# Introduction

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When "citizen journalism" makes the headlines it is often for the wrong reasons. A case in point occurred in October 2008 with respect to iReport.com, a news website operated by CNN, the cable news network. It relies entirely upon news stories submitted by ordinary members of the public. While its tagline "Unedited. Unfiltered. News" highlights its approach, iReport describes its own agenda this way:

> Lots of people argue about what constitutes news. But, really, it's just something that happens someplace to someone. Whether that something is newsworthy mostly depends on who it affects—and who's making the decision. On iReport.com, that is you! So we've built this site and equipped it with some nifty tools for posting, discovering and talking about what you think makes the cut.

It continues:

> Use the tools you find here to share and talk about the news of your world, whether that's video and photos of the events of your life, or your own take on what's making international headlines. Or, even better, a little bit of both.

Although iReport is owned and operated by CNN (controlled, in turn, by Time Warner, Inc.), a statement from the network on the website affirms that "it makes no guarantees about the content or the coverage" to be found there. News items

submitted by users "are not edited, fact-checked or screened before they post," with only those bearing the mark "On CNN" having been properly vetted by the network for use in its own news reports. Responsibility for the quality of the reporting, it follows, rests not with CNN but rather with "you, the iReport.com community."

The website has enjoyed a good reputation since its launch in the summer of 2006. It has proven to be a remarkably popular source of alternative news and is widely credited for having made important contributions to the reporting of breaking stories—including the use of a student's cell-phone video footage during the April 2007 shootings at Virginia Tech University (the sound of gunfire from inside an adjacent building being captured). iReporter items covering California wildfires, as well as Midwest floods, similarly helped to bring the website to prominence. User statistics suggest that as many as 20,000 items can be posted per month. However, on the morning of October 3, 2008, a posting by one iReporter would spark an extraordinary controversy that would ensure this experiment in citizen journalism would be subjected to intense scrutiny from across the mediascape.

During early trading on Wall Street, an anonymous individual—identified only as "Johntw"—posted this apparent "news" item:

> Steve Jobs [CEO of Apple, Inc.] was rushed to the ER [Emergency Room] just a few hours ago after suffering a major heart attack. I have an insider who tells me that paramedics were called after Steve claimed to be suffering from severe chest pains and shortness of breath. My source has opted to remain anonymous, but he is quite reliable. I haven't seen anything about this anywhere else yet, and as of right now, I have no further information, so I thought this would be a good place to start. If anyone else has more information, please share it.

The impact of the report, which appeared to resonate with recent concerns about the state of Jobs's health, was as sudden as it was severe. Within minutes, Apple's stock price spiraled to a 17-month low (a plunge worth almost $5 billion of market value) as the rumor gained momentum across the internet. Seeking to verify the story, Silicon Alley Insider (a business blog) managed to reach an Apple spokesperson on the telephone; she promptly denied it, which brought the story to a grinding halt in less than an hour after it began. As the day wore on, the company's stock price managed to recover much of its lost ground, but in the opinion of some commentators the damage to the credibility of CNN—and its decision to "tap into the citizen journalism craze" (Sandoval, 2008)—was all but irreversible.

All too aware of the pointed questions being posed about the principles underpinning its public news initiative, CNN moved swiftly to respond. A statement was quickly released to journalists clarifying its position:

> iReport.com is an entirely user-generated site where the content is determined by the community. Content that does not comply with Community Guidelines will be

removed. After the content in question was uploaded to iReport.com, the community brought it to our attention. Based on our Terms of Use that govern user behavior on iReport.com, the fraudulent content was removed from the site and the user's account was disabled.

Despite CNN's resolve to reaffirm the gate-keeping role attributed to the site's community of users, criticism from rival news organizations—and from across the blogosphere—was fierce. The network's "brand," in the eyes of some, was badly tarnished by this "imbroglio," with some critics expressing their astonishment that it could be so naïve as to trust the site's users to safeguard its reputation for quality reporting.

Henry Blodget (2008), blogging at Silicon Alley Insider, was among the first to weigh in, declaring that citizen journalism "apparently just failed its first significant test." Others insisted that the problem revolved around the absence of agreement over acceptable editorial standards, including those determining who can be a CNN iReporter (technically anyone, given that all that is required to register is the completion of an online form, and an email address). Still others maintained that the real issue was the inadequacy of "health warnings" on the site, that is, the necessity of adding "unverified" to "unedited" and "unfiltered." In sharp contrast, for those defending the site, blame deserved to be placed elsewhere. "The (iReport) story's been picked up by numerous sites as a failure of citizen journalism," Arnold Kim (2008) of MacRumors.com observed. "It's nothing of the sort.... The real reason it gained traction is the reporting of it on mainstream blog sites." It was the latter sites, such as Silicon Alley Insider, that in his view gave the false report sufficient credibility to frighten market traders. Meanwhile Adam Ostrow (2008), a blogger at Mashable, pointed out that internet rumors impacting the stock market was a longstanding problem, suggesting that this "blunder" was hardly "the beginning of the end for citizen journalism." Blogger Jeff Jarvis (2008) at BuzzMachine concurred. In contending that the web had proven to be "almost as fast at spreading truth [i.e., Apple's statement about Jobs's health] as it is at spreading rumors," he asked: "Is this a story of citizen journalism and its failings or of professional journalism and its jealousies?"

Not surprisingly, given the bold—even, at times, apocalyptic—pronouncements being made regarding the very future of journalism in this regard, there is little sign that differences in fervently held opinions will be resolved any time soon. Even where there is a shared sense that major news organizations—struggling to cope with slashed budgets in recessionary times—will be increasingly relying upon the appropriation of first-person news reporting, views differ markedly over who should be held responsible for any lapses in quality. While some believe that the occasional mishap should not be allowed to undermine a news organization's commitment to empowering citizens to be reporters, a praiseworthy form of

democratization in their eyes, others discern in such incidents a portent of crisis that threatens to unravel the very integrity of the journalistic craft itself.

Against this backdrop, it is worth observing how these tensions reverberate in various national contexts around the globe. A comparative perspective, we believe, is invaluable for securing fresh insights into the factors shaping the emergence and evolution of citizen journalism as a phenomenon in its own right. In Britain, for example, debates over whether important distinctions between "professional" and "amateur" reporting are becoming dangerously blurred are often framed in terms of public service. In the case of the BBC, the role of user-generated content (UGC—its preferred term for citizen journalism) has gradually become a key feature of its newsgathering process, even though reservations remain. Speaking at an e-Democracy conference on November 11, 2008, the BBC's director of news Helen Boaden (2008) outlined what she perceived to be the main challenges at stake for its online provision. "Our journalism is now fully embracing the experiences of our audiences, sharing their stories, using their knowledge and hosting their opinions," she declared; "we're acting as a conduit between different parts of our audience; and we're being more open and transparent than we have ever been." The "accidental journalism" performed by ordinary citizens during the London bombing attacks in July 2005 was a watershed, in her view, "the point at which the BBC knew that newsgathering had changed forever" (see also in this volume Allan, Chapter 1, and Liu et al., Chapter 3). Members of the public contributed an extraordinary array of reports via emails, texts, digital photographs, and videos to help document what was happening that day.

Since then, the BBC has become much more proactive in soliciting this type of content from its audiences. In Boaden's words:

> It's not just a "nice to have"—it can really enrich our journalism and provide our audiences with a wider diversity of voices than we could otherwise deliver. As well as voices we might not otherwise hear from, there are stories about which we would never have known.... For many of our audiences, this has opened their eyes to something very simple: that their lives can be newsworthy—that news organisations don't have a monopoly on what stories are covered. Indeed, that news organisations have an appetite for stories they simply couldn't get to themselves and they value information and eye witness accounts from the public—as they always have done. (Boaden, 2008)

In learning to accept the tenet that "someone out there will always know more about a story than we do," the BBC has embraced citizen newsgathering as a vital resource. At the heart of its news provision is a recently established "UGC Hub"—a 24/7 operation—staffed by 23 people to handle what on an average day typically amounts to 12,000 emails and about 200 photographs and videos. This newly

forged relationship, Boaden is convinced, represents a positive opportunity for journalism to improve in a way that reinforces informed citizenship. "Smart news organisations are engaging audiences and opening themselves up to the conversation our audiences clearly want," she contends. In addition to helping to preserve the BBC's core journalistic values of accuracy, fairness, and diversity of opinion, she adds, this type of interactivity reaffirms a commitment to reporting in the public interest. "In order to survive," Boaden concludes, "journalism must be trusted."

This normative alignment of citizen journalism with the public interest can be thrown into even sharper relief in countries where the basic principles of press freedom cannot be taken for granted. In seeking to make their claim for such principles, bloggers have often paid a very high personal price for challenging the interests of the powerful and the privileged with alternative forms of news reporting. Repressive governments around the world have sought to place strict limits on the blogosphere, refusing to recognize the right of the citizen—let alone the citizen journalist—to express himself or herself freely, without prior restraint or censorship.

In Malaysia, around the time of the CNN iReport incident discussed above, Raja Petra Kamaruddin, responsible for the country's best-known political blog, *Malaysia Today*, was imprisoned based on allegations of "spreading confusion" and "insulting the purity of Islam." Having been arrested on September 12, 2008, under the Internal Security Act, invoked during a government clampdown on opposition voices, he was being detained without trial. Long considered a "thorn in the side" of the Malaysian government because of criticisms conveyed on his blog, Raja Petra was one of three critics being held for two years—a sentence renewable indefinitely—under the act (the other two being another blogger, Syed Azidi Syed Aziz, and Chinese-language journalist Tan Hoon Cheng). *Malaysia Today* continued to publish, thanks to the efforts of Marina Lee Abdullah, wife of Raja Petra, and colleagues using a variety of strategies to elude official attempts to block the website. (Strategies included publishing the blog on a mirror site, as well as using new web addresses in foreign countries.) Suddenly, on November 7, 2008, the charges against Raja Petra were dropped, due largely to pressure brought to bear by Reporters Without Borders. The 58-year-old blogger, according to the campaigning organization, was "constantly harassed" while he was being held in a Kuala Lumpur police station. "He was put in a cell with no window and with just a plank of wood for a bed, and was subjected to lengthy interrogation sessions designed to demonstrate that he was a bad Muslim. The police also deprived him of sleep" (RWB, 2008). Evidently the release had been ordered by a court ruling based on the view that the government had overstepped its authority in arresting him for comments on his blog where no immediate threat to national security was apparent. While a previous charge of sedition was still pending against him at the

time of his release, Raja Petra vowed to be back online within 24 hours. "I already have two articles that I wrote in prison," he stated, "and I'm waiting to post them" (cited in Fuller, 2008; see also CPJ, 2008).

In those countries where the state equates dissent with criminality, the indefatigable determination of ordinary citizens to speak truth to power is remarkable. The rise of the network society, to use Manuel Castells's (2000) term, is rewiring the planet in ways that have profound implications for the geo-politics of informational power and control. And yet there is little doubt that familiar—that is to say, Western—conceptions of what counts as citizen journalism risk appearing to be merely academic, in the worst sense of the word, in countries where ordinary people lack basic access to electricity. In civil-war-torn Liberia, for example, Alfred Sirleaf's efforts to perform a role akin to the citizen journalist are a case in point. As the managing editor of The Daily Talk, he writes up news and editorials on a chalkboard positioned on the street outside his "newsroom" hut every day, thereby providing passersby with important insights into what is happening in Monrovia. Equipped with his "nose for a good scoop," this "self-taught newshound" scours newspapers—and calls on an informal network of friends acting as correspondents—for the information necessary to keep everyone "in the know."

News stories—three or four of which are displayed each morning—are concisely written, relying on street words that people actually use themselves (thus "big stealing" rather than "embezzlement," for example). "I like to write the way people talk so they can understand it well," he told *The New York Times*. "You got to reach the common [person]" (cited in Polgreen, 2006). Crucially, Pru Clarke (2008) points out, Sirleaf has recognized two significant points:

> First, that the war continued because the young soldiers and their supporters didn't have access to any information. [Warlord Charles Taylor] brainwashed them into believing that fighting for him would bring them riches and power. They believed Taylor's fraudulent claims to be the rightful leader, and that Taylor's enemies would subjugate them if they won. They needed to hear the truth if they were to see Taylor for what he was, and to stop fighting.
>
> Sirleaf also realized that after a decade of war more than half the Liberian people were illiterate. Those who could read couldn't understand the flowery, overblown prose of the government-sanctioned newspapers. (I still struggle to understand them!) Neither could they afford to pay for them. (Clarke, 2008)

For those unable to read words on a chalkboard, there are symbols: a blue helmet hanging beside the board means that the story involves the United Nations peacekeeping force, while a chrome hubcap represents the president (the "iron lady" of Liberian politics). In previous years Sirleaf's dedication to citizen reporting has

met resistance from those in power during the Taylor regime; he was arrested and spent a brief spell in prison, then went into exile while his newsstand was torn down. Today, with his plywood hut rebuilt, he remains steadfast in his belief that what he is doing matters for the country's emergent democracy. "Daily Talk's objective is that everybody should absorb the news," he maintains. "Because when a few people out there make decisions on behalf of the masses that do not go down with them, we are all going to be victims" (cited in Polgreen, 2006).

The brief examples of citizen journalism touched upon above—from the US, Britain, Malaysia, and Liberia—usefully highlight a number of the pressing issues to be examined in the course of this book's discussion. Taken together, they are indicative of a communication continuum that stretches from global news organizations, such as CNN and the BBC, to the lone voices of individuals struggling to be heard against dauntingly formidable odds. Celebratory proclamations about the "global village" engendered by Web 2.0 ring hollow when we are reminded, in turn, that the majority of the world's population has never made a telephone call, let alone logged on to a computer.

Accordingly, *Citizen Journalism: Global Perspectives* will endeavor to delve beneath the rhetoric of globalization in seeking to examine the spontaneous actions of ordinary people—more often than not in the wrong place at the wrong time—compelled to adopt the role of reporter. Time and again, their motivation is to bear witness to crisis events unfolding around them. This collection, in taking this crisis dimension as its point of departure, draws together 21 original, thought-provoking chapters. It investigates the emergent ecology of citizen journalism in the West, including the United States, United Kingdom, Europe, and Australia, in conjunction with its inflection in a variety of other nations around the globe, including Brazil, China, India, Iran, Iraq, Kenya, Palestine, South Korea, Vietnam, and even Antarctica. In so doing, it strives to engage with several of the most significant topics for this important area of inquiry from fresh, challenging perspectives. Its aim is not to set down the terms of debate, but rather to encourage new forms of dialogue.

## OVERVIEW OF *CITIZEN JOURNALISM: GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES*

### Section One: Eyewitness Crisis Reporting

In Chapter 1, Allan sets the scene for the book's discussion by exploring what counts as "citizen journalism" from varied historical perspectives. Beginning with a brief overview of the emergence of the internet as a "new news medium," he proceeds to examine several crises where the reporting of ordinary citizens

made a vitally important contribution. Examples include natural disasters (such as earthquakes and hurricanes), political scandal, and the tragedies of terrorism, conflict, and war, among others. Allan's aim is to discern the emergent ecology of citizen journalism as it has been negotiated through the exigencies of crisis reporting.

The Iraq war provides the backdrop for Wall's (Chapter 2) analysis of the recent wave of warblogs—"a feisty new genre of blog that focused specifically on the terrorism wars"—written by Iraqis from within the war zone, and milblogs, written by current or former soldiers. Of particular interest is the way in which institutional forces have sought to censor and intimidate bloggers and even to use their "grassroots authenticity as a cover for sophisticated war information operations." Despite this, she argues, citizen journalism is poised to have a central position in the future "as amateurs play an even larger role in providing audiences with first-hand information about the world."

Citizens' eyewitness photography—especially where the use of a cell or mobile telephone equipped with a camera is concerned—is increasingly playing a significant role in crisis reporting. In Chapter 3, Liu, Palen, Sutton, Hughes, and Vieweg explore the genre of photo-blogging in relation to six distinct crises, several of which were of global significance. They single out for special attention the evolving role of Flickr, the prominent photo-sharing website, to show how it serves as a community forum for crisis-related photojournalism. Of particular interest, they point out, are efforts underway to develop a set of normative criteria to guide the nature of social practice around photographic content during emergency response and recovery efforts.

The idea that citizen journalism can help victims of crisis is also the focus of Vis's (Chapter 4) assessment of the performance of Wikinews in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, which struck the US coast in 2005. She illustrates how collaborative citizen journalism acted as a clearinghouse for disaster relief information, including messages from individuals willing to help the homeless. Moreover, Vis demonstrates how the Wikinews community, in striving to report on the crisis and its aftermath, dealt with issues such as the perceived "bias" of certain eyewitness reports submitted by ordinary citizens. The site's Neutral Point of View policy, she argues, was sorely tested, especially in relation to the first-person reporting of lawlessness during the relief effort.

Empowerment is a crucial tenet of citizen journalism in India, a democracy with over one billion people. Sonwalkar (Chapter 5) argues that this new form of reporting is having an influential political function in highlighting social problems, such as the impact of severe poverty on those at the margins of public life. In a society where women, for example, "are seen as inferior and, in many cases, subjected to domestic violence," blogging has enabled pressure groups to spark

public discussion and debate "in a way that the mainstream news media have never done." Citizen journalism, Sonwalkar points out, is being increasingly recognized as a powerful force in this regard.

Citizen journalism from within a conflict zone is the focus of Zayyan and Carter's (Chapter 6) discussion, which explores how bloggers in the Occupied Palestinian Territories "have helped to tell a truth different from the one frequently related in the mainstream media in many countries." Many of these citizen journalists choose to write in English instead of Arabic so as to reach a global audience with their message and to plea for basic human rights. Zayyan and Carter argue that in so doing, "Palestinian citizen journalism is shifting the terms of debate on the conflict in the Middle-East." This reporting embodies a "simple hope," namely that by raising awareness of their suffering, "pressure will be brought to bear on politicians around the world to help end it."

In Chapter 7, Nip assesses citizen journalism's response to the Wenchuan earthquake in southwestern China in May 2008. She reveals how citizen journalists were the first to report the earthquake both to a Chinese and international audience, providing eyewitness reports and expressions of personal emotion—grief, anger, and sympathy. Moreover, in a rare moment of openness under the Communist government, citizen journalists were also able to investigate and critique officials' handling of the disaster. Such reporting did not completely evade state censorship, however, and Nip further discusses new government tactics such as infiltration of citizen-generated content—that is, paying for people to post content supporting the government as a strategy to subvert opposition and manage this new form of public discourse.

Rounding out this section, Thorsen (Chapter 8) explores how scientists researching the climate-change crisis in Antarctica are using blogging as a means to communicate directly with the public. He argues that citizen journalism can function as a form of educational outreach, giving us seemingly unmediated access to scientists who are recording the effects of climate change first-hand. This emergent form of science reporting is shown to provide an important contrast to traditional forms of journalism, where the process of climate change is a difficult fit for conventional, event-led news agendas.

## Section Two: Citizen Journalism and Democratic Cultures

Khiabany and Sreberny (Chapter 9) address questions of citizenship and journalistic professionalism in an authoritarian regime by exploring the re-inflection of a more Western conceptualization of citizen journalism in relation to Iran's radically different political setting. The Persian blogosphere, they demonstrate, provides a space for trade unions, radical student groups, and women's movements to voice

their plight, which is otherwise ignored by the traditional, state-controlled mass media. They show how citizenship and journalism are both experiencing a revival through innovative and alternative forms of expression in response to the political context.

Children and young adults are often sidelined in debates surrounding citizenship and journalism. In thinking of children as citizens "in the making," Guedes Bailey (Chapter 10) explores the importance of "Newspaper Clubs" in Brazil, a project conceived and implemented by the Brazilian NGO "Communication and Culture" in partnership with public schools (local and state government). Since 1995, newspaper clubs have empowered children by giving them a voice as reporters of community affairs, thereby socializing them as informed and active citizens. Guedes Bailey's chapter also highlights the continued significance of print-based publications in the developing world, where many people—in particular children and young adults—have "no access to computers and have little or no information about, or practice with, communications technologies skills."

One of the most frequently cited examples of citizen journalism is the role of OhmyNews during the 2002 South Korean presidential election, a time when democracy itself was perceived to be in a crisis of legitimacy. Woo Young (Chapter 11) illustrates how the website functions as a counterbalance to the otherwise conservative media, maintaining that citizen journalism is integral to improving the country's democratic system as it ensures that the diversity of South Korea's public opinion is recognized. Indeed, the popularity of the citizen reporting at the heart of OhmyNews has made it the largest, most influential online newspaper in the country.

Despite Vietnam being listed as one of the 13 "enemies of the internet" in 2006 by Reporters Without Borders, Nguyen (Chapter 12) argues that citizen journalism has "developed quite vigorously" there. Indeed, he illustrates how it has seen a spectacular rise in recent years, establishing a reputation for breaking news—often reporting events that would have been ignored by mainstream media as too controversial. In this way, citizen journalists are helping to create a realm of debate where the authority of the state can be called into question. The blogosphere has prospered, in Nguyen's view, not simply because of technological advances, but also because of the governing regime's "confident tolerance" in allowing such activities to take place.

While such tolerance is more often associated with Western democracies, Carpentier, De Brabander, and Cammaerts (Chapter 13) demonstrate in their analysis of the Belgian peace movement that citizen journalism is a vital means to enable alternative or activist voices to be heard. They argue that the "active presence of the Indymedia.be (volunteer) staff members" at peace marches and associated events "highlights the interweaving of citizen journalism and peace activism."

That is, activists both report and actively support the objectives of such activities. They suggest that citizen journalism needs "to be seen as an inseparable part of civil society," since this form of participatory media enables citizens to "be active in one of many (micro-)spheres relevant to daily life, organize different forms of deliberation, and exert their rights to communicate."

Citizen journalism is frequently associated with political activists seeking to challenge society's established institutions and power relations. In Chapter 14, Salter explores the position of Indymedia's citizen journalists in relation to libel, security laws, and incitement, drawing on recent examples where both private and state actors have attempted to shut its operations down. Salter argues that citizen journalists cannot simply "claim the rights afforded to journalists," since the "privilege is dependent upon adherence to the rules" of law. Such activist citizen journalism, it follows, "will always be at a disadvantage compared to mainstream journalism—politically, economically, culturally and legally," which has important implications for democratic dissent.

Peaceful protests are in stark contrast to some of the practices uncovered during the 2007 Kenyan presidential election crisis by Zuckerman (Chapter 15). He reveals how bloggers took on the role of reporters in documenting the election process and mapping the violence that ensued following the disputed result, providing a crucial source of information following the government's ban on live media. However, citizen media and text messaging were also used in a more sinister way to mobilize different ethnic groups against each other. Attempts at moderating such hateful content led Kenya's leading bulletin board site to shut down, while the government decided to block bulk text messages. Technologies "useful for reporting and peacemaking," Zuckerman warns, "are also useful for rumor mongering and incitement to violence."

The 2007 Australian federal election, in contrast, will be remembered for more peaceful reasons, most notably the incumbent prime minister losing his seat and the increasingly significant role of citizen media during the campaign. In Chapter 16, Bruns, Wilson, and Saunders explore the tension that developed between bloggers and mainstream media such as *The Australian*, with the latter attacking citizen journalists for having the audacity to criticize its election analysts. Experiences from the authors' involvement in the hyperlocal citizen journalism project, Youdecide2007, are also shared. Based on this experiment, the chapter concludes with a proposal to "transcend the stale 'professional-amateur' dichotomy" by putting forth a concept of "journalism as social networking." The authors here highlight four dimensions in which they argue "professional practice is changing to accommodate citizen-generated content."

The 2008 US presidential election marked a historic shift in American politics through the election of Barack Obama. One of the key characteristics of

this campaign was the influence of the internet, which is explored by Fiedler in Chapter 17. His discussion begins with the occasion on which Obama encountered Mayhill Fowler, a citizen journalist, at a campaign fundraising event that was off-limits to the mainstream press. Obama's off-the-cuff remarks about the reasons why some working-class voters might feel embittered about politics, dutifully relayed by Fowler in a blog, sparked news headlines around the world. This was a crisis of an unusual sort for the Obama campaign to address, one that helped to reveal the changing nature of election campaigns in the age of the internet.

## Section Three: Future Challenges

Reese and Dai, in Chapter 18, explore the role of citizen journalists acting as media critics, arguing that the Chinese blogosphere is increasingly featuring posts and comments that represent a new form of public deliberation. Nationalism, they argue, suits the interests of the Chinese government, which has given citizens free range in criticizing the Western media—attacking CNN for discrepancies in its coverage of the Tibet riots and negative framing of the Olympic Torch relay, for instance. Moreover, they demonstrate how citizen reporters also critique domestic professional journalistic principles, forcing action on issues that would otherwise have been ignored. In the context of globalization, they contend, these developments point to new ways of understanding social change.

Mainstream media are increasingly appropriating citizen journalism content—broadly encapsulated under the umbrella of "user-generated content" (UGC)—in part to avoid perceptually undermining traditional journalism's occupational values. Singer and Ashman (Chapter 19) pick up on this tension from the perspective of "journalists at Britain's *Guardian* newspaper and its internationally popular website," exploring how journalism practice is changing as it is forced to accommodate content from—and interaction with—its audience. Journalists' responses are positioned in relation to traditional occupational values of authenticity, autonomy, and accountability. While "user-generated content" and audience interaction are cautiously embraced, journalists remain wary of the challenges inherent in negotiating new relationships with citizen contributors.

Few technological innovations invite forms of use as distinct from traditional journalistic practice as wikis. Bradshaw examines the emergence of wiki-based citizen journalism in Chapter 20, evaluates its strengths and weaknesses, and proposes a taxonomy of its different forms. Wikis are "blogs 2.0," he argues, since their technology forces a collaborative practice that transcends the linear communications flow of blogs and discussion forums. Wikis offer a single place for the

distributed discussion of blogs to take place, where the community deliberates to reach (ongoing) consensus by making changes to the original text.

The book draws to a close with Deuze's (Chapter 21) assessment of the future of citizen journalism from three different perspectives: industry, audience, and convergence culture. The future of citizen journalism, he argues, "is about creating brand communities around the news"—often where communities of interest already exist, which explains the success of "hyperlocal" initiatives. Deuze calls into question the promise and practice of online audience interaction, suggesting that "none of these forms of distributed conversation have real, permanent, or stable political power." Beyond these critical perspectives, he settles on a more positive note by exploring how convergence culture may enable "a future citizen journalism where professional reporters and engaged citizens indeed co-create a public sphere within their communities of reference."

These brief chapter overviews begin to make apparent several pressing reasons why the contributors to *Citizen Journalism: Global Perspectives* have sought to participate in the debates traversing these pages. It is hoped that the respective chapters, individually and collectively, will help to provide the basis for new dialogues to emerge regarding citizen journalism today, as well as about where it may be heading tomorrow. In drawing attention to how crisis events in particular throw into sharp relief the imperatives underpinning this evolution, the importance of this dialogue becomes all the more apparent. At stake is nothing less than the future of journalism itself. "We used to call mainstream journalism the 'first draft of history,'" Dan Gillmor (2005) has observed. "Now, I'd argue, much of that first draft is being written by citizen journalists. And what they're telling us is powerful indeed." In agreeing with this view, we would add that it signals a further challenge, namely for all of us to discover new ways to recast the rigid, zero-sum dichotomies of the "professional versus amateur" debate. This will necessarily entail thinking anew about the social responsibilities of the citizen as journalist while, at the same time, reconsidering those of the journalist as citizen.

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