1. Can Peace Journalism be transposed to Climate Crisis news?

Commentary: This commentary briefly outlines characteristics of Peace Journalism (PJ), and then summarises ways that PJ could inspire justice and crisis-oriented climate journalism, including ethical moorings, audience orientation, journalism practices, self-reflexivity and scepticism of the practices of 'objectivity'. While there are also important disjunctures between them, particularly around advocacy, partisanship and conflict escalation, both paradigms have liberal and radical variants. The author concludes with a note on structural media change as a corequisite of either paradigm's implementation.

Keywords: climate change, climate crisis, climate journalism, global, journalism paradigms, Indigenous concept of warrior, peace journalism

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Peace journalism as a paradigm

PEACE Journalism shares some of the spirit of a reform movement that emerged within American media during the 1990s—Civic Journalism, also known as Public Journalism. While it faded early in the 2000s, Civic Journalism has left important legacies for journalism that aims to address the need for public engagement and a sense of urgency in the context of global climate crisis. Civic Journalism opened up debate about journalism's democratic purposes and its relationship with those it claims to serve. It de-naturalised organisational routines and orthodoxies, particularly objectivity. It invited journalists to be more reflexive about their practices and impact, especially the place of the public in their stories, and the frames and master narratives employed (Compton, 2000, p. 455). Its experiments, within their limits, showed a considerable potential for both journalists and public to recover a sense of political agency.

Given the ambiguous impact of Civic Journalism, Peace Journalism offers a more recent paradigmatic shift that could well resonate with our focus groups and interviews with climate-concerned citizens and environmental communicators in the Vancouver area. Our respondents are alienated by the many limitations—over-reliance on official sources, on events rather than processes, on a cynical view of

politics as a fruitless spectator sport rather than the arena where solutions must be found—of conventional climate politics news (Cross et al., 2015). Briefly, as many readers of this journal will already be aware, Peace Journalism (PJ) is an analytical method for evaluating reportage of conflicts, a set of practices and ethical norms that journalism could employ in order to improve itself, and a rallying call for change (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005a, p. 270). In sum, PJ's public philosophy 'is when journalists make choices—of what stories to report and about how to report them—that create opportunities for society at large to consider and value non-violent responses to conflict' (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005b, p. 5).

PJ draws upon the insights of Conflict Analysis to look beyond the overt violence which is often tantamount to War Journalism. PJ calls attention to the context of Attitudes, Behaviour and Contradictions. If War Journalism presents conflict as a tug-of-war between two parties in which one side's gain is the other's loss, PJ invites journalists to re-frame conflict as a cat's cradle of relationships between multiple stakeholders; to distinguish between stated demands, and underlying needs and objectives; to move beyond official sources to include other voices—particularly victims and those working for creative and non-violent solutions; to explore ways of transforming and transcending the hardened lines of conflict; and to report aggression and casualties on all sides, avoiding demonising language and the conflict-escalating trap of emphasizing 'our' victims and 'their' atrocities. PJ looks beyond overt bloodshed, to include other forms of everyday violence that may underlie conflict situations: structural violence, the institutionalised barriers to human dignity and wellbeing, such as racism; and cultural violence, the glorification of battles, wars and military power (Hackett, 2006).

Israeli scholar Dov Shinar (2007, p. 200) offers a concise summary of PJ prescriptions for better journalism:

1. Exploring backgrounds and contexts of conflict formation, and presenting causes and options on every side so as to portray conflict in realistic terms, transparent to the audience;
2. Giving voice to the views of all rival parties;
3. Offering creative ideas for conflict resolution, peacemaking and peacekeeping;
4. Exposing lies, cover-up attempts and culprits on all sides, and revealing excesses committed by, and suffering inflicted on, people of all parties;
5. Paying attention to peace stories and post-war developments more than the regular coverage of conflict.

Shinar then bids caution and realism regarding both the prospects for implementing PJ in journalism practice, and its impact in conflict situations. I return to the question of implementation below, after considering whether the PJ model can be transposed to climate crisis journalism.

Peace Journalism for climate crisis?

In the search for journalism adequate to the scale and urgency of climate crisis, PJ offers a growing repertoire of philosophical support, methodological guidelines and field experience from which to draw. In this section, I briefly thematise some of the potential affinities between PJ and climate journalism.

- Even though PJ's purpose is to reduce violent conflict rather than eco-logical destruction, its ethical horizon—a peaceful, just and sustainable global society—resonates with climate journalism. Both approaches aim to transform journalism into a practice that in turn can transform the broader culture. Media reform is not only about media reform; as one public health and media activist put it, 'The point isn't to change the media; the point is to change the world' (Hackett, 2011, p. 35). But most PJ advocates also respect journalism's autonomy and the need for pro-fessional ethics and standards. It seeks news media that are more inde-pendent of established power, that are not suborned to propaganda from vested interests—including advocacy groups. As Lynch has put it:

  > … peace journalism is an advocacy position vis-à-vis journalism itself, but *it is not trying to turn journalism into something else.* If 'society at large' is provided with such opportunities [to value non-violent conflict resolution], but chooses not to take them, then there is nothing else journalism can do about it, while remaining journalism. (Lynch, 2008, pp. 3-4; emphasis in original)

  That 'something else' presumably, is propaganda on behalf of any par-ticular organisation. PJ retains a profound commitment to truth-telling in the public interest, but:

  > On the other hand, there is no concomitant commitment to ensur-ing that violent responses get a fair hearing. They can take care of themselves, because the reporting conventions (still) dominant in most places, most of the time, ensure that they seldom struggle for a place on the agenda. (Lynch, 2008, p. 4)

  For similar reasons, climate crisis journalists need not make special ef-forts to grant access to climate science denialists, or to extol the virtues of consumerism, economic growth, or public cynicism about collective action. The biases of conventional news will normally reinforce those values effortlessly.

- PJ finds intellectual anchorage in an academic discipline—peace and conflict studies, with particular reference to the pioneering work of Johann Galtung (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005b). The efforts to translate

this anchorage into journalistic practice could inspire parallel work to link environmental communication and reporting practices, in the pursuit of journalism that is both scientifically informed and politically empowering.

• Peace Journalism and environmental communication scholars alike maintain that news reporting is neither ideologically neutral, nor separate and detached from the 'events' that it reports. Interpretive frames necessarily influence the apparently neutral reporting of events. Peace journalists Lynch and McGoldrick (2005a) hypothesise a 'feedback loop' between journalism and political actions, arguing that conventional conflict reporting (which they regard as tantamount to War Journalism) creates incentives for conflict escalation and 'security crackdowns'. Environmental journalism scholars Boykoff and Boykoff (2004) argue that inappropriate 'balance' between science and opinion confused American public opinion for years. PJ enjoins self-reflexivity on the part of journalists vis-à-vis both the influences on, and the predictable consequences of, their own routine practices.

• Scholars like Lynch and McGoldrick recognise limits to journalism's power, given media organisations' unavoidable imbrication with broader social relations and political institutions—and yet seek to recover a sense of agency for journalists, resisting reductionist conceptions of the news as merely putty in the hands of powerful elites.

• PJ's practices have much to offer climate journalism. Peace journalists broaden the range of sources and voices in the news, beyond officials and technocratic experts, to grassroots activists, solution-builders, and the victims of war—a democratised pattern of access that resonates with climate justice. Peace journalists have found ways to expand the news agenda beyond today's events, and to tell engaging narratives about contexts like patterns of structural and cultural violence, the historical development of attitudes and policies by the parties in conflict, creative ideas for peaceful conflict resolution, processes of peace-building during and after conflicts, and the 'invisible' costs of war beyond bloodshed and destruction. The growing news attention and public recognition of soldiers' post-traumatic stress as a cost of war is an example of how journalism can render visible the previously unseen. Insofar as crisis-oriented climate journalism would extend the news agenda beyond protests and disasters like oil spills to explore global warming's systemic roots, there are lessons to be learned from Peace Journalism's theory and practice.

• Like climate justice journalism, PJ seeks to transform relationships with audiences, or at least to evoke a different response. Preliminary evidence

in Mexico, the Philippines, Australia and South Africa suggests that by contrast with conventional war reporting, PJ framing does generate (at least amongst focus groups in experimental settings) a greater degree of empathy, hope and cognitive engagement with counter-hegemonic arguments vis-à-vis war propaganda (McGoldrick & Lynch, 2014; Lynch, 2014). While it remains to be demonstrated on a broader scale, PJ's apparent impact is consistent with the public empowerment and larger-than-self values called for by environmental communicators.

- Finally, both PJ and emergent climate journalism challenge conventional journalistic practices and self-understandings. They are inherently controversial, and can expect to be ignored, dismissed or critiqued by journalistic traditionalists, some academics, and (to the extent that such transformative journalisms gain traction) the powerful interests that would be less able to dominate news agendas. Advocates and practitioners of crisis- and engagement-oriented climate journalism could be forearmed by reviewing debates since the emergence of PJ in an annual journalism summer school in the United Kingdom in the mid-1990s (Lynch 2008, p. xi). German scholar Thomas Hanitzsch (2004a, 2004b) has been an especially prolific snowball-thrower. He argues that PJ wrongly assumes that journalism routinely overemphasises violence, assumes an outdated view of media effects as powerful and linear, and adopts a naïvely realist epistemology, expecting news to provide 'truth' rather than 'distortion'. PJ inappropriately assigns journalism peacemaking tasks that are better suited to other institutions, says Hanitzsch, and in so doing, compromises journalists' integrity and neutrality.

PJ advocates have responded by clarifying misconceptions (they do *not* favour suppressing news that could jeopardise the prospects of peaceful outcomes; nor do they expect journalism alone to save the world), modifying positions (PJ aims to expose propaganda, but does not naïvely expect to provide unassailable 'truths'), and above all, continuing to problematise conventional 'objective' reporting practices as complicit in the escalation of conflict (see e.g., Lynch, 2008). PJ aims to provide a journalism that is actually more complete, informative and truthful than conventional journalism, and can be justified in terms of the latter's own stated ideals.

Many of PJ's arguments, frames and practices could be transposed to crisis-oriented climate journalism. There are, however, important contrasts between these two journalism paradigms.

'The war is on!': paradigm disjunctures

It is June 18, 2014. Canada's federal government has just announced its long-expected support for the proposed Northern Gateway pipeline, one that would

slash from Alberta's tar sands through First Nations territory in northern British Columbia to coastal ports. The reaction is swift and well-publicised. At a rally outside CBC headquarters in Vancouver, in front of television cameras and a thousand energised supporters, Grand Chief Stewart Phillip declares, 'The war is on!' Rousing cheers and street dances ensue (Prystupa, 2014).

That 'war' metaphor has important implications for Peace Journalism's relevance to climate crisis. What if Naomi Klein is correct: '… Indigenous rights—if aggressively backed by court challenges, direct action, and mass movements demanding that they be respected—may now represent the most powerful barriers protecting all of us from a future of climate chaos' (2014, p. 380). Is it possible that, contrary to the precepts of PJ, saving the planet may require taking sides, and escalating conflict, in order to disrupt an ecocidal status quo?

Indeed, it could even be argued that in a state of planetary emergency, a more appropriate model might be the openly patriotic press of the Allied powers during World War II, engaged in a life-and-death struggle against fascism. Defeats as well as victories were reported, but there was no pretence of neutrality. How might such wartime journalism be relevant to climate crisis? A sense of urgency, the sheer amount of coverage, the weaving of discrete news events into an overarching narrative, the identification of enemies and the framing of news as Us-versus-Them. On the other hand, wartime journalism implies censored and slanted news, the suppression of dissent in favour of unity against a common foe, and a huge buy-in to journalism's collaborative role. But collaborate with whom? In wartime, with the government and the military. It is difficult to see those institutions as allies, if ecological sustainability requires radical change.

Still, the question of advocacy journalism in relation to the agonistic politics of climate change hints at some important disjunctures between PJ and Climate Crisis Journalism (CCJ). Their definition of the core problem differs. In its dominant versions, PJ sees conflict itself, and the threat of conflict escalation to the point of violence, as the key issue—not any particular party to the conflict. CCJ would focus on global warming and its impacts on the human and 'natural' worlds, and the (in)adequacy of societal and political responses. In order to mobilise effective responses, it may be necessary to bring millions of people who won't take no for an answer into the streets (Monbiot 2009), escalating conflict in order to challenge business as usual.

Likewise, they differ regarding the key shortcoming of journalism. For PJ, journalism too often contributes to conflict escalation, and fails to convey the accurate and complete accounts of conflicts that notionally democratic societies need as a basis for informed policy. CCJ sees a range of environmental deficits in hegemonic media, above all their imbrication with consumerist culture and corporate capitalism. It is an open question whether these respective diagnoses point strategically in the same direction. PJ seeks to change journalism practices

and representations so as to increase the likelihood of peaceful conflict-resolution, and make it less likely that news media contribute to conflict escalation; it calls for avoiding 'demonising' one party to a conflict, or identifying it as the enemy.

CCJ could well contribute to broadening the scope of conflict as a means of achieving social change (a strategy well understood in social movement practice); and in calling for increased analysis and attention to the causes of global warming, it could well lead to identifying the fossil fuel sector or other particular interests as targets for political action.

This approach parallels the struggles, alluded to above, of Indigenous peoples on the front lines of resistance to extractivist capitalism. In Vancouver, anti-pipeline protesters, Aboriginal and settler allies alike, wear t-shirts emblazoned 'Warrior up!' The 'warrior' concept is arguably a 'trope', a figure whose meaning differs between discourses. At one level, it is a colonial stereotype emerging from settler society, alongside 'drunken Indian' and 'noble savage', for example. In recent decades, however, it has been re-appropriated by some Indigenous nations defending their homelands from settler-controlled development (like the expansion of a golf course onto sacred Indigenous lands, resulting in an infamous standoff at Oka, Québec in 1990). It has particular recent relevance in the context of territorial defence against resource extraction and energy mega-projects, and thus, climate change. Within Indigenous nations where it has been deployed, the concept can be a divisive one, particularly when it is taken to connote violence and the identification of enemies. There appears to be more consensus when 'warrior' is associated with sacrifice on behalf of others, rootedness in the community and customary laws of their people, collective self-defence against external threats, resistance to colonialism, a spiritual and ethical struggle that can be politicised through 'self-transformation and self-defence against the insidious forms of control that the state and capitalism use to shape lives according to their needs—to fear, to obey, to consume' (Alfred, 2005, p. 29).

Just as the warrior concept is ambiguous, so too are its implications for Peace Journalism. On the one hand, even if Indigenous warriors are committed to non-violence, the concept does entail taking sides and assigning blame, identifying the colonising state, developers and extractivist companies as aggressors. On the other hand, in the Kanien'keha language of the Kanehsata:ke ('Oka') community, the word for warrior is 'Rotiskenrakeh:te', usually translated as 'those who carry the burden of peace' (Gabriel 2014). Parenthetically, these considerations point to the interplay of media discourses and practices with subjectivity (Corner, 2011); if the personality type of the 'asshole' (James, 2012) is a byproduct and bulwark of neoliberalism, the warrior may be an oppositional antidote. But the valorisation of the warrior does not seem to be part of Peace Journalism's normative framework.

Still, the contrast between PJ and CCJ should not be exaggerated. In part, this is

because neither PJ nor CCJ are monolithic paradigms. Both have 'mainstream' or 'liberal' vs. 'radical' variants. The environmental communicators' we interviewed differed on whether conflict frames should be avoided, or instead, transferred in a radical direction. A roughly parallel dichotomy is relevant in PJ debates. The co-editor of the British peace movement journal *Peace News* argues that while it has usually followed PJ's dominant practices, it has sometimes found it necessary to 'assign blame' in conflict situations (Rai, 2010, p. 220). British journalism educa-tor Richard Keeble (2010, pp. 63-64) argues for 'a radical political re-theorising of journalism and more specifically peace journalism' as an 'essentially political practice'. He critiques the 'dominant strand' in PJ as focusing too narrowly on reforming professional routines, rather than on campaigning/advocacy journalism, alternative/oppositional media, and the fresh possibilities for participatory and citizens' journalism through the internet.

Thus, affinities between PJ and CCJ are more pronounced by comparing their respective liberal and radical versions. Liberals seek reforms within existing media and policy institutions (e.g. PJ as 'better' journalism rather than a fundamental challenge to its procedures and self-understandings). They pursue consensus and dialogue, based on the assumption that underlying interests (as distinct from stated demands) are ultimately compatible, that war and ecological degradation are un-intended consequences in nobody's interests—a position parallel to deliberative democracy. Radicals are more likely to adopt a view of society as characterised by fundamental antagonisms, and by governing logics that however ultimately destruc-tive they be, can only be challenged and reversed through resistance to identifiable enemies and the formation of counter-hegemonic alliances. In that perspective, PJ is relevant insofar as it provides discursive resources (such as structural contexts and propaganda critiques) that support struggles for social change.

Can we get there from here?

The liberal variants of both paradigms assume and seek change within the field of professional journalism. Lynch is concerned to recover a sense of agency for journalists, one that is missing in the radical functionalism of some theories of the media, such as the Propaganda Model (Herman & Chomsky, 2002). PJ's aim to challenge the inevitability of War Journalism framing is commendable. But the skills and resources needed for either Peace or Climate Crisis Journalism (es-pecially if it is informed by a Climate Justice metaframe) do not mesh well with the constraints imposed by conventional media—particularly, ownership disin-vestment in news, the continued national bases (and biases) of media organiza-tions and audiences, and structural ties to consumerism and capitalism. Peace Journalism seems to have flourished only under certain conditions, such as so-cieties where media contributed to destructive internal conflict, and/or news or-ganisations with a stake in avoiding their audiences' dissolution into opposing

camps, and/or societies emerging from authoritarian rule, where journalism's professional norms may be relatively open to self-reflexive change (J. Lynch, personal interview, 25 June 2010, University of Sydney). Similarly, CCJ is likely to find some market and institutional conditions more conducive than others.

Nor should we assume that the digital media environment automatically bypasses the blockages of hegemonic media. To be sure, there are new opportunities for independent journalism and popular mobilisation online. Yet the commercialised internet and 'social media' are also complicit in the spread of disinformation and misinformation, the segmentation of users into like-minded opinion tribes, the growing precarity of journalistic labour, the erosion of professionalisation, and the profusion of entertaining clickbait. Well-resourced and highly skilled journalists remain as essential as ever in covering an issue as complex as climate crisis. Unfortunately, it seems that in the Western corporate media, journalists have neither sufficient incentives, nor autonomy vis-à-vis their employers, to transform the way news is done, without support from powerful external allies (Hackett, 2006; Hackett, 2011, p. 45). We need to consider both alternative media as an emerging site for Climate Crisis Journalism, and systematic reform of media structures and policy frameworks that would facilitate the scaling up of CCJ's practices.

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