism to news desert communities and struggling news outlets.

In the next section, I discuss how journalism faculty members are responding to the need for more public affairs, investigative and watchdog reporting through *citizen-informing* collaborations.

4.1.2 *Citizen informing collaborations: Responding to the need for public affairs, investigative, and watchdog reporting*:

Embedded in most of the *coverage expanding* collaborations is also a commitment to teach students the value of public affairs, investigative, and watchdog reporting through

innovative strategies and partnerships to produce precisely those types of journalism. Journalism faculty members have launched different types of *citizen informing* collaborative projects with news foundations, non-profit investigative news outlets, professional newsrooms, other departments and other universities designed to try to strengthen public affairs and civic coverage, often through data journalism and investigative reporting. Following Robinson's call for a "Deweyan" approach to journalism education that emphasizes diversity and inclusion, I propose that the ideal type of *citizen informing* collaboration involves experiments with innovative and inclusive approaches to producing and sharing political news, investigative reporting, political analysis, and other guidance that informs civic life in a democracy. My participants described a range of *citizen informing* collaborations that have also included the development of new digital news platforms, as well as grant-funded investigative centers, statewide media alliances, educational resources, and state capitol and campus-based news bureaus through which students produce and share news with professional news outlets.

In his capacity as a journalism professor at a large Southern research university, Ronald, a veteran news reporter and editor, has led and participated in several innovative collaborations that fit into the *citizen informing* category. In 2020, an independent news website that provided state-wide health information related to Covid asked him to provide some technical and editorial help; but after he started working on it, the site grew so quickly that he and his students eventually took it over. Ronald said the project also involved an "informal" collaboration with the biggest medical center in their community which provided technical and scientific information and support. Ronald said students in his reporting class analyze data, create data visualizations, and write code for the site, on top of reporting and

answering readers' questions on social media. Their work is presented in English, Spanish, and Marshallese to serve the state's diverse population. Ronald said his students also provided much-needed context to Covid numbers released by the state department of health; they discovered that more than a third of the Covid cases in their state were connected to working at a food processing plant. This type of reporting served an important public service and provided professional reporting experience for his students, he said:

> We would fact check claims that were being made by public officials about the pandemic, and we would answer questions from our readers on Twitter. We had 14,000 Twitter followers. And so, the reader questions were also a significant part of our journalism so the surveillance function in journalism was a major thing that we did. (Ronald, personal communication, Jan. 28, 2022)

Ronald was also able to raise about $80,000 for the site by applying for grants from a corporate foundation, a journalism association, and a community foundation to pay students $15 an hour for their work on the site. When he left the university for another position, however, the site was shut down.

In another project, Ronald said his students gained even more professional exposure from their collaboration with a foundation-funded investigative center at another university. He said his relationships with former news and academic colleagues and his strong networking skills paved the way for the partnership that enabled his students to contribute data, analysis, and reporting to national investigative projects, including one on homelessness:

> My students' stuff got on the AP [Associated Press], and now, all of a sudden, they have clips on you know, 14 newspapers and that sort of exposure. They're like sitting on our

> weekly calls with Pulitzer Prize winning editors. And they're like, holy shit, you know. And so, it just became like this completely different level of work, and it really forced them to up their game. So, the students would bust their asses and are working much harder than what they had expected. (Ronald, personal communication, Jan. 28, 2022)

Like Ronald, other faculty members leading collaborations that are focused on investigative reporting and public affairs are also champions of sophisticated use of data collection and analysis in their work. Brice is a veteran investigative reporter who teaches investigative and public affairs reporting and is a department chair at a college of media at a large Midwestern public research university. He created an online newsroom funded by two major journalism foundations in collaboration with several local newspapers and public media outlets who could publish his students' community and watchdog reporting. Brice said the reporting by his students is "data heavy" and "data driven," focused on analysis of issues such as campaign spending by local politicians, the local impact of changing demographics, food safety at local restaurants, and how different colleges were dealing with Covid. Brice said another impactful project involved his students collecting and analyzing data to map gun deaths by neighborhood. He said his students' work goes beyond providing supplemental content to "bankrupted" local newspapers: "We're reinventing the news. We're not replacing it. I think that's key to if there's anything people consider innovative, which I would, was how data driven this work has become" (Brice, personal communication, Jan. 10, 2022).

Brice is also experimenting with innovative ways to get news to people in rural areas through texting and using artificial intelligence to scan civic meeting agendas and alert residents about issues they say are important to them. Brice leads two investigative news associations

and said he wants to see more colleges become investigative journalism hubs as an answer to increasingly partisan professional media outlets. “These are the opportunities to get people out of their echo chambers. Like if my students do a property tax story. That's gonna cross all the aisles, all the echo chambers. It's like [relevant to everyone] … everybody's paying taxes,” he said.

Journalism faculty members said they have also attempted to boost public affairs coverage by partnering with professional news outlets and assigning students to cover news in the nation’s capital and in state capitals. Faculty involved in these types of partnerships explained that the key to making them work is making sure that colleges and partner news outlets sufficiently train students to understand how government works and provide consistent support for story development and advanced editing.

As journalism faculty members have explained, they have launched innovative collaborations with a range of professional news, academic and civic partners to try to boost public affairs and investigative reporting in their communities. These projects seek to provide the information-centered news that citizens need to make everyday decisions; however, they rely on generous funding, advanced training in data collection and analysis, advanced training and support for students covering government agencies, and creative and passionate faculty leaders.

The next section explains how journalism educators are responding to political polarization and the lack of citizen engagement in civic affairs by leading collaborations that facilitate civic discourse.

4.1.3 *Civic Discourse Facilitating Collaborations: Responding to political polarization and lack of citizen engagement in local civic affairs:*

While most collaborations discussed in my interviews involved some aspect of news production and news sharing, several of them were focused solely on civic engagement and did not involve producing or sharing news content. In her critique of the teaching hospital model, Mensing (2013) advocated a model for journalism education less focused on producing news content and more committed to fostering community relationships and civic engagement. She said the teaching hospital model could actually slow the response to change:

> Rather than creating conditions for students to help re-think journalistic practices, the teaching hospital model reinforces the conviction that content delivery is the primary purpose of journalism. Put simply, it makes it hard for students to think differently. (p.27)

A 2021 National Academy of Education (NAE) report called on educators to teach for civic discourse and civic reasoning in the face of multiple crises, including increasing polarization, unprecedented strain on democratic institutions, and persistent racial injustices. NAE offered this definition for civic discourse:

> Civic discourse concerns how to communicate with one another around the challenges of public issues in order to enhance both individual and group understanding. It also involves enabling effective decision making aimed at finding consensus, compromise, or in some cases, confronting social injustices through dissent, Finally, engaging in civic discourse should be guided by respect for fundamental human rights. (NAE, 2021)

Informed and inspired by the public journalism movement, I propose that the ideal type of *civic discourse facilitating* collaboration involves journalism students and their collaborators researching, developing, and carrying out inclusive opportunities for citizens to engage with each other and civic leaders for the purpose of improving public life. *These collaborative projects do not always involve the production of news but can serve as useful and important sources and resources in story development.* Several faculty members that I interviewed said they are innovating with creative approaches to facilitating civic discourse in response to political polarization and a lack of citizen engagement in local civic affairs. Some examples described by my interview participants of this type of collaborative project included organizing a mayoral debate or town hall meeting, hosting a workshop in conjunction with civic leaders about a local problem such as homelessness or food insecurity, connecting citizens with civic leaders and government resources, and developing an app to help citizens identify their government representatives.

One of my interview participants, Angela, a journalism professor at a large West Coast research university, led a collaboration with community members, first responders, journalists, science faculty, and students for a workshop to share information and conduct exercises related to covering wildfires. She said the goal of the workshop was to help journalists, community members and other stakeholders to work together, build relationships, and prepare for natural disasters. She explained that in her view, bringing journalism students and journalists into this type of cooperative forum is an important step toward building trust and mutual understanding with people they could be covering and reporting for in the future. She said:

> I think, you know, it's an important moment for journalism to self-reflect, and to realize that things need to be better. Things need to be improved and changed. And I think these kinds of collaborations can show to the profession that when one brings the community front stage, you know, front and forward, and to the table, that there's a lot that can be gained. (Angela, personal communication, Nov. 22, 2021).

I interviewed Daniela just as she was retiring from her longtime position as a professor at large Southwest public research university. Daniela described one of her journalism students' most creative civic engagement and discourse facilitating efforts. She said they thought writing about upcoming political caucuses would be boring, so they partnered with a local nightclub and organized an event to teach citizens through song and dance about how to vote in a caucus:

> So they came up with the idea of having a DJ at a big local nightclub do a dance that was about how to do a caucus. They did it. The candidates were big singers, you know, big names. And they actually spent like 45 minutes organizing the whole group into caucuses and describing what it would be like and then doing little dances in between, you know, so that was a form of…we said…'that's engagement journalism, right?' People feel that it was really fun, you know, and that we informed them about caucuses," she explained. (Daniela, personal communication, Jan.6, 2022)

Daniela also founded a statewide news alliance that brings together journalists throughout her state to promote local news, collaborate on solutions to the news crisis and discuss how to get citizens more engaged in public life. A scholar and innovator in journalism

education, Daniela spoke about the need to inspire journalism students to get creative when it comes to civic engagement.

> It's really important that we get our students deeply engaged in figuring out… you know, this is your life. I mean, [they are] going to have to figure this out, and how to communicate and how to be engaged…how to understand that the country just doesn't exist without people participating. So, there were a lot of levels of conversations to have." (Daniela, personal communication, Jan. 6, 2022)

For Luke, a journalism professor at a large Upper Midwestern public university, training people who live in communities around his campus to work as "citizen reporters" seemed like a way to boost citizen engagement and bring more diverse voices into the discourse about local news and public affairs. Luke was an early supporter of the public journalism movement and a pioneer in community-engaged reporting; however, he said, not everyone he trained to be a citizen reporter wanted to stick with the job:

> What we learned pretty quickly, it took about a year and a half, was that we could train people to do journalism, remarkably successfully in my view, but then they didn't want to do it once they learned how to do it. So [they would say], 'but wait, you mean I have to go ask my landlord if he's a dirty scumbag' and [I would say] 'yeah, you actually do.' And so they said, 'this is too much work. I just want to write you know.' So, we literally trained 100-something people and we got, you know, ridiculously low return on our investment in return on writing." (Luke, personal communication, January 12, 2022)

However, Luke said the project evolved over the years into a collaboration with a grassroots citizen advisory council whose members serve as sources and community guides for students in

his community-based reporting classes. He said students learned more about the community and had to "talk to strangers," and he said that people that might have been misrepresented or ignored by media outlets in the past were able to participate in how they are covered in the news.

> First of all, those communities, they weren't covered properly, even when the newspapers were in their heyday. They weren't covered. They didn't have the level of voice, that type of voice that they needed and wanted. So, again, I would by no means say we filled that gap. But we explicitly sought to create more voice now. (Luke, personal communication, Jan. 12, 2022)

Whether it's bringing together citizens to serve on an advisory council to guide community news coverage, coordinating approaches to wildfire coverage with community stakeholders, or hosting educational public events, journalism educators said their collaborative projects played a valuable role in facilitating civic engagement and discourse. Though, they acknowledge they need to be especially creative, flexible, and open to new partnerships and approaches to meet people where they are.

In the next section, I will describe how journalism educators are responding to the lack of diversity in newsrooms and in journalism schools through three different types of collaborative projects.

4.1.4 Co-cultural Connecting, Cross Training, and Community Building Collaborations: Responding to lack of diversity in newsrooms (and in j-schools):

Several faculty members discussed the need for more diversity in newsrooms and in their journalism programs. According to a 2018 article in the Columbia Journalism Review, the news industry has "failed spectacularly" in achieving a goal set by the American Society of News Editors to match the percentage of racial and ethnic minorities in newsrooms with that of the nation's population. The article cites statistics from the Census Bureau that racial and ethnic minorities represent about 40 percent of the country's population, but less than 17 percent of newsroom workers at print and online publications (Arana, 2018). A Pew Research Center survey of 12,000 journalists found 52% say their organization does not have enough racial and ethnic diversity, and fewer than half of journalists say their organization makes issues of diversity and inclusion a major priority (Gottfried, 2022).

In response to those issues, faculty members have developed partnerships and projects that attempt to provide a pipeline to their college journalism programs from minority communities, that provide opportunities for students from diverse backgrounds to work in newsrooms, and that bring students and faculty with diverse backgrounds to universities for special projects. In this section, I will describe those projects that I have labeled and categorized as *Co-cultural Connecting, Cross Training, and Community Building Collaborations*.

The ideal type of *co-cultural connecting* collaboration involves opportunities for students to engage in creative and inclusive community engagement with people of various perspectives, age, gender, socioeconomic status, and cultural, racial, and ethnic backgrounds for the purpose of mutual understanding. *These collaborations do not always involve the production of news.* Faculty members I interviewed described several projects that fit into this category such as students hosting media and news literacy workshops in inner city and rural

schools and community centers, j-school students participating in service learning and civic media production projects, and j-schools students hosting "listening sessions" and other outreach to learn about communities they are covering.

Cross training collaborations involve j-school students and faculty sharing skills and knowledge they've learned with diverse professional news outlets or community groups, while at the same time learning about working in those in newsrooms or community settings. The *cross training* collaboration involves mutually beneficial opportunities for students and collaborative partners to learn from each other while responding to the crisis in journalism and promoting civic engagement. Faculty members I interviewed explained that some of those projects involved j-school students teaching digital skills to veteran reporters with low tech knowledge in rural newsrooms; j-school students teaching mobile journalism skills at local high schools; j-schools experimenting with AI and other technology and sharing their skills and technology with news outlets to gather and produce news.

The ideal type of *community building* collaboration involves journalism students engaging in activities to improve civic life for citizens in communities near their campus and to strengthen neighborly bonds between local and campus communities. *These collaborations do not always involve the production of news, and ideally, also occur as co-cultural connecting and civic discourse facilitating collaborations.* Some examples described by my interview participants include partnerships with local civic groups to mobilize community action and service, and partnerships with K-12 schools and other civic organizations for events, workshops, and campus tours.

Faculty members explained that in some cases, these types of *co-cultural connecting*, *cross training*, and *community building* collaborations have helped develop an enrollment pipeline from their communities to their universities. Iris described a collaboration with another historically Black college and funded by a major journalism foundation that invited students from urban high schools to participate in summer journalism workshops:

> We want a pipeline, right? So … we know that students who get introduced to their profession early on, understand what it takes to be in that profession.… We see it as a way to see the future of journalism because many of these students don't interact with any journalist ever, and so we can get them thinking about what that what that job looks like, what their career looks like. (Iris, personal communication, Jan. 6, 2022)

Jane, the head of a journalism department at a large Southern public research university, described a collaboration with high schools in urban areas. In that project, her college journalism students trained high school students to cover sports. Jane said the project was part of a strategy to teach her own students to build relationships and develop understanding of the local community, while boosting interest in her journalism program among high school students from underserved communities. "So, it's helping them…but in the long term, we are hoping it's helping us in that some of those students are going to say I had a great experience, I want to go there," she said (Jane, personal communication, June 22, 2021).

Journalism faculty members explained that another collaborative strategy to try to promote diversity in newsrooms involves training professional newsroom staffers on innovative and inclusive digital strategies. I have categorized these projects as *cross training* collaborations. Alana, the director of a journalism innovation program at a major Southern

public research university, developed a project that sends college journalism students from diverse backgrounds into more rural – mostly white – small newsrooms to develop a curriculum and train staffers on how to use social media and other digital tools in audience engagement.

> I am hopeful that, you know, by sending students into these newsrooms. We can help [the newsrooms], particularly because we have a little bit more of a diverse student body than a lot of these newsrooms have…. So, I'm hoping the newness of the journalism students and our Gen Z or millennial kids will open their eyes to this stuff. (Alana, personal communication, August 23, 2021)

Another *cross training* project to try to build diversity in journalism targets high school teachers. Through a new initiative funded by a national news association, Robin, the director of a journalism innovation program at a large Southwestern public research university, is training high school teachers of color to use high tech immersive storytelling tools, including augmented reality, virtual reality, and a system used to create video games and other interactive experiences. Robin and her students have also partnered with professional news outlets on major projects such a developing a wildfire tracking system, an app to connect citizens with their government representatives, and an interactive 360 video project about the border with Mexico. Robin said she is one of the few Black women in journalism education creating and teaching immersive content, and she wants to help other women of color who are teaching journalism be ready for the future.

Faculty members acknowledged that a lack of diversity in their own programs is another issue that could be addressed, in part, with collaborations. Karen, the leader of a foundation-funded investigative journalism center at a large Mid-Atlantic university, explained that she and

her faculty collaborators recruited students from historically Black colleges, and hired Black editors on a temporary basis for a project about historically racist coverage in white-owned newspapers. Karen is white, and works in journalism program made up of predominantly white faculty members:

> We wanted to have as many black editors as possible to work with the students because we thought they would bring sensibilities that you might not get from me or [another faculty member]. And it's not because we aren't good editors. It's just that that's not our lived experience. (Karen, personal communication, January 13, 2022)

Thus, faculty members who want to promote diversity in newsrooms and in their journalism programs have launched innovative and inclusive collaborative projects that have involved outreach and relationship building with diverse communities, however many of them acknowledged that more systemic change is needed in newsrooms and at universities to bring more staff and students from a variety of backgrounds into the field.

4.1.5 Co-cultural Connecting & Critical Consciousness Raising Collaborations: Responding to negative stereotypes, misrepresentations, and harmful portrayals of marginalized communities in news:

Faculty members who said they wanted to address problems in news related to negative stereotypes, misrepresentations, and harmful portrayals of marginalized populations said they conceived of collaborative projects to examine and cover those issues and try to restore trust with audiences in those communities. These projects included partnerships with other college departments, civic groups, and philanthropic organizations to launch service-oriented projects;

the development of digital news platforms for people in diverse communities to express themselves (tell their own stories); and collaborations to produce stories that redress negative stereotypes. I have labeled and categorized those projects as co-*cultural connecting* and *critical consciousness raising* collaborations.

Such *co-cultural connecting* and *critical consciousness raising* collaborations involve partnerships with professional newsrooms, faculty from diverse backgrounds, advocacy groups, civic leaders, and people from underserved and vulnerable populations to produce stories that raise awareness about and redress negative stereotypes and harmful coverage. Inspired and informed by Freire's concept of critical consciousness and Robinson's call to educate students about how news has perpetuated toxic structures in society, I propose that the ideal type of *critical consciousness raising* collaboration involves educating student journalists about how systemic problems in newsrooms have led to harmful and often inaccurate coverage of minority communities and provide opportunities for students to be involved in the production of news or other activities that redress those harmful portrayals. My interview participants described several examples of these types of projects, including collaborative coverage of past racist stories in white-owned newspapers, j-school students helping prisoners create their own newspaper, and training "citizen reporters" in underserved neighborhoods to cover their own communities.

Peter, a journalism professor at a small private Northwestern college, leads what he calls "values driven" collaborations in which he and his students form partnerships with civic organizations to solve community problems. "Our values are using the resources we have to support communities that need support," he said (Peter, personal communication, September

10, 2021). Peter explained that his students work in marginalized urban areas with high rates of poverty. They regularly partner with diverse community organizations on ways that media and storytelling can help solve local problems. He said his projects are challenging journalistic norms in that student reporters develop deep cooperative relationships with their community partners. He said their collaborations go beyond reporting and involve community partners co-creating media about the issues affecting them.

Peter's students recently produced an ambitious collaborative project to examine false narratives about gun violence in their state. The students worked with three civic organizations, including an organization that helps victims of gun violence and a youth empowerment group to raise awareness of gun-related violence that Peter said has either been ignored or has perpetuated negative stereotypes by local news media. The students and their community partners created a website, produced two documentaries, held four community forums, and created a theatrical production, a role-playing game, and a virtual reality experience to help victims of gun violence create and tell their own stories. Peter said their collaborations are "interesting and novel" because they challenge traditional notions of journalistic distance with sources, and instead develop deeper relationships within communities. He said he wants his students to be empowered to create a more inclusive and sustainable future for journalism.

> Not only are there just vast inequities in all of our spaces…socioeconomic, cultural, racial… but there are also vast inequities in the way that journalism has worked in terms of who is telling stories…like we've known this from research, for forever. And so, we want to be attentive…and that is the main thing that drives our journalism process

which is about providing a mechanism to cover, report on, and with, and share stories that matter. (Peter, personal communication, September 10, 2021)

In a different collaboration focused on redressing negative stereotypes, Brad, the media innovation director at a small Southwestern university, said one of his "passion projects" is with activists and leaders on a Navajo reservation. He said the indigenous population there has historically been under-covered and misrepresented. In his grant-funded project, college journalism graduate and undergraduate students trained indigenous "citizen reporters" in mobile journalism strategies and offered them a digital platform for reporting their own stories.

The collaboration produced several video stories including reports about balancing cultural traditions and work, and reactions from Native Americans to a border wall with Mexico. Brad said there is a lot of potential for more collaboration. He wants to "propagate" a citizen reporting corps and develop a Native American Journalism Center on campus, but as with other collaborations, he is facing challenges finding time, money, and support. "It's hard when you've got such a small faculty and we're all working full loads," he said (Brad, personal communication, January 4, 2022).

In a much larger scale collaboration, a major journalism foundation provided funding for a project developed by a journalism innovation center at a large Southern public university to improve coverage of issues related to poverty. One of the leaders of the project, Kevin, a veteran corporate news manager who now heads the innovation center, said the collaboration with major news outlets started with creating a Covering Poverty Toolkit to train students and partner journalists to cover issues related to poverty with sensitivity and care. He said:

> We want to emphasize to our students quite clearly, that it's very easy sometimes covering poverty and these types of issues, to come across as condescending or to come across as written from the white perspective or from another perspective, other than the people that we are writing about. So, we have been very conscious about working with some experts in that area in our School of Social Work, to create the language and to make sure that we are understanding how to interview people in these circumstances. (Kevin, personal communication, Jan. 6, 2022)

Through the collaboration, students have written stories published in local, regional, and national publications on topics such as managing medical expenses related to a Covid diagnosis, dealing with supply chain issues that impact products for babies, and understanding a new child tax credit system.

My interviews with Peter, Brad, and Kevin showed that *critical consciousness raising* and *co-cultural connecting* collaborations involve interrogating historically problematic coverage of marginalized populations and experimenting with new approaches to more accurate and context-rich stories, sometimes challenging traditional journalistic norms and values along the way.

In the next section, I will describe how journalism educators are responding to the slow and uneven pace of innovation in newsrooms with *cutting-edge experimenting* collaborations.

4.1.6 Cutting Edge Experimenting: Responding to the slow and uneven pace of innovation in newsrooms:

Faculty members said part of the push to improve and expand local news coverage, investigative reporting, and community engagement has also involved training students to use cutting edge technology. Researchers have found that legacy news outlets have struggled to adapt to newer digital technologies and that their level of technical sophistication varies widely, resulting in missed opportunities to innovate, evolve, and even survive (Heckman and Wihbey, 2019; Holcomb, 2018; Local Media Association, 2018). Journalism educators are responding to the slow and uneven pace of innovation in newsrooms by launching collaborative projects that I have labeled and categorized as *cutting edge experimenting* collaborations.

Several faculty members I interviewed are engaging in partnerships with tech companies and other journalism innovators, as well as newsrooms and community groups to develop and/or test new technologies and approaches to news gathering, engagement, storytelling, and distribution. They described projects such as an investigative project that required students to build air pollution sensors and test them in urban neighborhoods; a project that trained people in underserved communities to use technology such as AI, drones, and 360 video to tell their own stories; and partnerships to develop an app to help people geolocate local news. To prioritize plurality in journalism and journalism education, I propose that the ideal type of *cutting edge experimenting* collaboration involves the production of news using new technologies and other innovative or novel approaches to promoting diversity and inclusion in news gathering, audience engagement, storytelling, and news distribution.

Working at a large West Coast private research university puts Rick in a region rich with technological innovators and access to well-funded high-profile media and news partners, and he said he has tried to capitalize on all of it in his job as a journalism and communications

professor teaching his students what he calls *community collaborative journalism*. He described it this way:

> Instead of that, you know, parachute in, gather stuff and leave - what we do is we work with a community, train them on how to use this technology so they can tell their own stories. And my students learn the production by executing on the stories that the community has decided they want to tell. So, we've done that with the housing insecure, youth in foster care, and survivors of domestic abuse. Right now, we're in post-production on [stories about] reentry from formerly Incarcerated folks. (Rick, personal communication, December 30, 2021)

Rick said he is training his students to work with emerging and experimental technology, such as augmented reality, virtual reality, drones, and photogrammetry, in "nonfiction storytelling" on diverse media platforms, including Snapchat. His collaborators have included professional news outlets, and non-profit investigative centers, community organizers, and other people he and his students have met in community forums, such as a local expo that provided resources for homeless people. He said he hopes his students will take what they have learned in his classes and continue to be problem solvers in news, in their communities, and with emerging media:

> I want to demystify the new thing and empower them to have the courage to experiment on something that they might be afraid that they might break. I want to empower them to have the courage to try things, and break things, and problem solve. (Rick, personal communication, December 30, 2021)

However, like other faculty members, Rick said he often feels like he is alone in working to sustain his collaborative projects. He described a collaboration with a major national newspaper and a non-profit investigative center to use virtual reality to explore the potential impact of a devastating storm. The partners had approached him about the idea and wanted to collaborate on reporting, but neither the news outlet nor his university would pay for it upfront. Rob said he personally paid for airfare, hotels, rental cars, and food for his students so they could travel to report and produce the story. Eventually the non-profit investigative center reimbursed him, but Rick said questions about funding always hover over the future of his work.

In another project that combines *cutting edge experimenting* with most of the other categories in my typology, Angela and her journalism students at a large West Coast public research university investigated air pollution in urban neighborhoods around campus. They partnered with a non-profit investigative news service, scientists on campus, civic groups, and the local health department to design and build air pollution sensors and place them in the homes of people they'd met through their civic partnership. The students also helped people living in some of the communities they studied to build their own sensors. The reporting involved data collection, analysis, and visualization. They expanded the project over several years, and Angela and a colleague eventually developed a curriculum for high school educators to teach their students how to carry out the same "sensor journalism" in their communities.

These collaborations that involve *cutting edge experimenting* have the potential to break new ground in investigative reporting, public service, co-cultural connecting, and

community engagement, according to faculty members, but they too require steady investment and support that faculty members said is not always guaranteed.

In the next section, I discuss how faculty members are using *credibility boosting* collaborations in response to the proliferation of disinformation and the loss of public trust and interest in information-centered news.

4.1.7 Credibility Boosting Collaborations: Responding to disinformation and the loss of public trust and interest in news:

Several faculty members brought up the loss of public trust and interest in news. An October 2022 Gallup Survey reported that American's trust in the mass media to report the news "fully, accurately, and fairly" is at a near record low. Just 7% of Americans have a "great deal" of trust and confidence in the media, and 27% have a "fair amount" of trust (Gallup, 2022). One of the journalism professors I interviewed, Alana, mentioned trust 17 times in our 40-minute interview and said she believes the loss of public trust in journalism has been devastating for the business model of the news industry, and for democracy.

While all the collaborative projects described so far in this chapter have been geared at repairing and revitalizing news in the face of profound challenges, including the loss of trust, I have categorized and labeled a few of these projects as *credibility boosting* collaborations because faculty members described them as more specifically focused on promoting trust in news and fighting disinformation. Three of the 20 faculty members I interviewed described forming partnerships with other colleagues, news outlets, foundations, non-profit journalism

institutes, and civic groups to engage in strategies to try to boost public understanding of the value and credibility of news outlets. These *credibility boosting* collaborations were designed to teach and promote the value of journalism and fact-checking and warn of the dangers of disinformation. I propose that the ideal type of *credibility boosting* collaboration also involves activities that promote the value of journalism in a democracy and provide public resources and training related to assessing accuracy and credibility of news and information. Some of the *credibility boosting* projects described by my interview participants involved j-school partnerships with other departments and news organizations to teach news and media literacy, partnerships with professional news organizations or civic groups to host workshops promoting local news, and partnerships with philanthropic foundations and non-profit institutes such the Trusting News project and First Draft News.

Jane, the head of a journalism program at a large Southern public research university described a partnership to teach and implement strategies from the Trusting News project, founded at the University of Missouri and funded by the Reynolds Journalism Institute and the American Press Institute. The project's website describes it as a research and training project that empowers journalists to demonstrate credibility and earn trust. Jane said faculty members at her college are recruiting and training staffers from newsrooms throughout the Southeastern United States to work with them on "trust-building" strategies that included finding ways to explain to audiences their news gathering process, coverage goals and journalism ethics. The college plans to conduct research studies to examine the impact of these strategies. Jane said her college has also partnered with First Draft, an international non-profit coalition of journalists and civil service organizations working on strategies to help newsrooms fight

disinformation. Through the partnership with First Draft, Jane said her college hosted lectures and training seminars on fact-checking and content verification, especially around U.S. elections. As I explained in my literature review, scholars such as Michael Schudson (2013) have promoted this type of project to police misinformation and train citizens to understand what makes sources authoritative as a way for journalists to act as democratic stewards.

In another *credibility boosting* collaboration, Kevin, a journalism professor at a large Southern public university, is collaborating with the non-profit educational organization, The News Literacy Project in Washington, D.C. to develop a news and media literacy certificate program at his university open to students in all disciplines. He said his college has also collaborated with a statewide press association and local news outlets to create a free 85-page media literacy guidebook available online that includes chapters such as The Value of Journalism in a Democracy, The History of Fake News, and The Public's Responsibility in an Informed Democracy. He said:

> We're very much in the mindset that news literacy is the biggest problem facing journalism…and that we have to make sure that our own journalism majors are news literate, but also people in society at large or news literate. (Kevin, personal communication, January 6, 2022)

Kevin added that he hopes other universities nationwide will follow their initiative to launch their own university-wide certificate programs in news media and literacy.

In another *credibility boosting* collaboration, Daniela described creating a statewide alliance of journalists to support each other and host news and media literacy forums for the

public. She said she developed the idea for an alliance of journalists during a breakfast meeting with a newspaper editor who was worried about losing local news:

> He was saying, 'It's desperate…we really need to do something.' And so we just decided to call the meeting of all the local media. There's not that many of us here… just before the pandemic and we had a meeting and said, 'We would like to bring attention to what's happening with local news.' (Daniela, personal communication, January 6, 2022)

Daniela said the alliance held an event at an art museum to promote local news that attracted more than 150 people. Since then, the alliance (including some of her journalism students) has created a documentary about local news and hosted a series of events, including public forums on Zoom and a breakfast that brought more than 25 journalists in the state together to discuss ways they can collaborate and help each other.

Jane, Kevin, and Daniela are all experimenting with outreach and education efforts to increase public understanding of the value of journalism with the hope of building and restoring trust in news. Jane's college is partnering with a national journalism education organization to provide resources and training for journalists in their region on fact-checking and trust-building strategies. Kevin's college is launching a campus-wide news and media literacy initiative, and Daniela's alliance of local reporters took a more grass-roots approach by hosting community forums about the need for local news. These interviews have demonstrated that journalism educators see they have a role to play in trying to restore and build trust in news, and they are looking at public engagement and education among the ways to do it.

In this chapter, I have used my typology of ideal types of j-school collaborations as a framework to explain and analyze how journalism educators have carried out their

collaborative projects and the extent to which they say their projects are responding to specific problems in journalism. Each of the faculty members I interviewed reported that they considered their projects successful to some degree, especially related to student experience, expanded news coverage, and community engagement. Additionally, among this dissertation's most promising findings is the commitment expressed from journalism faculty members to situate their collaborative projects in diverse communities. In the next chapter, I present findings related to RQ2 that examines those efforts and the thinking behind them, as well as findings related to RQ3, the challenges and opportunities with different types of partnerships.

Chapter 5: Findings – Situating collaborative projects in diverse communities and the challenges and opportunities of different types of partnerships

This chapter continues to present and analyze the perspectives and experiences of journalism faculty members who have led collaborative projects at their colleges and universities. In section 5.1, I examine data related to RQ2 - how and why journalism educators seek to situate collaborative projects within diverse communities. The findings in this section reveal four of the most common strategies that journalism educators have used to connect with diverse communities and serve their information needs through collaborative projects. In section 5.2, I present data and analysis related to RQ3 - how faculty members describe the challenges and opportunities with developing and sustaining different types of collaborative partnerships. Section 5.2 is divided into six subsections that deal with partnerships with philanthropic foundations, local news outlets, community and civic organizations, other colleges and universities or other departments in their own college, journalism organizations, and national media outlets.

5.1 Getting students out of their comfort zones

RQ2: *To what extent do journalism educators seek to situate collaborative projects within diverse communities? What is the logic behind this, for example, do they see such collaboration as a way of understanding civic life and playing an active role in improving it?*

While much of the traditional rhetoric about journalism in the United States has focused on its government watchdog and accountability role as the fourth estate, the journalism educators

I interviewed emphasized the increasing importance for journalists to connect with and cover many publics, and facilitate more inclusive, solution-oriented public discourse.

After the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis in 2020 and the international protests against racially motivated police brutality, journalists engaged in what the Associated Press (AP) called "large scale reckonings" about bias in reporting, and their own lack of newsroom diversity (Bauder, 2021). While major news outlets have announced since then that they have hired more Black and Hispanic reporters and managers, it has been difficult to get an accurate measure of diversity in newsrooms because newsroom participation is lagging in the industry's largest diversity survey (Bauder, 2021; Scire, 2022). The American Society of News Editors' annual diversity survey was paused in 2018 because of low participation rates. The lead researcher on that project said she had received responses that were openly hostile from some newsroom managers about the survey, with one respondent calling her a "woke snowflake" and another asking her if they needed to "check between the legs" of newsroom employees to answer a question on gender identity (Scire, 2022). The Pew Research Center reported that from 2012 – 2016, U.S. newsrooms were more likely to be male and white than U.S. workers overall, and that 77% of newsroom employees were non-Hispanic whites (Grieco, 2018).

This section summarizes faculty perspectives and experiences related to situating their collaborative projects in diverse communities. Every faculty member I interviewed was involved in collaborative projects that included intentional outreach to diverse populations. These projects included outreach to people of various perspectives, age, gender, socioeconomic status, and cultural, racial, and ethnic backgrounds. As I explained in Chapter 4, faculty members are especially interested in connecting with and covering groups who have historically

been misrepresented, demeaned, or ignored in news coverage. Several faculty members told me that they believe that type of coverage has contributed to political polarization, racism, prejudice, and exploitation of people in marginalized communities. (See sections 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5 for examples of civic-discourse facilitating, co-cultural connecting, critical consciousness raising, cross-training, and community building collaborations aimed at improving plurality in newsrooms and in society).

Most of the faculty members I interviewed brought up their own students when I asked them why they wanted to situate their collaborative projects in diverse communities. They said they hoped those projects would sensitize their students to the struggles, strengths, and interests of people different than themselves. Luke explained that the first assignment for his journalism students was to map out a neighborhood, figure out where to find resources for that community, and talk to the people who live there about issues affecting them.

> I had the students go out to neighborhoods that they were not familiar with. So that way, it would get them out of their comfort zone, to see other parts of [the city} that they may not have been familiar with. I think it helps, you know, to give one a different perspective of the world around them by putting them into different places and spaces that they may not normally go to, and allows for them to see different perspectives, hear different voices, and see, you know, observe, understand all the different aspects that can come with that. (Luke, personal communication, January 12, 2022)

Faculty members also said some of the inaccurate and harmful media portrayals of people who live in low-income minority communities stemmed from a lack of diversity in newsrooms. Journalism educators explained that they are facing new directives from funders, college

administrators, and their students to prioritize diversity and inclusion in their programs. Jane, a journalism program director at a large Southern public research university, mentioned to me some newer initiatives in her department that are focused on recruiting a diverse student body and diverse faculty.

> If we don't foster a more diverse journalistic community, we're not serving our publics. If we're not attracting a diverse student body here, and diverse faculty body, we are not serving our students. And so, it's something that we think about, not just with our collaborative projects, but everything we do. You can't cover a community if, as a journalist, if you're missing voices, and you can't cover it adequately, you know, unless you have a diverse newsroom. So, you know, it all goes back to journalism being important for the health of our democracy. And we cannot do that if we're insulated. (Jane, personal communication, June 22, 2021)

Through my interviews, I identified four of the most common strategies that journalism educators have used to connect with diverse communities and serve their information needs through collaborative projects. Those strategies involve: creating new bilingual (and one trilingual) digital news platforms; training citizen/community reporters and providing a news platform for them to tell their own stories; training middle and high school teachers and students in marginalized communities in reporting and digital media skills; and participating in collaborations to produce news for ethnic media outlets. The most common strategy mentioned in my interviews for trying to reach diverse communities and serve their information needs seemed to be creating news websites and producing stories in both English and Spanish. Six of the 20 faculty members I interviewed had been involved in collaborative

projects to create new digital news platforms that delivered news and information in English and Spanish. Ronald said the website that he and his students created to provide Covid-related information and investigative stories, was published in English, Spanish, and in Marshallese to serve their community's large population from the Marshall Islands. Daniela was also involved in a collaboration to create a news website that served their state's large Spanish-speaking population. Many of her students were bilingual and were able to produce work in both English and Spanish. She said after her project launched; other local news outlets started translating their stories into Spanish as well. She said another significant development from that project involved students' recognition that they built stronger relationships with sources and delivered more complete stories when they interviewed Spanish-speaking sources in Spanish rather than through a translator or in English:

> I felt like at the end of the semester, students started to get it. They're like, 'when I interview in Spanish, I get different stories.' You know, I thought, 'yes, now we're getting somewhere.' And so I feel like we've evolved, but it's been really interesting to watch the students begin to understand [how to build those relationships]. (Daniela, personal communication, January 6, 2022)

A strategy that stretches the norms of journalism education involves recruiting and training people from diverse local communities to work as "citizen reporters" covering news and events and to share their perspectives on issues. Five of the 20 faculty members I interviewed have been involved in projects that invited people to participate in their local news ecosystem by contributing reporting, photography, and personal stories to news outlets run by college journalism programs. The faculty members said they've had mixed success sustaining these

projects or getting the results they'd hoped for. Terry, a teaching specialist at a small public East Coast university, described what seemed to be one of the most successful projects. She is the director of a state funded initiative that paid residents to participate in training, cover civic events and meetings, and deliver stories for a news website run by Terry's university. Terry said the legislation that funds the program promoted it as an effort to benefit the state's civic life and meet the evolving information needs of communities. Terry hopes that students, who are working as interns on the project, learn that elite voices shouldn't be the only ones on the news:

> I'm hoping they feel empowered that they can pass the microphone, so to speak, to, community voices that we don't typically get to hear from, and that they understand it's not just enough to take for example, the word of the CEO or someone at the top level. I'm hoping students will feel more empowered to say let's not hear from the same people, the same voices we hear from over and over again. (Terry, personal communication, November 22, 2022)

Terry said that because the "citizen journalists" on her project are paid, they have consistently delivered content for the news site. However, other journalism faculty members from other universities without similar funding systems said they had a difficult time getting the community members they recruited to deliver news stories on any consistent basis. As Luke, a journalism professor at a large Upper Midwestern public university, explained in Chapter 4 few of the citizen reporters he trained wanted to do the more confrontational reporting work, like ask their landlord if they were "a dirty scumbag." Luke said that instead of recruiting citizens as reporters, now his college recruits them as part of a community advisory board and his

students do the reporting. Shorter term collaborations in diverse communities were more in line with expectations. Faculty members Rick, Paul, and Brad each described their projects as successful that trained citizen reporters to produce individual stories, rather than having to meet more consistent and frequent deadlines.

Most of the projects were aimed at Black and Hispanic residents in urban communities with high poverty rates. This chart lists communities of focus for journalism faculty members, the projects they have launched, and the purpose of those projects beyond training their own students to learn about and engage with diverse communities.

Faculty member (Pseudonym)	**Populations and communities of focus**	**Project**	**Purpose (beyond training their own students to learn about and engage with diverse communities):**
Alana	Rural, high poverty rates	Trained rural news editors in digital skills & audience engagement Collaborated with local extension service to connect students with sources on issues of importance to rural communities	Build news audiences in rural communities and use social media to increase their engagement in local news Serve the information needs of rural communities and raise awareness about issues affecting them
Andrea	Islamic community	Created local news website that includes human-interest feature stories about people from diverse backgrounds such as local residents from Yemen	Spotlight local diversity in predominantly white community
Annie	Black, urban, high poverty rates	Launched creative community outreach using billboards & texting to provide resources about dealing with hunger. Report on issue and host community forums.	Provide resources to community & launch more public conversation about hunger and poverty
Angela	Black & Hispanic, urban, high poverty rates	Built and deployed air pollution sensors to gather data and report on air pollution Trained High School teachers in diverse communities to launch their own air pollution investigations	Uncover and raise awareness of problems and inequities Gather more data, promote the college & value of news to diverse HS students
Brad	Native American, Navajo reservation,	Trained Native American citizen reporters to produce their own video stories about their culture and issues of concern to them.	Raise awareness of local culture, problems, and inequities

	high poverty rates		
Brice	Black, Hispanic, urban, high poverty rates	Created a local news website and collaborated with local Spanish-language news outlet on stories about changing local demographics	Serve information needs of increasingly diverse community
Daniela	Hispanic, urban & rural, high poverty rates,	Created bilingual (English/Spanish) local news alliance and website	Serve information needs of increasingly diverse community
Diego	Hispanic, urban & rural, border with Mexico, high poverty rates	Created bilingual (English/Spanish) local news website	Serve information needs of increasingly diverse community
Iris	Black, urban, high poverty rates	Created a news bureau to serve Black press nationwide Conducted media literacy & news skills workshops in urban high schools	Provide news & information of relevance to Black audiences Promote the college & value of news to diverse HS students
Jane	Black, urban, high poverty rates & Special needs athletes	Conducted reporting skills workshops in high schools with predominantly Black students from high poverty communities. Assigned students to cover Special Olympics	Promote the college & value of news to diverse HS students Provide coverage to special needs community and raise awareness of disabled kids' strengths and challenges
Karen	Black, Hispanic, urban, high poverty rates, women athletes	Conducted investigative reporting on issues such as homelessness, inequities for women in sports, predatory lottery advertising in low-income communities, and air pollution Collaborated with Black editors and HBCU journalism programs to investigate racist news coverage	Uncover and raise awareness of problems and inequities facing marginalized communities: "Shine a light on society's injustices."
Kevin	Urban, rural, high poverty rates	Created a resource guide and training opportunities for journalists covering issues related to poverty and produced stories about those issues.	Teach and promote more accurate, context-rich, human-centered coverage of people experiencing poverty and the issues affecting them.
Luke	Black, urban, high poverty rates	Created a news website and collaboration hub and trained local residents as citizen reporters on the site Created and supported digital news site to serve local Black audiences	Serve information needs and foster dialogue among diverse communities
Mark	Hispanic, urban, rural, high poverty rates	Created bilingual (English/Spanish) local news website and collaboration hub	Serve local information needs and provide a pipeline of Spanish speaking student reporters to local news outlets

Peter	Black, urban, high poverty rates	Collaborated closely and provided resources and support for community groups to create multimedia projects about issues affecting them.	Serve information needs and foster dialogue
Reese		Created local news website that includes human-interest feature stories about people from diverse backgrounds such as local resident from Yemen and a Holocaust survivor	Spotlight local diversity in predominantly White community.
Rick	Black, Hispanic, rural, high poverty rates, housing insecure youth in foster care, survivors of domestic abuse, people who are formerly Incarcerated	Trained people to use new digital tools to creatively tell their own stories	Cover and raise awareness of challenges and inequities facing marginalized populations
Robin	Black, Hispanic, urban, rural, border communities, high poverty rates	Experimented with new digital media tools to connect with diverse audiences and cover issues important to them. Trained High School journalism teachers in predominantly Black communities to use digital media and news reporting tools with their students	Cover and raise awareness of challenges and inequities facing marginalized populations Empower instructors in underserved communities to teach innovative and inclusive storytelling and reporting.
Ronald	Black, Hispanic, Marshallese, urban, rural, high poverty rates	Created digital news site that provided Covid-related news and information in three languages (English, Spanish, & Marshallese) Created a digital news site that provided a platform for Black High School students to produce news of local and cultural interest	Uncover and raise awareness of problems and inequities related to the Covid crisis facing marginalized communities
Terry	Black, urban, high poverty rates	Created a digital news site and trained citizen reporters to cover news of interest to their communities.	Serve local information needs and tell "restorative stories"

In summary, journalism faculty members said that they are intentionally situating their collaborative projects in diverse communities as a way get their students "out of their comfort zones," raise awareness of issues facing marginalized populations, and to help serve evolving information needs in communities. Faculty members said they face directives from funders,

administrators, and students to prioritize diversity equity and inclusion in their teaching. They are responding to those directives and their own concerns about harmful media portrayals of marginalized communities with innovative collaborative projects. The next section of this chapter examines the challenges and opportunities of different types of partnerships involved in those projects.

5.2 Faculty perspectives on the challenges and opportunities of different types of partnerships

Collaborative projects in journalism education require individual faculty members or program leaders to develop relationships and agreements with partners and collaborators. The faculty members I interviewed primarily discussed three types of collaborative relationships, in terms of funding; news and resource sharing; and engagement and outreach. In this section, I will examine the opportunities and challenges associated with different partnerships and projects. In total, the 20 people I interviewed described collaborations with more than 140 different organizations. Every faculty member said they had received some level of grant funding for at least one of their projects, and they all said they had collaborated with local news outlets in their communities, such as local newspapers, radio and tv stations, and digital startups. In descending order, they also discussed collaborations with community and civic organizations, other colleges and universities or other departments in their own college, journalism organizations, and national media outlets.

In this section, I present my data and analysis related to RQ3: *How do faculty members describe the challenges and opportunities with developing and sustaining different types of*

collaborative partnerships? This section is organized in six subsections, with each one examining challenges and opportunities associated with a different type of collaborative partner. Section 5.2.1 deals with philanthropic foundations. While these are typically not day-to-day working partnerships, foundation funding is the driving force behind most of the collaborative projects discussed in this dissertation, and foundations have played an important role in shaping faculty members' project goals and priorities. 5.2.2 examines the opportunities and challenges associated with j-school collaborations with local news outlets, including local newspapers, commercial and public radio and tv stations, community media, and digital startups. Section 5.2.3 deals with partnerships with community and civic organizations, including K-12 schools, local government agencies, and advocacy groups. In section 5.2.4, I present faculty perspectives and experiences related to collaborations with other colleges and universities and other departments in their own colleges. Section 5.2.5 deals with collaborations with journalism organizations such as statewide and national news and media associations, and groups leading reform initiatives such as Solutions Journalism Network, The News Literacy Project, and The Listening Post. Section 5.2.6 examines opportunities and challenges associated with collaborations with national media outlets.

No broad conclusions can be drawn about which of these collaborative partners are best overall for responding to the news crisis and promoting journalism schools as democratic stewards. Rather, some partnerships seemed more suited to addressing specific problems. Collaborations with community organizations offered the most opportunities for rethinking new approaches to reporting, expanding co-cultural connections, and promoting media literacy. Partnerships with philanthropic foundations have been the most critical for providing funding

to develop and sustain innovative projects. Faculty members suggested that collaborations with local news outlets provided the most immediate relief in light of the loss of local news. Collaborations with national news outlets seemed to offer the most prestige through journalism awards and opportunities for students to work with esteemed professional journalists on major public affairs and investigative stories. For the most part, each type of collaborative partner offered some unique and important opportunities for students to get reporting and/or community engagement experience and played a role in improving access to reliable news and information for a diverse public. For example, Ronald's coverage expanding and citizen informing collaboration with a university-based non-profit investigative center at another college provided a range of opportunities for his students at a smaller rural university to work with esteemed editors around the country, get bylines in prestigious publications, and expand the audience for their work. Peter's co-cultural connecting, community building, and critical consciousness raising collaboration with a local youth group and a group that advocates for victims of gun violence led to the production of multimedia stories that reframed unfair narratives about gun violence in their city. As the next six subsections make clear, faculty members also faced some significant challenges with collaborative partners, and most of my interviewees described having to adjust their expectations, pivot in new directions, and work around setbacks to make sure their students and communities still benefitted from their projects.

5.2.1 Opportunities and Challenges with specific partnerships: philanthropic foundations

A driving force for many collaborations in journalism education is grant funding from philanthropic foundations. Rowan University journalism professor Mark Berkey-Gerard

reported during his presentation at the 2022 Collaborative Journalism Summit that most of the news-academic partnerships and university-based journalism projects he studied were funded by foundation grants (Gerard, 2022). A 2018 joint study from Northeastern University's College Journalism and Harvard University's Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy found that between 2010 and 2015, more than 6,568 foundations distributed more than $1.8 billion dollars for journalism and media related grants (Nisbet, 2018). About 20% of that total funding went to journalism education (most of that went to the Newseum in Washington, D.C., which has since closed, as well as funding for facilities, scholarships, and faculty positions) and 2% ($36 million) went to university-based journalism initiatives (Nisbet, 2018). The report found that the top funders for university-based journalism initiatives were The Knight Foundation, The Ford Foundation, The William Penn Foundation, the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation and the Wyncote Foundation. The authors of the report (Nisbet, 2018) said grant funding has become the financial backbone of the non-profit journalism sector, including journalism education and university-based journalism initiatives:

> Far from being passive supporters of nonprofit media, foundations have played an active role in framing the challenges, defining the priorities, and promoting specific strategies for responding to the collapse of the newspaper industry. By way of their grantmaking and convening power, foundations actively shape common ways of thinking about social challenges that bind together otherwise disconnected organizational leaders, experts, and donors into shared approaches and strategies. (Nisbet, 2018)

Foundations have directed funds specifically targeting collaborative initiatives in journalism education. The leading funder of university-based journalism initiatives by a wide margin was the Knight Foundation, which invested heavily in the "teaching hospital model" of journalism education and provided $4.1 million for The Center for Collaborative Journalism (CCJ) at Mercer University (Nisbet, 2018). According to its website, the CCJ at Mercer University is a partnership between Mercer University, The Telegraph, Georgia Public Broadcasting and 13WMAZ that engages students, faculty, and veteran journalists in using the "teaching hospital" model to publish community news (Mercer University, n.d.).

Every faculty member I interviewed received some grant funding for their projects (although it's important to note, I found most of my interview participants because they were on a list of award winners for collaborative projects from the Online News Association or been referred to me by one of those award winners). One of the faculty members, Alana, said journalism educators must keep track of emerging research and be tuned in to where philanthropic resources are going if they want to experiment and innovate to help save journalism.

> Anytime the Knight center gives out money, I'm like where are they giving it? What are they doing? Can we do that too? So I think, you know, doing a lot of social listening, inside of those networks is really beneficial to getting good ideas and then making connections with people who may also be doing the same work. (Alana, personal communication, August 23, 2021)

Alana, who is involved in a *cross-training* and *co-cultural connecting* collaboration that sends students into rural newsrooms to teach and oversee digital engagement strategies, said

she launched that project through a collaboration with a statewide non-profit press foundation and a national foundation associated with a major media company. The funding has allowed her to compensate students for their travel expenses and provide a stipend while they are working in newsrooms.

Faculty members said foundation funding – usually through grants - has allowed them to initiate projects, hire more staff to help support their projects, pay students for work, purchase new equipment, and develop digital news platforms. They said foundations have been especially supportive of innovation in journalism education; initiatives to promote inclusive reporting, investigative reporting, and reporting that redresses negative stereotypes; and intentional outreach to diverse communities. Thus, the support from foundations has had a significant impact on how journalism educators prioritize their own resources and respond to the news crisis.

However, it can be difficult to get foundation funding and problems arise when grants run out. Just 2% of foundation funding for journalism and media goes to university-based journalism projects (Nisbet, 2018). Several faculty members described projects that ran out of money and were shut down or lost support after their grants expired. Nisbet (2018) found that most of the foundation funding for university-based journalism initiatives went to just five universities (Columbia University, Mercer University, American University, Arizona State University, and Yale). This has left other journalism programs scrambling for the smaller amounts of foundation funding or pursuing other fundraising options such as state and local grants and private donations, and often their projects are only funded for one year. Angela, the professor with the air pollution sensor project, said trying to raise funds for her community-

engaged collaborative projects takes a lot of extra work, but she said she needs to do it for her students to get the best learning experience.

> I think, the more they have an opportunity to see the world around them and to collaborate with as many different people entities or otherwise, the better, they'll be prepared for whatever job they go into in the future. So, I feel like it's a responsibility on my part, to do that. And to find ways to make it happen…collaborations take resources and money that sometimes it's hard to get that if it's not there. So, I think part of it is just like, it's my responsibility to do that I feel as an educator, I need to be 200%. (Angela, August, 2021)

Most of the faculty members I interviewed indicated that their projects would likely not be possible without support from outside grants. So, while grant funding from philanthropic foundations is a driving force for innovation and collaboration in journalism programs, securing and keeping the funding can be as time-consuming and stressful as carrying out meaningful projects. However, the funding is critically important for serving information needs in communities: in their study of news ecologies in four major cities, Kim and Konieczna (2016) found that the most significant contributors to the sustainability of civic and community journalism websites were connections to a postsecondary institution and location within a news network. The faculty perspectives and experiences cited in this dissertation should also demonstrate to funders that journalism educators have a valuable role to play through innovative collaborations with diverse partners to repair and revitalize news and help sustain journalism for a stronger democracy.

5.2.2 *Opportunities and Challenges with specific partnerships: local news outlets*

Every faculty member I interviewed has been involved in at least one collaboration with at least one local news outlets. These partnerships usually involved students producing, co-creating, and sharing news with local newspapers, radio and tv stations, community media, and digital startups through *coverage expanding* and *citizen informing* collaborative projects. Faculty members said producing and sharing news with local news outlets is often the only way students can get professional exposure and experience in college. They also said these collaborations are critical for students to get "clips" – published articles to use to try to get a journalism job.

Collaborations with local news outlets, digital startups, and community media also provided opportunities for students to engage in what I have categorized as *co-cultural connecting*, *community building*, and *critical consciousness raising* collaborations. Faculty members said students were able to experiment with new technology and creative approaches to audience engagement, news gathering and storytelling, work in diverse environments, and learn about different cultures and communities. Faculty members also described these collaborations as providing opportunities for students to play a role in "saving" local news by producing public affairs stories for struggling local news outlets.

While faculty members described local news partnerships as important ways to help meet community information needs and provide real-world professional experience for students, they also ran into significant challenges that threatened to make local news partnerships unsustainable. Annie described a problem echoed by several other faculty members: the local news editors that partnered with her class didn't have the time to work

with them to offer advice or guidance for covering their communities. She said local news editors were often stretched thin with their own heavy workload:

> You really have to find the right person who just believes in the mission of what you're trying to do and is passionate about it. That's what's gonna push them to work with you, you know, late into the evening after work their long day, kind of talking through, even the next day when you're gonna go out in the field with students or you're going to do a, you know, video session with them to kind of go over how they should cover XYZ story. (Annie, November 18, 2022).

Among the other challenges with local newsroom partners, faculty members said the professional journalists were sometimes too busy to train students and coordinate on projects; skeptical or disappointed about the quality and quantity of student work; hesitant to listen to student ideas; entrenched in old routines; and unwilling or unable to compensate students for their work. Alana said her students were frustrated when the news editors they worked with at a local news outlet insisted on putting their stories behind a paywall, even after the students argued that audiences should receive the stories - which focused on public health information during the Covid crisis - for free.

> So my students were, you know coming gung ho with, let's give them this COVID News in front of the paywall. It will make the readers trust and love us and then your subscriptions will go up and the publishers were like “yeah, no, we're putting nothing in front of the paywall because then we're giving away our stuff for free and we’ll lose money’. (Alana, personal communication, August 23, 2021)

The bottom line is not just a worry for local news outlets. It's also a worry for some journalism schools as they calculate the cost of their students and faculty members often "working for free" for some local news outlets. While most faculty members are developing their collaborative projects to create more learning experiences for students and help news outlets and communities, it seems that not all of them are able to engage in these activities without a financial contribution from their partners. A few faculty members told me about situations in which community groups or local news outlets had contacted their colleges for help in covering an event or issue, with little or no compensation. In those cases, Iris said, the journalism department must make some careful calculations:

> So, we have to figure out what makes sense for us, because in addition to working with the students, we teach other students, we teach other classes, we do advising, we do service, we have our own research, and we're engaged in our own community. So, the faculty is really very, very, very busy. And sometimes the benefit doesn't always match up with the reality. You know, they come to us saying, 'Oh, your students will get free articles. They'll get their work published and get to see their work, distributed.' And we're like, 'Well, you know, we teach a class, and the students have to deliver work for the class,' and so we can't give them over to people to do the work for them, when we need them to be students, get the grades to graduate, and go out into the world. (Iris, personal communication, January 6, 2022).

Robin explained that the leadership of her college has "mandated" that the college receive some level of financial incentive or support before entering any new collaborations with professional news outlets, especially when it comes to providing the use of new technology.

Robin said she has tried to work around the mandate to help ethnic media by hosting training sessions on new technology. Other faculty members described similar workarounds when they did not have funding for collaborations with local newsrooms, sometimes paying for transportation and food for students, and equipment for their projects out of their own pockets.

As more struggling news outlets turn to colleges and universities for support and supplemental coverage, these questions about who pays for what could become more common. Journalism schools have an obligation to use their infrastructure and resources to do what they can to support information needs in their communities and establish themselves as democratic stewards, even if it doesn't always seem like a balanced relationship with local media partners.

5.2.3 Opportunities and Challenges with specific partnerships: community and civic organizations

Faculty members I interviewed described collaborations with diverse community organizations, such as those that advocate for people in underserved communities, including people who are homeless, immigrants, living in poverty, living in urban and rural areas, living on Native American reservations and along the border with Mexico, transitioning from prison or in prison, and people dealing with drug addiction. Collaborations with civic organizations also involved students working in K-12 schools, and projects with government agencies such as police, social service, public health, recreation, and transportation departments. Faculty members who were most inclined to partner with community groups said these collaborations

have provided opportunities for students learn about local government, issues facing society, and diverse communities and cultures. One of those faculty members, Daniela, said it's becoming increasingly clear to her that journalism schools must shift their focus from serving the news industry to serving their neighboring communities directly. She explained:

> Our whole reason for being as journalism schools, this first 120 years was about supporting the industry. It's an important industry. We all believe in it. We understand its function for a democracy. But we could be oriented to the industry because that's where our students went and got jobs. You know, we were serving them, and the industry was serving the country, and it was a pretty neat package. But now, the industry is not in a position to support us in the same way anymore. And I think both practically and ethically, our orientation has to be to the community and serving the public needs. (Daniela, personal communication, Jan. 6, 2022)

According to several faculty members, collaborative projects with community groups have also provided opportunities for students to develop empathy through deeper listening, improve their co-cultural communication skills, and learn about how groups of people have been misrepresented in media. As I discussed in chapter 4.4, Faculty members said community collaborations also provided opportunities for them to recruit students in underserved communities to their colleges, boost their reputation and relationships in the local community, and promote the value of journalism.

Faculty members also discussed challenges related to collaborative projects with community organizations, including difficulties with coordinating schedules, transportation for students, and funding. Faculty members said collaborations with community organizations have

also raised issues related to journalistic autonomy. Rick explained that he has made collaboration with community organizations a priority at his school, but he has run into problems with his community partners over editorial control. “The framework that I have is that the students are doing the work. So, they decide the editorial approach and in this project with one community partner, they freaked out about that,” Rick said (personal communication, January 28, 2022). That type of concern has kept another faculty member, Ronald, from partnering with community organizations in the production of news. Ronald explained that he is comfortable partnering with other journalism professors and news organizations, but hesitant to enter partnerships with community groups:

> I always wanted to stay independent, as a news entity, and not get tied up with a community group, which is going to have a different mission. And they don't understand journalists and they don't understand investigative journalism, and autonomy and control with the editorial product is paramount to me and I don't want to confuse my journalism students with some sort of mixed message. (Ronald, personal communication, December 30, 2021)

At the same time, some of the faculty members I interviewed said it’s only through involvement and coordination with community groups closest to the problems they’re covering can their students produce the most accurate and potentially impactful coverage. Peter, who leads what he calls “participatory journalism projects” that involve partnerships between students and community groups to solve community problems, said students learn much more through forging deep and cooperative community relationships, than by taking an outsider observer role in their reporting and storytelling. Peter said he has created a new curriculum

that reimagines journalistic roles and approaches to reporting that emphasizes relationship building and mutual understanding. He explained:

> The thing that I think we do that's interesting and novel is we talk a lot about community values and how you work with communities. The distant observer is someone with power going in and extracting information, so we try to teach a lot on community building and a lot on how you enter and exit communities and how you work with communities. And then the other thing that I think is novel for us is that we're all trained in participatory design, so we've had cool collaborations in creating community events and co-designing story ideas and having our students come up with creative ways – even playful interventions - to do engagement strategies. (Peter, personal communication, Sept. 10, 2021)

Peter said he teaches his students that they need to work harder to connect directly with communities to overcome information gaps and gaps in community cohesion created by the loss of local news, and other factors:

> So there's a very clear pedagogical angle here for me which is…at a time when there's less journalists present in the community spaces, there's less news present, and coverage has become victim to the whims of the large media platforms, there's a need to be in communities, there's a need to learn how to work with communities, and there's a clear need to support them in the gaps that have emerged. (Peter, personal communication, Sept. 21, 2021)

In summary, partnerships with community and civic organizations have provided journalism students with critical opportunities for public service, for understanding and

reporting on diverse communities, for promoting media literacy, and for playing a role in improving public life. However, these partnerships have also created tension about journalistic independence and what journalism programs should be teaching their students.

5.2.4 *Opportunities and Challenges with specific partnerships: other departments or colleges*

Journalism faculty members explained that some of the most rewarding and helpful collaborations involved partnerships with other departments or colleges. Some of those partnerships involved working with public health departments on their campus to analyze Covid data, splitting the cost with a politics professor in a different department to pay for students to cover a women's march in Washington, D.C., coordinating with researchers in a school of social work to develop a reporter's guide to covering poverty, and collaborating with a professor who is a food safety expert to produce stories about restaurant inspections. Some journalism programs also worked with as many as six other college journalism programs at a time to share data, resources, and reporting to produce investigative and public affairs stories. Those collaborations have led to more exposure for students to highly accomplished faculty at other universities, provided opportunities for students to learn new strategies for news gathering and reporting, and expanded the impact and reach of student work. Alana explained that faculty members at colleges and universities realize they are under increasing pressure to produce more with less, so they must rely on each other:

> I think what we have found here is the workload is too much to handle on your own. The creativity, and what you have to cover and what we have to achieve in our very

> small program cannot be done in isolation. And so, if we really want to be excellent, then we have to work together. (Alana, personal communication, August 23, 2021)

Faculty members explained, however, that the biggest challenge in working with other college and university educators is finding the right partners who are willing to put in many extra, often uncompensated hours and finding enough time to carry out meaningful projects. Kevin explained that collaborative projects require everyone involved to go the extra mile:

> They are often difficult to deal with, they're difficult to manage. None of this is easy stuff. But if we don't do it, then we're not providing a complete holistic experience for the students in our program. (Kevin, January 6, 2022)

Some faculty members noted that they also faced financial, political, and bureaucratic obstacles in forming partnerships with other colleagues and colleges. As Mark noted in the previous chapter, he works in a joint journalism and communications college where the journalism side doesn't seem to have the financial resources or political clout as the communications side. So, Mark explained, he has had to reach outside the college for financial and logistical support to build and maintain a new digital news site serving the community.

In summary, journalism faculty members told me that they have found practical and moral support in their collaborations with faculty from other programs and colleges that have resulted meaningful projects. However, the journalism educators I interviewed said it can be difficult to find partners who have the time and resources to commit to those projects. And, once they find those partners, they don't usually work with them long term, beyond on-off projects, unless there's a steady stream of funding and structural support from college administrators for everyone involved.

5.2.5 Opportunities and Challenges with specific partnerships: journalism organizations

One of the ways that journalism educators have formed partnerships with professional news outlets has been through national and statewide news associations that count these newsrooms as their members. Press associations typically provide education and networking opportunities for their members, offer scholarships and awards, advocate for journalists, and promote the value of news. The associations have also played a critical role in connecting journalism educators with professional newsrooms for collaborative work. Iris told me that the National Newspaper Press Association has connected her students with more than 200 African-American owned weeklies; Mark said his collaboration with the Asian-American Journalists Association provided funding and support from professional journalists for his students to produce stories for their digital news platform; and Amanda said she partnered with her state's press association and association of broadcasters to place students in rural newsrooms to train veteran reporters in new digital strategies for reporting and audience engagement.

Other journalism organizations are focused on innovating with new approaches to audience engagement, reporting, and storytelling. Faculty members also described collaborations with non-profit groups that have formed in recent years in response to the news crisis, such as The Listening Post Collective, The News Literacy Project, The Solutions Journalism Network, Trusting News, and First Draft News. Annie, a professor at a small private Northeast college, said collaborating with The Listening Post Collective provided her students with training and resources to innovate with new audience engagement strategies and learn about a critical issue in their community. On the Listening Post Collective website, the organization describes

itself as the project of an international media support non-profit focused on "developing local news and information solutions to help communities thrive" (Listening Post Collective website home page - https://listeningpostcollective.org/). Annie said her students used billboards, texting services, and community listening sessions with guidance from The Listening Post Collective to connect with people in their city who were experiencing food insecurity issues. The Listening Post Collective provided staff support and instructions for carrying out the outreach. Annie's journalism students were able to help people who responded to their outreach by providing information on community resources. The students also developed relationships with many of the people who were experiencing food insecurity. Those people agreed to share their stories in the students' coverage and participate in a public forum on the issue with local political leaders. Annie said the innovative approach and resources provided by The Listening Post Collective encouraged students to get more comfortable talking to strangers and empathizing with their stories:

> What I really wanted them to have was the experience of getting outside their comfort zone. Whether that meant, you know, interviewing people that they might not ever have had the chance to interview before and going deeper into communities where they might stand out as a rich kid from [a private school] and really wanting them to push themselves with their reporting, but then also the style of storytelling. So choosing, like the, the texting approach, choosing the listening posts, kind of forced them to think about, like collecting information differently, and then also compiling and producing information differently (Annie, personal communication, November 18, 2022).

In summary, journalism organizations such as national and statewide news associations and non-profits are valuable partners for journalism programs because they provide access to professional news outlets and information, support, and other resources to launch innovative projects. However, it's usually up to journalism faculty members to initiate and sustain these relationships.

5.2.6 Opportunities and Challenges with specific partnerships: national news outlets

Faculty members described exceptional opportunities for their students and their colleges associated with collaborations with national news outlets. Ten of the 20 faculty members I interviewed had been involved in a collaborative project with a national news outlet. Through these collaborations, faculty members said, journalism students received high-level and high-quality exposure and experience; broad distribution of their work; a pipeline to jobs; and association with highly publicized and impactful investigative and data-driven stories. Faculty members said national news outlets have benefitted by having access to high quality news content, including investigative reports, interviews, video, graphics, data visualizations, and photographs as well as coverage of events and issues they would not have had otherwise.

Karen, the director of a grant-funded investigative center, has produced data-driven projects about social issues such as homelessness, air pollution and climate change, and hunger in collaboration with outlets such as PBS, USA Today, National Public Radio, and The Washington Post. She said those projects have resulted in prestigious awards, more grant funding, and a higher profile for her college of journalism. Her students also received bylines in major national news publications, and experience working with national editors and

correspondents. She said her center's first collaboration with National Public Radio involved sharing data, analysis, and community engaged reporting conducted by student journalists and edited by faculty members. Karen said very careful planning about distribution of work responsibilities went into the collaboration:

> We would do our reporting. We would share all of our information back and forth. They [NPR] could use any information that we found, and we could use information that they'd found. We'd credit each other, and that worked really well. But it also underscored for me, the need for the most rigorous fact checking system I've ever seen. Because if you're working with a professional partner, you can't afford to be wrong, or you will never work with them again. (Karen, January 13, 2022)

According to the Center for Cooperative Media (2017), that type of temporary collaboration in which partners conduct research and create content separately and then share with each other is typical for first-time collaborators. Karen went on to lead even more extensive and integrated projects in which her program shared large amounts of data and resources at an organizational level with multiple partners, including other colleges and local and national news outlets.

Securing partnerships with national news outlets can be a challenge for smaller colleges. The faculty members I interviewed who had been involved with national news partnerships were all from larger, public research universities. During our interview, Brad described his frustration that a much larger university with a more well-funded journalism department in his state had stronger partnerships with national news outlets than his university did. He said, "They've got every partnership you can imagine. That's one of the problems…they are the big

vacuum that sucks up all the air for the entire state" (Brad, personal communication, January 4, 2022).

In summary, partnerships with national media outlets seem to offer the most prestige and reputation boost for journalism schools because they can lead to high profile journalism awards and opportunities for students to work with esteemed professional journalists on major public affairs and investigative stories. However, the faculty members I interviewed said those partnerships require significant coordination and staffing on the part of the college and can be difficult to form for smaller colleges.

To wrap up this chapter, journalism faculty members said that they are intentionally situating their collaborative projects in diverse communities as a way get their students "out of their comfort zones," raise awareness of issues facing marginalized populations, and to help serve evolving information needs in communities. Faculty members said they are responding to their own concerns and directives from funders, administrators, and students to prioritize diversity equity and inclusion in their teaching. I also examined the different types of collaborative partnerships. The faculty members I interviewed primarily discussed three types of collaborative relationships; those that involved funding, news and resource sharing, and engagement and outreach. They described opportunities with each type of partnership; partnerships with philanthropic foundations have been the most critical for providing project funding; collaborations with local news outlets provided the most immediate relief to the loss of local news and opportunities for students to have their work published and get "clips" for their portfolios; collaborations with national news outlets seemed to offer the most prestige through journalism awards and opportunities for students to work with esteemed professional

journalists on major public affairs and investigative stories; and collaborations with community organizations seemed to offer the most opportunities for rethinking new approaches to reporting, expanding co-cultural connections, critical consciousness raising, and promoting media literacy.

In the next chapter, I offer an overview of conclusions and limitations, and make recommendations for future research and action related to collaborative projects in journalism education.

Chapter 6: Conclusions, Limitations, and Future Research

In this dissertation I have examined the motives, experiences, and perspectives of journalism faculty members at colleges and universities who have invented, developed, and led innovative journalistic collaborations in their programs. I conducted 20 interviews with faculty members from 16 different colleges and universities; they have led a total of at least 70 different projects involving collaborative partnerships with more than 140 different organizations. Through these interviews, I investigated the extent to which faculty members initiated and carried out their collaborative projects in response to specific problems in journalism. I also sought to find out if they intentionally situated their projects in diverse communities, and if so, what was the logic behind doing that and what they hoped to accomplish. Finally, I wanted to learn about the opportunities and challenges associated with different types of collaborative partnerships in journalism education.

In this chapter, I provide an overview of conclusions, discuss this dissertation's limitations, and offer recommendations for future research. This dissertation offers new insights and hopefully some guidance and inspiration for journalism educators, college and university administrators, scholars, funders, and student journalists about how faculty-led collaborations in journalism education can provide experiential learning and democratic engagement opportunities for students and play a role in repairing and revitalizing news.

For journalism educators, I hope this study inspires them to follow the lead of my interview participants to innovate and collaborate and advance the role of j-schools as democratic stewards. This dissertation proposes a typology of nine ideal types of j-school

collaborations that individually or, ideally in combination, could help respond to ongoing and emerging problems in journalism, such as the collapse of local news, the loss of public trust in journalism, the lack of diversity in newsrooms, and more (detailed below). I suggest that this typology could be a blueprint for future innovation and research related to the journalism curriculum *and* new ways of practicing journalism.

For college and university administrators and funders, I put forward data that show how journalism educators are responding to challenges in the journalism field, such as the loss of local news and public affairs coverage, by launching innovative collaborations that seem to be having a real-world impact. These projects are also providing valuable experiential learning and democratic engagement opportunities for students and providing for the information needs of communities. However, college and university administrators and funders should be aware that only those projects that have strong institutional support, are consistently funded and staffed, and built into a program's strategic goals seem to have the most promise for long term impact and sustainability.

For scholars exploring paths for future research in journalism studies, this dissertation advances the growing body of scholarship about new directions in journalism education and university-based journalistic collaborations. Specifically, this dissertation provides empirical evidence of collaboration in journalism education as a response to transformation, loss, and upheaval in the journalism field; and it proposes a practical conceptualization of *collaboration as a strategy for democratic stewarding in journalism education*. I hope this dissertation will be a launching point for future research into the processes and impact of j-school collaborative projects.

For student journalists, I hope this dissertation will empower you to insist that your journalism program incorporates the most innovative and inclusive models of teaching and learning to their journalism curriculum, including as Steiner (2000) said, conceptual scholarly research aimed at the public good. After all, your future depends on it.

6.1 Overview of findings and conclusions

As journalism educators, we spend a lot of time pushing students out of their comfort zones; we instruct them to go to unfamiliar places to cover stories, talk to strangers about uncomfortable topics, and ask tough questions because it's just part of the job. At the same time, however, *too many of us* are lingering in our own comfort zones of tried and trusted teaching routines and narrow perceptions of journalism. We are teaching the same traditional "textbook" news values we've taught for decades, recycling familiar assignments, and too often avoiding "new" initiatives, especially those that take us out of our classrooms. As Solkin (2020) found, journalism educators are still for the most part relying heavily on an industry-led curriculum that focuses on professional competencies and discourages change - even as parts of the industry collapse around them. At the same time, this dissertation shows how some journalism educators are becoming innovators, or as Schudson (2013) put it "practical philosophers," inventing responses to the news crisis that are more pluralistic and inclusive than traditional industry-led approaches to news. This dissertation is the latest wakeup call for journalism faculty members to consider the consequences of sticking to those old routines, and hopefully, shake some journalism educators out of their comfort zones, and into more innovative, inclusive, and collaborative approaches to teaching and practicing journalism.

Through this dissertation, I sought to answer three primary research questions:

RQ1: *What do faculty members see as problems facing the journalism field and to what extent are they pursuing specific types of partnerships and collaborative projects to address those issues?*

RQ2: *To what extent do journalism educators seek to situate collaborative projects within diverse communities? What is the logic behind this, for example, do they see such collaboration as a way of understanding civic life and playing an active role in improving it?*

RQ3: *How do faculty members describe the challenges and opportunities with developing and sustaining different types of collaborative partnerships?*

For RQ1, each of my interview participants said that they see their collaborative projects as at least in part a response to some aspect of transformation, loss, and upheaval in the news industry. Faculty members cited as their top concerns shrinking newsrooms and collapsing business models resulting in the loss of local news and public affairs coverage; and low reporter pay and a shortage of jobs (including internships). In descending order, they also mentioned: the lack of rigorous, investigative, context-rich reporting; the loss of public trust and respect for journalism; the proliferation of disinformation and misinformation online; the perceived loss of interest in news by young people; the lack of diversity in newsrooms and news coverage; cuts to ethnic media; the public's disengagement in local civic affairs; and the slow pace of innovation in many professional newsrooms. Every faculty member I interviewed said colleges and universities have the potential – and responsibility - to play a role in addressing the news crisis by supporting innovative and inclusive journalistic collaborations. Faculty members

asserted that the projects they invented, developed, and led were in response to many of those concerns.

I have categorized their responses through a typology of ideal type j-school collaborations. I created the typology using grounded theory methods by grouping themes or similarities in faculty perspectives and experiences related to the functions, goals, and outcomes of their specific projects. The typology categorizes nine ideal type functions of j-school collaborations as: coverage expanding, citizen informing, civic discourse facilitating, co-cultural connecting, critical consciousness raising, community building, cutting edge experimenting, cross training, and credibility boosting. Through the development of this typology, it became clear that journalism educators are engaging in collaborations not just as a way to help compensate for industry losses to local news and investigative reporting, but also to experiment with newer approaches to teaching, learning, and practicing journalism.

I have identified *coverage expanding* collaborative projects in journalism schools as those that involve news and resource sharing with other newsrooms, college programs, and community groups to produce news, create digital content, and expand audiences and coverage areas. The ideal type of *coverage expanding* collaboration would also expand news coverage about issues that have historically been ignored or under reported for communities that have limited or no access to news about those topics or other issues that affect their daily lives. Faculty members described this type of collaboration as a response to news deserts and the collapse of local news, including cuts to ethnic media. During my interviews, faculty members explained how they have played a role in expanding news coverage by providing new digital news platforms, increased local news and public affairs reporting, and reporting on

issues important to diverse populations. All the faculty members I interviewed described their coverage expanding collaborations as successful in terms of providing real world experience for their students and providing news and information to underserved communities about under-reported issues. However, faculty members reported varied levels of success with the collaborative aspect of their projects: some faculty members lamented their lack of staff and funding; they complained about the lack of support and coordination from collaborative partners, including professional news outlets; and, they expressed urgent worries about sustainability. These examples of *coverage expanding* collaborations demonstrate that the more organizational support and coordination (from colleges and partners), staffing, and funding they have, the more that university-based collaborations can provide sustainable journalism to news desert communities and struggling news outlets.

Journalism faculty members have launched different types of *citizen informing* collaborative projects in response to concerns about the loss of public affairs, watchdog and investigative reporting. Faculty members described partnerships with news foundations, non-profit investigative news outlets, professional newsrooms, other departments and other universities designed to try to strengthen public affairs and civic coverage, often through data journalism and investigative reporting. Following Robinson's call for journalism education that follows the philosophy of education of John Dewey and thereby emphasizes diversity and inclusion, I propose that the ideal type of *citizen informing* collaboration involves experiments with innovative and inclusive approaches to producing and sharing political news, investigative reporting, political analysis, and other guidance that promotes pluralism and informs civic life in a democracy. My participants described a range of *citizen informing* collaborations that have

also included the development of new digital news platforms, as well as grant-funded investigative centers, statewide media alliances, educational resources, and state capitol and campus-based news bureaus through which students produce and share news with professional news outlets. Faculty involved in these types of partnerships explained that the key to making them work is making sure that colleges and partner news outlets sufficiently train students to understand how government works and provide consistent support for story development and advanced editing. Faculty members said these projects have provided news that a diverse citizenry needs to make decisions; however, faculty members said they rely on generous funding, and curriculum improvements such as advanced training in data collection and analysis, advanced training and support for students covering government agencies, as well as creative and passionate faculty leaders.

Faculty members have also launched what I have categorized as *civic discourse facilitating* collaborations in response to political polarization and lack of citizen engagement in local civic affairs. Informed and inspired by the public journalism movement, I propose that the ideal type of *civic discourse facilitating* collaboration involves journalism students and their collaborators researching, developing, and carrying out inclusive opportunities for citizens to engage with each other and civic leaders for the purpose of improving public life. *These collaborative projects do not always involve the production of news but can serve as useful and important sources and resources in story development, as well as provide valuable democratic engagement opportunities for students.* Some examples described by my interview participants of this type of collaborative project included: organizing a mayoral debate or town hall meeting; hosting a workshop in conjunction with civic leaders about a local problem such as wildfires,

homelessness, or food insecurity; connecting citizens with civic leaders and government resources; and developing an app to help citizens identify and communicate with their government representatives. Journalism educators said these collaborative projects provided valuable learning experiences for their students and played a role in facilitating civic engagement and discourse. Though, they acknowledge they need to be especially creative, flexible, and open to new partnerships and approaches.

Another concern that faculty members want to address through collaborative projects is the lack of diversity in newsrooms and in j-schools. To respond to those problems, faculty members have developed partnerships and projects that attempt to provide a pipeline to their college journalism programs from minority communities, that provide opportunities for students from diverse backgrounds to work in newsrooms, and that bring students and faculty with diverse backgrounds to universities for special projects. I have labeled and categorized these projects as *Co-cultural Connecting, Cross Training, and Community Building Collaborations*. The ideal type of *co-cultural connecting* collaboration involves opportunities for students to engage in creative and inclusive community engagement with people of various perspectives, age, gender, socioeconomic status, and cultural, racial, and ethnic backgrounds for the purpose of mutual understanding. *These collaborations do not always involve the production of news.* Faculty members I interviewed described several projects that fit into this category such as students hosting media and news literacy workshops in inner city and rural schools and community centers, j-school students participating in service learning and civic media production projects, and j-schools students hosting "listening sessions" and other outreach to learn about communities they are covering.

Cross training collaborations involve j-school students and faculty sharing skills and knowledge they've learned with diverse professional news outlets or community groups, while at the same time learning about working in those in newsrooms or community settings. The *cross training* collaboration involves mutually beneficial opportunities for students and collaborative partners to learn from each other while responding to the crisis in journalism and promoting civic engagement. Faculty members I interviewed explained that some of those projects involved j-school students teaching digital skills to veteran reporters with low tech knowledge in rural newsrooms; j-school students teaching mobile journalism skills at local high schools; j-schools experimenting with AI and other technology and sharing their skills and technology with news outlets to gather and produce news.

The ideal type of *community building* collaboration involves journalism students engaging in activities to improve civic life for citizens in communities near their campus and to strengthen neighborly bonds between local and campus communities. *These collaborations do not always involve the production of news, and ideally, also occur as co-cultural connecting and civic discourse facilitating collaborations.* Some examples described by my interview participants include partnerships with local civic groups to mobilize community action and service, and partnerships with K-12 schools and other civic organizations for events, workshops, and campus tours. Faculty members who want to promote diversity in newsrooms and in their journalism programs have launched innovative and inclusive collaborative projects that have involved outreach and relationship building with diverse communities, however many of them acknowledged that more systemic change is needed in newsrooms and at universities to bring more staff and students from a variety of backgrounds into the field.

Faculty members who said they wanted to address problems in news related to negative stereotypes, misrepresentations, and harmful portrayals of marginalized populations said they conceived of collaborative projects to examine and cover those issues and try to restore trust with audiences in those communities. I have labeled and categorized those projects as co-*cultural connecting* and *critical consciousness raising* collaborations. These projects included partnerships with other college departments, civic groups, and philanthropic organizations to launch service-oriented projects; the development of digital news platforms for people in diverse communities to express themselves (tell their own stories); and collaborations to produce stories that redress negative stereotypes.

Journalism educators are responding to the slow and uneven pace of innovation in newsrooms by launching collaborative projects that I have labeled and categorized as *cutting-edge experimenting* collaborations. Several faculty members I interviewed are engaging in partnerships with tech companies and other journalism innovators, as well as newsrooms and community groups to develop and/or test new technologies and approaches to news gathering, engagement, storytelling, and distribution. They described projects such as an investigative project that required students to build air pollution sensors and test them in urban neighborhoods; a project that trained people in underserved communities to use technology such as AI, drones, and 360 video to tell their own stories; and partnerships to develop an app to help people geolocate local news. To prioritize diversity and inclusion, I propose that the ideal type of *cutting-edge experimenting* collaboration involves the production of news using new technologies and other innovative or novel approaches to promoting those values in news gathering, audience engagement, storytelling, and news distribution. According to the faculty

members I interviewed, the collaborations that involve *cutting edge experimenting* have the potential to break new ground in investigative reporting, public service, co-cultural connecting, and community engagement, but they require steady investment, tech-savvy faculty, and support that faculty members said is not always guaranteed.

I classified projects specifically focused on promoting trust in news and fighting disinformation as *credibility boosting* collaborations. Three of the 20 faculty members I interviewed described forming partnerships with other colleagues, news outlets, foundations, non-profit journalism institutes, and civic groups to engage in strategies to try to boost public understanding of the value and credibility of news outlets. These *credibility boosting* collaborations were designed to teach and promote the value of journalism and fact-checking and warn of the dangers of disinformation. I propose that the ideal type of *credibility boosting* collaboration also involves activities that promote the value of journalism in a democracy and provide public resources and training related to assessing accuracy and credibility of news and information. Some of the *credibility boosting* projects described by my interview participants involved j-school partnerships with other departments and news organizations to teach news and media literacy, partnerships with professional news organizations or civic groups to host workshops promoting local news, and partnerships with philanthropic foundations and non-profit institutes that promote transparency in news coverage. This was among the least mentioned type of project in my interviews, and to me, that seems like a significant missed opportunity as it is becoming increasingly important for us to find creative ways to teach and promote the value of journalism and fact-checking and warn of the dangers of disinformation.

In conclusion, this typology provides a framework for analyzing the types of collaborations launched by faculty members in response to the news crisis. These findings show that journalism educators are engaging in collaborative projects related to news production and audience engagement and experimenting with novel approaches to teaching and learning in response to problems in the journalism field. However, faculty members often see these projects – while successful - as temporary or one-off activities. It is also unclear whether these projects represent any fundamental shift in the journalism curriculum. In other words, while specific projects included experiments with different forms of community engagement and approaches to news gathering, sharing, and presentation, I did not ask faculty members if they thought these experiments would result in permanent changes to how they and their colleagues teach journalism. Several of the faculty members complained that they felt like they were alone in their departments working to establish and maintain collaborative partnerships and projects, and that their projects did not reach their full potential as a result. My interviews indicate that only those colleges that have built the projects into the identity of their journalism programs through well-funded and staffed news bureaus, specialized investigative or innovation centers seem to have much hope of long-term impact, growth, or sustainability.

One of the most encouraging findings in this dissertation (relevant to RQ2) is the commitment expressed by faculty members to situate their projects in diverse communities for the purpose of "getting students out of their comfort zones" and elevating marginalized voices that have historically been misrepresented or ignored in news and media coverage. Every faculty member I interviewed was involved in collaborative projects that included intentional outreach to diverse populations. These projects included outreach to people of various

perspectives, age, gender, socioeconomic status, and cultural, racial, and ethnic backgrounds. Most projects were situated in urban areas with high poverty rates and predominantly Black and Hispanic populations. I identified four of the most common strategies that journalism educators have used to connect with diverse communities and serve their information needs through collaborative projects. Those strategies involve: creating new bilingual (and one trilingual) digital news platforms; training citizen/community reporters and providing a news platform for them to tell their own stories; training middle and high school teachers and students in marginalized communities in reporting and digital media skills; and participating in collaborations to produce news for ethnic media outlets. The most common strategy mentioned in my interviews for trying to reach diverse communities and serve their information needs seemed to be creating news websites and producing stories in both English and Spanish.

Faculty members addressed RQ3 by describing opportunities and challenges with different types of partnerships. For the most part, each type of collaborative partnership offered some unique and important opportunities for students to get reporting and/or community engagement experience and played a role in improving access to reliable news and information for a diverse public. However, each type of partnership also brought challenges. Faculty members said it can be difficult to obtain and sustain funding from philanthropic foundations and secure partnerships with prestigious national news outlets. Faculty members also said that in their partnerships with local news outlets, the professional journalists were sometimes too busy to train students and coordinate on projects; skeptical or disappointed about the quality and quantity of student work; hesitant to listen to student ideas; entrenched

in old routines; and unwilling or unable to compensate students for their work. In their partnerships with community partners, faculty members said there were often concerns about journalistic autonomy and editorial control, as well as difficulties with coordinating schedules, transportation for students, and funding.

Based on their interviews, I draw no broad conclusions about which types of partnerships are best overall, but the data can be used to show how certain partnerships seem more suited to specific goals. Collaborations with community organizations offered the most opportunities for rethinking new approaches to reporting, expanding co-cultural connections, and promoting media literacy. Partnerships with philanthropic foundations have been the most critical for providing funding to develop and sustain innovative projects. Faculty members suggested that collaborations with local news outlets provided the most immediate relief in light of the loss of local news. Collaborations with national news outlets seemed to offer the most prestige through journalism awards and opportunities for students to work with esteemed professional journalists on major public affairs and investigative stories.

6.2 Assumptions, limitations, and scope:

This dissertation assumes that journalism faculty who carry out collaborative projects and agree to participate in this study are qualified and motivated to provide accurate information about their experiences and attitudes. While some are more experienced – and "credentialed" – than others, they all work with students on journalism collaborations, and I assume they are working in the interest of the students and to advance the public service mission of journalism. This dissertation is limited in scope to faculty perspectives about their

own collaborative projects and does not consider other texts or evidence related to their projects or perspectives of their project partners, funders, supervisors, or students. I intend to continue to study these collaborative endeavors and investigate those perspectives in future research.

It is also important to note that I am not only a researcher, but a journalism practitioner and teacher with a personal interest in improving and expanding journalism education. I am sympathetic to the challenges and limitations of faculty members who engage in collaborative projects, and I am eager to see them succeed.

6.3 Recommendations for future research

While this dissertation offers new empirical evidence about how journalism educators are launching innovative and collaborative projects as a response to transformation, loss, and turmoil in the journalism field, I am eager to learn much more about the processes involved in each type of collaboration described by my interview participants.

I recommend that researchers and scholars use this dissertation as a launching point for more in-depth exploration of how journalism educators are collaborating with various partners to try to save, or at least "repair and revitalize" journalism. Personally, I would like to embed for at least a semester, and ideally longer, with any of the faculty members I interviewed to study ethnographically how people involved in the partnerships and projects communicate with each other, build support, set goals, respond to challenges, develop a curriculum, move their projects forward, and assess their impact. This type of study could be immensely helpful to

inform best practices for other faculty members who want to use collaborative projects to improve their teaching and respond to problems in the field. It could also reveal more specifically, the challenges involved in more reform-oriented teaching in journalism education that pushes and exceeds the boundaries of industry-led norms.

I have also thought a lot about questions I would like to pursue more fully with journalism faculty members. Specifically, I'm interested in learning more about the extent to which journalism faculty members who launched collaborative projects faced any resistance or rejection from their colleagues or potential partners. The faculty members I interviewed had all received grants for their projects and their projects were greenlighted by their departments. While they faced challenges outlined in Chapter 5, most of those challenges were related to limitations in time, resources, and funding. It could even be worthwhile to interview faculty members who are *not* pursuing more innovative collaborations about how they are responding to changes in the field, if at all. Developing a clearer understanding of the potential reasons for resistance to innovative and collaborative journalism projects could help faculty members improve how they communicate about their ideas and how they develop plans for overcoming barriers to reform.

It also seems important to learn more about how faculty members changed their approach to their lesson plans, assignments, and assessments, and how those new approaches have challenged norms in their colleges, and in the field. In that vein, I would also be interested in learning more about how faculty members prepared students to work in diverse communities, and the extent to which faculty members took steps to mitigate any potential harm to people in communities covered by student journalists.

Another helpful contribution to journalism studies would be more research into the impact of faculty-led collaborative journalism projects on the communities they are serving: how are they benefitting, if at all, from the collaborative work of journalism educators and their partners? Where do these projects fit in the local news ecosystem around campuses? Of course, we also must also study what journalism students involved in these collaborative projects are learning through the experience. We know that many of these projects can be experimental and therefore chaotic and uncertain at times, so we should use surveys, observation, and interviews to try to understand the impact of that unpredictability on students. Does it help or hurt their learning? What are students getting out of their involvement in j-school collaborations, what values and skills are they learning, and how are they carrying what they learned into their careers?

This dissertation has also discussed the critical importance of sustained funding and institutional support to the success of faculty-led collaborative projects in journalism education. We need a clearer understanding of the obstacles to funding and other institutional support. I recommend work to develop greater, more complete understanding of the financial resources, including foundation funding, that could be available to journalism educators and administrators to launch innovative and collaborative projects. If faculty members and j-school administrators can learn more about what goes into these funding decisions, they might have more success obtaining and sustaining funding for their projects and even more success reaching their goals.

To close, I want to express gratitude to my interview participants. Their commitment to collaboration, innovation, and inclusion in journalism education should inspire optimism. My

conversations with journalism educators have made clear that an industry-led model of journalism education is not sustainable if the industry is collapsing around us, and its leaders are making news decisions based on the bottom line. Universities, specifically journalism educators and administrators, have an opportunity and obligation to act as hubs for innovation and collaboration and expand their role as democratic stewards.

REFERENCES

AASCU, American Association of State Colleges and Universities (2022), Stewards of Democracy: Educating and Inspiring Agents of Change.
Retrieved from: https://www.aascu.org/Stewards-of-Democracy/

All Together Now. (2009, May/June). Columbia Journalism Review. Retrieved from http://www.cjr.org/editorial/all_together_now_1.php

Allsop, J. (2020, March 31) America's Newsrooms Face an Apocalypse, *CJR*, retrieved from: https://www.cjr.org/the_media_today/local_news_layoffs_coronavirus.php

Barrera, D., Willner, L. N., & Kukahiko, K. I. (2017). Assessing the development of an emerging critical consciousness through service learning. *Journal of Critical Thought and Praxis*, *6*(3).

Bates, M. (2011) "Work-integrated Learning Workloads: The Realities and Responsibilities." *Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education* 12:111-114

Benson, R. (2006). News media as a "journalistic field": What Bourdieu adds to new institutionalism, and vice versa. *Political Communication*, *23*(2), 187-202.

Blank-Libra, J. (2016). *Pursuing an ethic of empathy in journalism*. Routledge.

Boers, F., & Lindstromberg, S. (2005). Finding ways to make phrase-learning feasible: The mnemonic effect of alliteration. *System*, *33*(2), 225-238.

Bourdieu, P. (2005). The Political Field, the Social Science Field, and Journalistic Field. *Bourdieu and the Journalistic Field*. Wiley.

Carey, J. W. (2000). Some personal notes on US journalism education. *Journalism*, *1*(1), 12-23.

Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. Sage.

Charmaz, K. (2014). Constructing grounded theory (2nd ed.). Sage.

Charmaz, K. (2017). The power of constructivist grounded theory for critical inquiry. Qualitative inquiry, 23(1), 34-45.

Creech, B., & Mendelson, A. L. (2015). Imagining the journalist of the future: Technological visions of journalism education and newswork. *The Communication Review*, *18*(2), 142-165.

Christian, S. E. (2007). A marriage of like minds and collective action: Civic journalism in a service-learning framework. In L. R. Frey & K. M. Carragee (Eds.), Communication activism: Media and performance activism (pp.97-128). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.

Clark, L. S. (2013). Cultivating the media activist: How critical media literacy and critical service learning can reform journalism education. *Journalism*, *14*(7), 885-903.

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2016). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Sage.

Deuze, M., & Witschge, T. (2018). Beyond journalism: Theorizing the transformation of journalism. *Journalism*, *19*(2), 165-181.

Doty, D. H., & Glick, W. H. (1994). Typologies as a unique form of theory building: Toward improved understanding and modeling. *Academy of Management Review*, *19*(2), 230-251.

Dubicki, E. (2013). Faculty perceptions of students' information literacy skills competencies. *Journal of Information Literacy*, 7(2), pp. 97-125.

Effron, M. (2019, May 6). Journalistic Collaboration is a Key to Survival. *Nieman Reports*. Retrieved from: https://niemanreports.org/articles/journalistic-collaboration-is-a-key-to-survival/

EQUITY FIRST Transforming Journalism and Journalism Philanthropy in a New Civic Age. (2020, October). *Democracy Fund*, Retrived from https://democracyfund.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/NII-REPORT-10.08.2020.pdf

Ferrucci, P. (2017). Exploring public service journalism: Digitally native news nonprofits and engagement. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, *94*(1), 355-370.

Ferrucci, P., Nelson, J. L., & Davis, M. P. (2020). From “public journalism” to “engaged journalism”: Imagined audiences and denigrating discourse. *International Journal of Communication*, *14*, 19.

Finneman, T., Heckman, M., & E. Walck, P. (2022). Reimagining Journalistic Roles: How Student Journalists Are Taking On the US News Desert Crisis. *Journalism Studies*, *23*(3), 338-355.

Folkerts, J. (2014). History of journalism education. *Journalism & Communication Monographs*, *16*(4), 227-299.

Francisco, T., Lenhoff, A., & Schudson, M. (2012). The classroom as newsroom: Leveraging university resources for public affairs reporting. *International Journal of Communication*, *6*, 21.

Freeman, S. (2021). Journalism students to play integral role in saving community newspaper

retrieved from: https://grady.uga.edu/journalism-students-to-play-integral-role-in-saving-community-newspaper/

Gans, Herbert J. (2003). *Democracy and the News*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Gans, H. J. (2004). Journalism, journalism education, and democracy. *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator*, *59*(1), 10.

Guevara, M. (2022, May 19) *Collaboration: From 'impossible stories' to world-changing journalism***,** Conference Presentation, Collaborative Journalism Summit, Chicago, IL

Gillmor, D. (2016). Towards a new model for journalism education. *Journalism Practice*, *10*(7), 815-819.

Glaser, B. G., Strauss, A. L., & Strutzel, E. (1968). The discovery of grounded theory; strategies for qualitative research. *Nursing research*, *17*(4), 364.

Gottfried, (2022) *Journalists give industry mixed reviews on newsroom diversity, lowest marks in racial and ethnic diversity*. Pew Research Center. Retrieved from https://www.pewresearch.org/journalism/2022/06/14/journalists-give-industry-mixed-reviews-on-newsroom-diversity-lowest-marks-in-racial-and-ethnic-diversity/

Graves, L., & Konieczna, M. (2015). Qualitative political communication| sharing the news: Journalistic collaboration as field repair. *International Journal of Communication*, *9*, 19.

Haas, T. (2000). Public journalism challenges to curriculum and instruction. *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator*, 55(3), 27.

Haas, T., & Steiner, L. (2006). Public journalism: a reply to critics. *Journalism*, *7*(2), 238-254.

Haas, T. (2012). *The pursuit of public journalism: Theory, practice and criticism*. Routledge.

Hachtmann, F. (2012). The process of general education reform from a faculty perspective: A grounded theory approach. *JGE: Journal of General Education, The*, *61*(1), 16-38.

Hermida, A., Domingo, D., Heinonen, A., Paulussen, S., Quandt, T., Reich, Z., ... & Vujnovic, M. (2011). The active recipient: Participatory journalism through the lens of the Dewey-Lippmann debate. In *International Symposium on Online Journalism* (Vol. 1, No. 2).

Jaakkola, M. (2018). S(t)imulating journalism in the classroom: A structured comparison of the design of pedagogical newsrooms in Nordic academic journalism training. *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator*, *73*(2), 182-199.

Kuhnhenn, J. (2020, June 9). 'A reckoning moment': Newsrooms face their own shortcomings. Journalism Institute National Press Club, retrieved from https://www.pressclubinstitute.org/a-reckoning-moment-newsrooms-face-their-own-shortcomings/

Lemann, N., (2009, Nov. 15). Journalism schools can push coverage beyond breaking news. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from http://chronicle.com/article/Journalism-Schools-Can-Push/49115/

Martin, V. B., Scott, C., Brennen, B., & Durham, M. G. (2018). What Is Grounded Theory Good For?. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, *95*(1), 11-22.

McDevitt, M., Gassaway, B. M., & Pérez Frank G. (2002). The making and unmaking of civic journalists: influences of professional socialization. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, *79*(1), 87–100. https://doi.org/10.1177/107769900207900107

Macdonald, I. (2006). Teaching journalists to save the profession: A critical assessment of recent debates on the future of US and Canadian journalism education. *Journalism Studies*, *7*(5), 745-764.

Mensing, D. (2010). Rethinking [again] the future of journalism education. *Journalism Studies*, *11*(4), 511-523.

Mensing, D., & Ryfe, D. (2013). Blueprint for change: From the teaching hospital to the entrepreneurial model of journalism education. In *ISOJ The Official Research Journal of the International Symposium on Online Journalism* (Vol. 3, No. 2, pp. 26-44).

Mensing, D. (2017). The curious case of US journalism education: Shrinking newsrooms, expanding classrooms. *Global Journalism Education in the 21st Century: Challenges and Innovations. Knight Center for Journalism in the Americas, University of Texas at Austin*, 219-242.

Min, S. J. (2020). What the Twenty-First Century Engaged Journalism Can Learn from the Twentieth Century Public Journalism. *Journalism Practice*, 1-16.

Moody, M., & Burleson, C. (2013). Using service-based, collaborative teaching in journalism courses. *Teaching Journalism and Mass Communication*, *3*(2).

Newton, E. (2012). Journalism schools aren't changing quickly enough. *Nieman Lab*. Retrieved from: https://www.niemanlab.org/2012/09/eric-newton-journalism-schools-arent-changing-quickly-enough/

Novek, E. (1999). Read all about it! Using civic journalism as a service-learning strategy. *Voices of strong democracy: Concepts and models for service-learning in communication studies*, 145-154.

Olsen, G. R. (2020). *Newsroom-Classroom Hybrids at Universities: Student Labor and the Journalism Crisis*. Routledge.

Parks, P. (2019). Textbook news values: Stable concepts, changing choices. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, *96*(3), 784-810.

Pearce, M. (2022). American Media Wants to Save Democracy, Is it working? *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/story/2022-07-29/la-ent-american-media-democracy

Rakow, L. (2018). What Is Grounded Theory Good For?. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, *95*(1), 11-22.

Rauch, J., Trager, K. D., & Kim, E. (2003). Clinging to tradition, welcoming civic solutions: A survey of college students' attitudes toward civic journalism. *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator*, 58(2), 175.

Robinson, S. (2017). Teaching Journalism for Better Community: A Deweyan Approach. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 94(1), 303-317.

Rosen, J. (1999). *What are journalists for?* Yale University Press.

Rosen, J (2010) The view from nowhere: Questions and answers. Pressthink. Retrieved from: http://pressthink.org/2010/11/the-view-from-nowhere-questions-and-answers/

Salahi, L., & Smith, C. C. (2021). Perceptions of news-academic partnerships as a sustainable business model. *Teaching Journalism & Mass Communication*, *11*(1), 12-23.

Schaffer, J. (2013, July 10) In New Jersey, a university teams up with local news orgs to collaborate for impact. Nieman Reports. Retrieved from https://www.niemanlab.org/2013/07/in-new-jersey-a-university-teams-up-with-local-news-orgs-to-collaborate-for-impact

Schudson, M. (2008). *Why democracies need an unlovable press*. Polity.

Schudson, M. (2013). Reluctant stewards: Journalism in a democratic society. *Daedalus*, *142*(2), 159-176.

Solkin, L. (2022). Journalism Education in the 21st century: A thematic analysis of the research literature. *Journalism*, *23*(2), 444-460.

Steiner, L. (2000). Ethics and academic politics. *Journalism*, *1*(1), 48-52.

Tracy, K. (2001) Discourse Analysis in Communication. In Schiffrin D., Tannen D., & Hamilton H. *Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Valencia-Forrester, F. (2020). Models of work-integrated learning in journalism education. *Journalism Studies*, *21*(5), 697-712.

Venance, S. L., LaDonna, K. A., & Watling, C. J. (2014). Exploring frontline faculty perspectives after a curriculum change. *Medical education*, *48*(10), 998-1007.