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Interpreting in Time: Lester Markel, *The Flow of the News Study*, and the Case for Interpretative Reporting during the Cold War

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The 1947 Hutchins Commission Report urged the press at the outset of the nuclear age to give Americans the "knowledge of the world and of one another" they needed to deal with the challenges ahead. Lester Markel, the formidable editor of the Sunday *New York Times*, maintained that the press could help Americans acquire the knowledge of other countries they needed to manage the uncertainties of the Cold War by adopting an approach to interpretative reporting that was akin to what the anthropologist Tim Ingold calls "wayfinding." As part of his campaign for interpretative reporting, Markel helped establish the International Press Institute, whose initial endeavor was to conduct a study of the flow of the news among nations that Markel believed would highlight how interpretative reporting could create "understanding between peoples and peoples." Markel's disappointment with the final *Flow of the News Study* made him even more determined to demonstrate how

interpretative reporting could foster the international understanding he believed was necessary to quell Cold War tensions.

On April 9, 1950, Lester Markel, the formidable editor of the Sunday edition of *The New York Times*, took to the pages of *The New York Times Magazine* to highlight what he saw as the governance crisis generated by the Cold War:

> In Year One of the Hydrogen Age, Washington is beset by uncertainties. It is unsure about the world; it is unsure about the nation; most of all, it is unsure about itself.
>
> The indecision is not unique to Washington; it is characteristic of the age. From the beginning of history, man has been largely preoccupied with controlling nature. Now, long before that task has been completed, he is confronted with another and even more difficult one—*the task of controlling man*."[1] (italics mine)

In the same month as Markel's *New York Times Magazine* piece, Paul Nitze, the Director of Policy Planning in President Truman's State Department, circulated National Security Council Memorandum 68, which called for the construction of an intimidating national security state to combat the threat posed to the free world by the Soviet Union's combination of chiliastic ideology and nuclear arsenal.[2] Secretary of State Dean Acheson defended the bellicosity of NSC 68 against critics such as George Kennan and Charles Bohlen by declaring that the document was designed "to so bludgeon the mass mind of 'top government' that not only could the President make the decision [to use nuclear weapons] but the decision could be carried out…. If we made our points clearer than truth, we did not differ from most other educators and could hardly do otherwise."[3] Acheson was correct that both commentators and politicians were employing similarly charged language to educate the public about the Soviet threat:

> Common to virtually all American officials was a rhetoric of global competition in which the United States, as leader of

> the "Free World," was pitted in a world-threatening struggle with the "Slave World" of communist tyranny. So, too, was the view that the Cold War would last indefinitely.[4]

Such "apocalyptic rhetoric"[5] roiled Americans' emotions. Americans' fears were so acute that in 1949, for example, 70% of Americans opposed the Truman administration's pledge not to use atomic bombs in a first strike.[6] These same fears prompted many Americans to turn to organized religion to manage their fear that the end of days might be nearer than they had previously anticipated.[7] The rise in the number of conservative evangelicals was not driven entirely by Cold War fears. But a perceptible turn toward faith at a time when "whirl was king" was, at least in part, driven by the doubts and fears that Markel worried might lead Americans to retreat from the world rather than wade into it.

The public's concern about the enemy without was matched by its fear of "the enemy within." Many Americans were prepared, according to Stephen Whitfield, "to impose a starchy repression upon themselves" in order to prevent the spread of subversive ideas that might weaken America's ability to combat Communism.[8] Markel's statement that the challenge of Cold War governance was "to control man"[9] was thus consonant with a mind set that accepted that the uncertainty and fear fostered by the nuclear stand-off between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R made the wide dissemination of international news essential for impressing upon the public the seriousness of the stakes involved in the superpower stand-off but also dangerous if reporters selected or sculpted news in ways that undermined the U.S.'s effort to win both the ideological and the military battle. Over a decade after his *New York Times Magazine* piece, Markel engaged the question of the press's responsibility to educate the public about Cold War geopolitics without encouraging dissent or disorder:

> There must be complete freedom of the press *in normal times*. But these are not normal times. We are engaged in a Cold War, which, even though undeclared, is as extensive and as crucial as any hot war…. Newspapers should recognize that it is not enough in these critical days to ask: "Is it news?" They must also ask: "Is it in the national interest?" It is not enough that the press be free; it must be responsible also.[10]

Markel contended that while the "sound judgments" required by this fraught period, when a wrong choice could quickly turn civilization into ash, could not be made without "an informed and alert public opinion,"[11] there were matters to which the public could not be exposed without risking the future of the American democratic enterprise. The press, in short, must be vigilant in its efforts to inform without agitating, or, as the 1947 Hutchins Commission Report, *A Free and Responsible Press*, put it:

> With the means of self-destruction that are now at our disposal, *men must live, if they are to live at all, by self-restraint, moderation, and mutual understanding.* They get their picture of one another through the press. The press can be inflammatory, sensational, and irresponsible. If it is, it and its freedom will go down in the universal catastrophe. On the other hand, the press can do its duty by the new world that is struggling to be born. *It can help create a world community by giving men everywhere knowledge of the world and of one another*, by promoting comprehension and appreciation of the goals of a free society that shall embrace all men.[12] (italics mine)

The Hutchins Commission's position that the "self-restraint, moderation, and mutual understanding" that were critical to easing international tensions could be

cultivated by a press that sought to "help create a world community by giving men everywhere knowledge of the world and of one another" informed Markel's campaign to abet what he called "the flow of information" or "the flow of the news" among countries. Improving this flow of international news could, Markel claimed, "solve the problem of public opinion," which was, in his mind, both to "a large degree a newspaper problem" and "the outstanding problem of the world."[13] Markel, however, did not merely want to increase the amount of international news. He also wanted to change the content of international news in a way that would give Americans the understanding of what he called "the setting, sequence, and significance" of world events and foreign cultures they needed both to manage the disorienting uncertainty of the Cold War era and to begin to "create a world community" built upon the bedrock of a "comprehension and appreciation of the goals of a free society."

The Press and the Management of Uncertainty

In her novel *Intuition*, Allegra Goodman explores the paradoxical relationship between rigor and proof and intuition and trust in scientific inquiry. Near the conclusion of the novel, the head of a research lab, in response to mounting evidence that the remarkable findings of one of the postdocs in the lab may be, if not fraudulent, at least inflated, reflects on the value of doubt in the scientific enterprise:

> She had honed her doubtful instincts once. Doubt had been her scientific ally, the whetstone for her sharpest questions. Now she struggled against doubt as if it were merely an emotion, *and not also a kind of intelligence*.[14] (italics mine)

Social psychologists have been for some time investigating the influence that doubt or uncertainty has on human judgment and choice.[15] More recently, political scientists and historians have sought, for

example, to distill the defining feature of democracy down to its "institutionalization of uncertainty" through establishing fixed rules that guide decentralized bargaining processes in ways that make policy outcomes indeterminate;[16] to explain how historical moments of "unmeasurable uncertainty" like the Great Depression can prompt political leaders to pursue policies designed "to reduce uncertainty to [normal] risk";[17] to explain how uncertainty can be the analytical key to unlocking the otherwise difficult to interpret decisions of the modern Supreme Court;[18] and to explore how factoring doubt into one's theories and models can provide a more realistic view of political behavior, one based on the understanding that even the most strategic and informed of actors must make choices "in the face of uncertainty."[19]

Students of journalism history have also sought to understand how doubt has informed the development of journalistic norms and practices. In *Discovering the News*, for example, Michael Schudson makes a compelling case that the epistemological questions raised by the socioeconomic, political, and intellectual disjunctures of the post-World War I period prompted journalists to embrace the scientific method as the appropriate approach to, in the words of journalist and social commentator Walter Lippmann, pierce the veil of the "pseudo-environment" that was a function of humans' cognitive and perceptual limitations, the growing distance between Americans and the centers of economic and political power, and the emergence of a public relations industry capable of privileging one version of the facts over others.[20] The result of this turn toward science was the establishment of objectivity as the method by which journalists could provide their readers with "a picture of reality on which men can act."[21] This picture, however, would be precisely that: a representation of the world that, while an approximation of reality, was not reality itself. Objectivity hence did not erase doubt but instead harnessed it

in a way that would presumably prompt journalists to construct, as Lippmann suggested in *Public Opinion*, more useful "fictions" about or "maps" of the world.[22]

Lippmann's contention that doubt is a form of intelligence as much for the journalist as it is for the scientist is a position that has not always been endorsed by a profession that instructs journalists "to believe only what is observable and quantifiable."[23] Journalistic objectivity has been encased for some time in a rhetoric of facticity[24] that has allowed journalists to parry many challenges to their cultural standing and influence. The press's legitimacy since the post-World War I period has been anchored in journalists' commitment to a mode of inquiry that is ostensibly characterized by "an honest attempt to assemble facts as fairly and accurately as possible."[25] Journalistic objectivity has thus become synonymous with "fact-based journalism" or "the idea that reporters should provide straight, unbiased information."[26]

The relationship between objectivity and factual reporting has been, however, more complex than the rhetoric of facticity suggests. Lippmann's contention in *Public Opinion* that although facts cannot be known with any certainty, journalists could nonetheless employ a method that could provide their readers with "a picture of reality" is perhaps the best example of the uneasy relationship between fidelity to the facts and a commitment to divining the truth. If, as Lippmann noted *in Liberty and the News*, "truthfulness were simply a matter of sincerity the future would be rather simple."[27] The question of "What is truth?" Lippmann claimed in 1920, was as pertinent at that time as it was when a "jesting Pilate" posed it eons ago.[28] Journalistic objectivity hence must be more than a commitment to the facts; it must be a vehicle that can take the public to the truths that often are elided or even obscured by the facts.

Interpretative journalism constituted one effort by journalists beginning in the 1930s to shape objectivity into

a craft that could transport journalists and their readers to the fundamental truths that rested beyond the facts. As Edwin Emery notes, "the impact of the political-social-economic revolution of the New Deal era, the rise of modern scientific technology, the increasing independence of economic groups at home, and the shrinking of the world into one vast arena for power politics forced a new approach to handling the news."[29] This new approach rejected "old–style objectivity, which consisted in sticking to a factual account of what had been said or done,… [in favor] of a new concept of objectivity which was based upon the belief that the reader needed to have a given event placed in proper context if truth really was to be served."[30]

One of the most vocal and influential spokespeople for interpretative reporting was Lester Markel, the editor of the Sunday *New York Times* from 1923 until 1964. Markel's addition in 1935 of the "News of the Week in Review" to the *Times* Sunday edition, a section devoted to providing readers with the background and analysis they needed to grasp "the meaning of facts,"[31] is often cited by press historians as an important moment in the rise of interpretative reporting.[32] It was, however, when the Cold War became particularly precarious during the 1950s and 1960s that Markel chose to make his most forceful and public case for interpretative reporting as a way to help Americans navigate "a mine-trapped and fog-bound world, a world in which facts are few and hunches difficult."[33]

Markel's efforts to address what he saw as the public's lack of engagement with and limited understanding of the Cold War conflict bore many similarities to Walter Lippmann's campaign in the 1920s to combat the new instruments for "manufacturing consent" that had emerged during the post-World War I period.[34] Markel shared Lippmann's pessimistic view of the public's interest in and understanding of public affairs, noting in a perhaps too candid moment that "20% of the population can be placed in the

moron category, another 20% is ignorant and unwilling to learn, some 40% do not know but are willing to learn, provided that the task [is] not too formidable. This leaves the enlightened 20%; on them a great responsibility rests."[35] Markel, however, had more confidence than did Lippmann in Americans' willingness, at the least, "not to turn away from complexity," provided "that the effort to know is not made too difficult":[36]

> I am convinced that people want to know. I believe that if they do not read important news, to a large extent it is because this reading is too difficult for them. If the news were made understandable to the reader, he would read it as eagerly as he does the local story.[37]

While Lippmann in 1922 had argued in *Public Opinion* that the creation of a world in which much of importance happened "out of reach, out of sight, out of mind"[38] of most Americans required the establishment of "intelligence bureaus" manned by social scientists who would parse and distill information about the actions of distant political institutions and corporations for both reporters and the public,[39] Markel maintained that reporters could work in tandem with schools to teach Americans how to cut through the modern age's complexity:

> The schools must supply to the citizens of the future the methods and the tools for thinking. The publishers of the written word must assume the task of extension and cultivation of education, of keeping adult minds alert of current thought and contemporary events.
>
> The two assignments cannot be separated. Unless a man knows how to think, it is futile and sometimes dangerous to give him facts.[40]

Markel's preferred means for extending and cultivating Americans' education was interpretative reporting, a form of reporting that he conceded

could, if the journalist was not vigilant, "spill over into opinion."[41] Interpretation or "background"—terms that Markel used interchangeably despite efforts by many of his interlocutors to draw a conceptual distinction between the two—required "objective evaluation,"[42] evaluation that must be scrupulously detached and focused not on "what happened" but "why it happened and what it means."[43] Interpretation would, Markel claimed, give readers "a deeper sense of the news."

Markel often used a hydraulic metaphor to make the point that interpretative reporting's critical virtue was that it placed "an event in the larger flow of events" in a way that would give it "setting, sequence, and, above all, significance."[44] Interpretation was thus for Markel a technique that was designed to place an event in time, allowing the reader to know its antecedents, its present incarnation, and its future direction. He expanded further on this view in an address at the University of Michigan on March 17, 1965, arguing that while "the world must include the reporting of immediate events,… it must also encompass the broader trend of events, the recording and appraisal of the currents discernible in the far-from-pacific ocean that is the world today."[45] By 1972, the emergence of what Markel called "trend stories" made him even more convinced that public understanding could only be generated by "articles concerned not so much with daily spot news but with larger news currents."[46]

The controlling image in each of these statements and others like them was one of movement, whether that be in a current or a flow, with the consequence that Markel's interpretative reporters were not so much mapmakers who sought to orient their readers by giving them a top down view of their present position, but what the anthropologist Tim Ingold has called "wayfinders" who sought to give them a sense of how their present location was a product of their past travels and experience and a point of departure for their next destination. Wayfinding,

according to Ingold, is a kind of mapping of the environment that produces "not so much representations of space as condensed histories."[47] Markel's version of interpretative reporting sought to produce a map of the new Cold War landscape that would allow readers to navigate this new space.[48] The map that Markel wanted wayfinding reporters to provide their readers was one that could create "understanding between peoples and peoples rather than an understanding between leaders and leaders or between diplomats and diplomats."[49] By generating mutual understanding among peoples kept apart by regime conflict, interpretative reporters could, Markel contended, reduce Cold War tensions.

Interpretative Reporting: Mapping the Cold War Landscape through Wayfinding

While Ingold's subject is how humans orient themselves in their physical environments, his discussion of wayfinding can be a useful heuristic for understanding strategies that humans use to manage doubt more generally, particularly the kind of doubt that can generate existential fear and confusion about the proper direction to take. The unsettling questions, "Where am I?" and "Which way should I go?"[50] pertain not only to navigating a defined space but also to navigating a murky emotional and intellectual landscape.[51] Americans in the 1950s and 1960s were, in Markel's view, struggling to discern how they arrived at their present position, one where their past convictions about both themselves and the people of other countries were being undercut by new geopolitical realities, and one that fostered uncertainty about how to re-orient themselves.

The analogy between navigating a geographic area and navigating a new political and intellectual context is not perfect. It neglects, for example, to take into account that lost travelers have a strong desire to re-orient themselves while lost citizens can and often do simply retreat from public life, choosing not to continue searching for a path

out of their predicament but instead giving up the search.[52] Employing Ingold's definitions of wayfinding and mapping[53] can, nonetheless, throw into relief both Markel's conceptualization of the challenges the Cold War moment posed to Americans' self-concept and his case that interpretative reporting could give the public the knowledge of other countries it needed to re-gain its footing in a shifting landscape. Highlighting the similarities between Markel's approach to interpretative reporting and Ingold's understanding of the virtues of wayfinding as an approach to mapping a landscape can also expose why Markel's argument for an understanding of interpretative reporting that would give readers a sense of "setting, sequence, and significance" was not endorsed by many other journalists, who feared that providing the background and context necessary to place events in the flow of time the way that Markel suggested could bring journalists too close to the line separating news from opinion and informing from instructing.

Ingold maintains in "To Journey along a Way of Life: Maps, Wayfinding and Navigation" that the metaphor of the map, which "has long been dominant in cognitive psychology"[54] and has been appropriated by scientists to characterize their theories[55] elides important elements of the process of situating ourselves in the world or answering the questions "Where am I?" and "Which way should I go?"[56] While maps are anchored in the principle of vertical integration, in which "local particulars obtained by observation on the ground are fitted within an abstract conception of space so as to form a representation of the world as though one were looking down upon it from 'up above,'" efforts by humans to orient themselves are much more informed by the principle of lateral integration, which "is performed by the organism as a whole as it moves around attentively, from place to place. Such movements do not merely connect places that are already located in terms of an independent framework of spatial coordinates. Rather,

they bring these places into being as nodes within a wider network of coming and going."[57] "Places [thus] exist not in space, but as nodes in a matrix of movement."[58] It is this process of lateral integration, Ingold maintains, that allows us to know where we are even when we cannot give our precise location in space or, more concretely, find ourselves on a map.[59]

The effort to orient oneself in the world is, according to Ingold, one that is guided by "know[ing] as we go," with knowledge being "cultivated by moving along paths that lead around, towards or away from or to places elsewhere."[60] All knowledge, according to this conception, is local, acquired from a close-to-the-ground perspective in in which one must situate "one's current position within the historical context of journeys previously made."[61] Places "do not have locations but histories" or stories that we draw on to orient ourselves, with each subsequent movement adding to our storehouse of histories and stories that we can use to gain an even firmer purchase on our environment. Wayfinding is thus an activity that "more closely resembles storytelling than map-using."[62]

One of the more important properties of wayfinding is that it undermines the comforting but erroneous view that the totalizing vision or unified theory of the world offered by science can be achieved.[63] The acquisition of knowledge through movement ensures that "the map keeps changing as one goes along,"[64] with the consequence that knowledge acquisition is "a process, not just a picture."[65] To accept the reality of wayfinding is thus to embrace uncertainty; to use uncertainty, in short, as a propellant to move to another location.

Lester Markel's understanding of interpretative journalism does not correspond precisely with Ingold's conception of wayfinding. Markel was not prepared to jettison journalistic objectivity, with its commitment to a detached, social scientific approach to analyzing problems and explaining

phenomena that promised, in Ingold's words, "a totalizing vision above and beyond the world."[66] Nor did Markel maintain that doubt and uncertainty should be treated as "as a kind of intelligence" that could impel further movement or inquiry. Markel maintained often that knowledge could be an antidote to doubt by, if cultivated assiduously, giving Americans the understanding they needed to make the sound decisions that would allow them not merely to navigate but to master the global environment. Markel's acknowledgement, however, of the need to treat world events not as phenomena that can be rendered understandable by fitting them into a theory, a schema, or a cognitive map but as events that can be understood only by tapping into the flow of time by assessing the lessons or the stories of past encounters, assessing how these lessons or stories illuminate the present context, and sifting through these stories to inform subsequent movements suggests that his brand of interpretative reporting was akin to wayfinding. Reporters needed to be wayfinders if they were to provide their readers with a map of the Cold War landscape that highlighted the common terrain held by the people of countries both in the East and the West that was currently obscured by the fog of regime conflict.

Not all of Markel's fellow editors found his conceptualization of interpretation persuasive, however.[67] For example, Markel's article "Interpretation?—Yes!" in the January 1, 1961 issue of *The Bulletin of the American Society of Newspaper Editors* stimulated a raft of responses from editors and reporters, offering positions ranging from emphatic support to strong condemnation.[68] The contribution of James Pope of the *Courier-Journal and Louisville Times* was representative of the latter:

> But many of us who are responsible for news columns like to associate reporting with factual news (there is such a treasure if we labor at it) and we want to see more

> and more readers get a paper which enables them to do the same. The interpretative function, if we have any understanding of it, does not belong here. To us, "interpretative reporting" is a contradiction in terms. Sometimes well-meaning, sometimes slyly designed to deceive."[69]

The divisions among his colleagues about both what interpretative reporting entailed and whether it had a place in the news columns was apparent in what Markel viewed as his most important effort to buttress newspapers' role in increasing global understanding: *The Flow of the News Study*, which was issued by the International Press Institute in 1953. The study sought through surveys of news producers and news consumers in the United States, eight European countries, and India both to understand how newspapers in these countries depicted other countries and to identify reforms that newspapers could adopt to improve the flow of foreign news among countries in ways that would increase global understanding.

Markel was, in the end, disappointed with *The Flow of the News Study* for a variety of reasons. The most important of these was that the final version of the study focused, in Markel's mind, on the quantity of international news in the countries under study rather than on its quality or its capacity to create the understanding among people of different nations that Markel thought could quell Cold War tensions.

The Cold War Origins of the International Press Institute

Michael Harrington claimed that "1948 was the least year of the thirties."[70] Harrington's willingness to put a period on a decade of progressive change was due in part, as James Patterson notes, to the tempering of reform activity in the United States as "Cold War fears rose to the center of American society." These fears informed "politics, and foreign policy in 1949 and early 1950, generating a Red Scare that soured a little the

otherwise optimistic, 'can-do' mood of American life until 1954."[71] Markel was not the first commentator to highlight the press's responsibility to prepare the public to contend with this new distant and threatening world.[72] The Hutchins Commission had begun this campaign a year before Harrington declared the thirties over in its 1947 report, *A Free and Responsible Press*. The Report treated the post-war moment as a hinge point in history, one during which "a new world [was] struggling to be born under the shadow of potential self-destruction."[73] This fraught moment demanded a free press that would, by acting in concert with other social agencies, maintain an "American mentality" that was "accustomed to the noise and confusion of clashing opinions and reasonably stable in temper in view of the varying fortunes of ideas."[74] Conditions that generated "anxiety, suspicion, resentment, gullibility, and despair" could push the pubic to demand state interference in the workings of the press.[75] The press, however, could, create "the mental conditions" necessary to sustain a free and independent press through committing itself to socially responsible journalism capable of providing the public with "a truthful, comprehensive, and intelligent account of the day's events in a context which gives them meaning."[76] This meant not only presenting the facts but "reporting the truth about the fact[s]."[77] Reporters' pursuit of the truth must include giving readers a purchase on "the flow of information and interpretation concerning the relations between two racial groups such as to enable the reader to set a single event in its proper perspective."[78]

Lester Markel was especially interested in tracking this flow of information between groups and countries in order both to identify gaps and distortions in this flow and to improve and channel it in a way that would increase global understanding. Markel on several occasions defined, at least to his satisfaction, what he meant by improving the flow of the news as follows:

> To me the concept [of the flow of the news] is quite simple, to wit: (a) world peace depends on understanding; (b) understanding comes about only through good information; (c) the day-to-day reports in the newspapers are the most potent source of such information; (d) there is not at this time an adequate flow of the news from other countries; (e) therefore, one of the prime tasks of American journalists is to improve the "flow of the news."[79]

Markel's interest in conducting research that could both assess and improve the flow of the news across borders prompted him to propose at the Annual Meeting of the American Society of Newspapers Editors in April 1949 the formation of an International Press Institute.[80] The other attendees agreed "to appoint a committee to investigate the possibility of such an institute."[81] The committee's report led to the convening of a conference in New York in October 1949 of 35 editors from 15 countries, who decided both that the establishment of such an institute was "desirable and feasible" and that Markel should head an organizing committee to formulate a plan for the new institute.[82]

Markel envisioned a permanent secretariat that "could perform an invaluable service [by] undertak[ing] studies of the kind of news that circulates between one country and another, [the] manner of news presentation and [the] methods of news transmission."[83] The objective of such studies and other activities the institute would design to address the "outstanding problems of journalism" was to advance Markel's position that "world peace depends on understanding between peoples and peoples rather than an understanding between leaders and leaders or between diplomats and diplomats."[84] Such understanding, however, could not be achieved unless editors from across the globe first tried to understand each other. The IPI would allow

editors from an array of countries to have "personal meetings… to discuss common problems" with the intent of "broadening understanding."[85]

Markel laid out his vision of the IPI in an April 20, 1950 "Report to the American Society of Newspaper Editors on the International Press Institute." The report began by presenting Markel's position that newspapers could play an integral role in promoting international understanding by exploring "the question of how we obtain precise intelligence and true information about the rest of the world."[86] Markel wrote that an editor's task was to make sure that "reports from overseas shall be accurate, objective, and significant (I add the adjective 'significant' because it implies the interpretation that is vital to understanding in a world of increasingly complex news)."[87] This parenthetical statement allowed Markel to insert his long-standing interest in interpretative reporting into the mission of the IPI. In this instance, interpretative reporting, Markel claimed, was to help editors and reporters "discover what motivates others" in order that they could give their readers the "guidance [to make] wise decisions."[88] Such decisions would allow newspapers to make an important contribution to waging the "psychological struggle" of the Cold War, a dimension of the Cold War that Markel argued had thus far been neglected as energy and resources continued to be poured into the military conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union. The true battle was to combat the "wide areas of ignorance and deep pools of prejudice" about the United States that persisted in many spots in the world[89] by, as Markel stated in his 1953 commencement address at Bates College, "improv[ing] the flow of the news among nations so that they shall have true views of one another and so arrive at an understanding."[90]

Markel, however, feared from the time of the IPI's establishment in 1949 that the Institute would become merely "a Cook's Agency for editors,"[91] an organization that booked travel for editors

seeking pleasant spots to converse about common problems. Markel hence insisted that the members of the IPI focus their exchanges on "improv[ing] the information [peoples] have of one another—in other words, a betterment of the 'flow of the news.'"[92] While "annual meetings of editors of various countries have great value in bringing about contacts and thus understanding," such exchanges were, to Markel's mind, "not enough." Unless there was "a constant study of the flow of the news and an unflagging effort to improve it, the full objective cannot be attained."[93] Markel contended that this work would be distinct from that conducted by the Hutchins Commission in that it would be produced by editors for other editors and thus would be "the press looking at the press" rather than the product of "the attitudes of professors of journalism."[94]

Markel did, however, concede that the IPI did share with the Hutchins Commission a commitment to cultivating the mutual understanding that he argued was the missing piece of America's strategy for winning the Cold War. Markel identified IPI's Cold War mission in a report to the ASNE on April 12, 1950:

> The problem of making certain that others understand us is measured… by the nature and depth of the Cold War. It is now recognized that the struggle is psychological as well as an economic and military one. In the military area, through the North Atlantic Pact, we have taken a long step toward the kind of united front that will lead to a retreat by Moscow. In the economic areas, notably through the Marshall Plan, we have begun to do the job. But in the psychological areas we are not making the kind of effort that will ensure victory. There are abroad, let us face it, wide areas of ignorance and deep pools of prejudice against us.[95]

Markel was, however, quick to underscore that "the prime

purpose of [the IPI] is not to fortify our side in the Cold War."[96] The "ultimate project was much broader": "to bring about understanding between editors and editors and between peoples and peoples."[97] This could only be achieved, according to Markel, through an examination of the flow of the news among countries with the purpose of trying to improve that flow.[98]

The Flow of the News Study: It's a Long Way to Interpretation

The 1953 *Flow of the News Study* was based on surveys of "editors, agency executives, foreign correspondents, and readers" in the United States, eight Western European countries, and India. Its purpose was to discern both how newspapers depicted the politics and people of countries other than their own and what might be done to achieve what Markel called the "better flow of information" that could create "greater understanding among nations."[99] Markel expanded on this position in his commencement address at Bates College the same year the study was published:

> Individual reporting could do a great deal to improve understanding. But we are having too much sensational news, too much trivial news. *We are not getting interpretative news—the facts plus the explanation—without which the reader gropes in a maze of words and gives up.* To improve the flow of the news among nations so that they shall have true views of one another and so arrive at understanding—this is the basic task of the press in the international field.[100] (italics mine)

The published study began by distinguishing between news and information by suggesting that "news" was a record of events while "information" was the kind of deeper analysis "upon which the people of free countries base certain vital decisions."[101] But the authors quickly collapsed this distinction by referring to "news as information," claiming that "the importance

of news as information has increased at a time when it is more and more difficult to make foreign news completely informative."[102] That "information" and "interpretation" were close to synonymous was evident, in particular, in the study's recommendations for improving the American press's foreign coverage.

While the study's authors maintained that it was "not undertaken to revolutionize the coverage and handling of foreign news but to describe it,"[103] its recommendations for improving, in particular, the American press's foreign coverage were tilted toward encouraging American editors to make a turn toward interpretation, though its characterization of interpretation focused more on "setting" than on "sequence."[104] That the study found that many editors maintained that "foreign news stories should explain the meaning of events they report, and in terms that will have significance for American readers" is not surprising.[105] The framing of this position, however, tracked much of the language and the argumentation that Markel had used and would continue to use to make his own case for interpretative reporting:

> The kind of writing that produces this significance is called interpretation by many editors. Others call it background. Some agency executives like the term explanatory writing and that is close to what newspaper editors and others mean by either background or interpretation *But whatever term is used, it denotes the kind of writing that is designed to give meaning to bare facts, to provide, setting, sequence, and significance.*[106] (italics mine)

The study's recommendations, however, sought to produce reporting that would give readers a better sense of "setting" than of "sequence." Interpretation's chief virtue, according to the study, was its capacity to convey foreign news to the American public "in a more simple, understandable way."[107] The key to achieving

this was to relate foreign news to Americans' daily lives. Interpretative reporting could, in short, orient Americans by giving them a sense of their relationship with the world outside of the U.S.'s borders:

> The remoteness of foreign events from his own community and his individual perspective is the most important influence upon the reader's attitude toward foreign news, and if he is to read more of it, it must somehow be more closely related to his daily life.[108]

Relating the world's events to Americans' daily lives, while certainly a positive step towards orientation, was insufficient if Americans were not also given a sense of the historical processes or past movements that had shaped these events and were likely to inform what were the next paths they were likely to take. That the study limited itself to encouraging reporters to use interpretative reporting to orient their readers in space was most likely a product of the way the authors approached the study, an approach that sought to tease out patterns in survey responses rather than explore how international reporting could be improved. That reporting the data took priority over debating the data is further evinced by the concluding pages of the section on interpretation, which present an edited transcript of an exchange among wire service executives at the 1953 General Assembly of the International Press Institute, an exchange that was included to illustrate the "increasing trend" of news agencies to include "more and more interpretation in foreign news writing."[109] The participants in this debate, however, confined themselves to the question of whether or not interpretation was appropriate in news stories, eliding the more vexing and, for Markel, more important, question of what interpretation entailed.

Markel's disappointment with *The Flow of the News Study* was both profound and vocal. He fired his first volley on September 1953 at a man who would quickly become his chief foe within IPI, the

organization's Director, E.J.B. Rose.[110] The occasion of Markel's letter to Rose was Markel's review of the proposed text of *The Flow of the News Study*. Markel claimed that the report was flawed not only because some of its criticisms of the news agencies and newspapers studied were, he believed, unfair. The study was also, Markel contended, critical of these press organizations for the wrong reasons. Markel argued that the study suggested that newspapers should "cover large areas of the world, even though there is no news breaking in some of these areas, and that they ought to print more 'cultural news' as against 'spot' news." He contended that this was not consistent with his vision of the study, which was to use its findings to encourage journalists to concentrate on "important events" and do so in a way that gave these events "the interpretation that is required."[111] The report, in short, was "measuring quantity of news rather than quality of news" in an attempt to identify the holes in international coverage rather than the interpretive lapses in that coverage. There was, however, Markel conceded, "nothing to do about it at this late stage" in the drafting process.[112]

Markel later claimed that his diagnosis of the fundamental flaw in *The Flow of the News Study* was justified by the press coverage of the study when it was released. Most outlets, according to Markel, simply reprinted "a short AP dispatch, devoted largely to the Gallup survey," while other major publications, such as *The Chicago Daily News*, failed to cover the study at all. This thin coverage "confirmed [Markel] in [his] belief "that a good deal more needs to be explored on the question of interpretation."[113]

Markel's position that *The Flow of the News Study* was merely a beginning rather than an ending recurred often in what became increasingly heated epistolary exchanges with Rose. Markel, for example, resigned from IPI's Executive Committee in 1954 at least in part because he thought that Rose and his allies on the Committee were refusing to follow-up on *The*

Flow of the News Study, choosing instead to invest IPI's resources in efforts "to bring editors of various countries together and to provide services of direct use to them."[114] Markel claimed in a "Memorandum on the Flow of the News Project" on April 20, 1954 that "the original concept expressed in January 1953 envisioned a continuing study growing out of the specific study of the project itself," a mandate that Markel claimed in a November 30, 1953 letter to Rose that the Director had intentionally ignored:

> I detect in the comments on the coming year's program a feeling that we have devoted too much attention to the Flow of the News. I register again my individual opinion that if the International Press Institute can improve the flow of the news among nations so that these nations get more accurate pictures of one another it will have done its most important job and I do not think we ought to underestimate that job.[115]

Although Markel was angered by what he often called Rose's "intrigues" against him, he initially resisted leaving the IPI entirely. He confided to a correspondent that he would "feel like a heel if [he] should be in any way responsible for the death of the IPI concept. And that concept will die if Rose and [Urs] Schwarz have their way."[116] He instead chose to continue to harangue Rose about his failure to follow-up on *The Flow of the News Study*, accusing Rose of a campaign to convince the IPI's membership that "the flow of the news is an abstract idea and impossible of realization"[117] and of refusing to act on his "guarantee" to implement the flow of the news study's recommendations.[118] Markel eventually circumvented Rose by soliciting the Ford Foundation for funding to produce an update to *The Flow of the News Study*. This effort was unavailing, principally, according to Markel, because of the Foundation's reluctance to fund an IPI project when "there is a ruckus between Markel and Rose."[119]

Markel softened his opinion of Rose's stewardship of the IPI as he gained some distance from the contretemps of the 1950s. By 1963 he was able to tell Jenkin Lloyd Jones that while "Rose did not like [the flow of the news study] or believe in it," it was the execution of the study, and not necessarily intrigues orchestrated by Rose, that rendered "it about 30% successful in that it asked the right questions, even if it did not come up with any right answers."[120] Markel continued to believe that "*The Flow of the News Study* was an important and essential undertaking as a blueprint for the future activity of the Institute."[121] The Cold War had become, if anything, more complex, and the concomitant "need for international understanding made it urgent that the flow of information be as unhampered as possible."[122] The credo with which Markel had begun the IPI in 1949 was now more relevant than ever: "there cannot be understanding unless there is good information (by which I mean information that is accurate, complete, and in perspective); and the newspaper is, or should be, the prime source of that information."[123] Markel still believed as late as 1966 that "the basic argument for the IPI itself remained its willingness to re-commit itself to studying the flow of the news" in order first to reveal "the distortions" that impede international understanding and then forge a brand of interpretative journalism that could correct those distortions.[124] It was only by dedicating itself to such "a new and significant research program" that the IPI could address "the crisis in the affairs of the Institute,"[125] and this research program would pivot around a vigorous new *Flow of the News Study*:

> [Apropos] the problem of the "flow of the news," I feel apologetic about the phrase, but I know of no other and so, despite all the cat calls, I hold doggedly to it. But here is the basic argument for improving the news flow; it is, in fact, the basic argument for the IPI itself….

> … the fact is that the press is not doing the kind of job in the international arena that is needed. Too much of it is devoted to entertainment rather than information, to sensation rather than to solid reporting.
>
> As a result, the pictures nations have, one of another, are often distorted, international relations are severely damaged and there are clogs and rust in the information pipelines.[126]

America was "trying [its] best to play a world role in which [it] had been thrust almost unwillingly."[127] Markel continued to believe that this role required a public that had the kind of accurate and textured picture of the people of other countries that interpretative reporting could provide. *The Flow of the News Study* remained for Markel the best vehicle for fostering the type of interpretative reporting capable of orienting Americans in both space and time such that they could navigate the new Cold War landscape in ways that would increase international understanding.

Conclusion

George Kennan, the architect of the policy of containment that came to define America's approach to managing the Soviet threat during the 1940s and 1950s, distinguished between the Soviet regime and the Russian people in a series of lectures he delivered at the National War College in the fall of 1947. While the former, Kennan claimed, could not be negotiated with "because the United States and the Soviet Union shared no common interests," the people of Russia were "still potentially our friends… I believe we still have the possibility of bringing [them] over to our side."[128]

Lester Markel believed that "the urgencies of his time" required newspapers to embrace interpretative reporting in order to "solve the problem of public opinion" that was, in his view, impeding Americans' efforts to manage the uncertainty generated by the Cold War. Fostering the

mutual understanding between Americans and the people of both the Eastern and the Western blocs was an important part of managing this uncertainty for both the authors of the Hutchins Commission's Report and for Markel. Markel's effort to manage his own uncertainty, which he expressed in his 1950 *New York Times Magazine* article, about the American and the Soviet regimes' ability "to control man" propelled his campaign for a type of interpretative reporting that could create "understanding between peoples and peoples rather than… understanding between leaders and leaders or between diplomats and diplomats." Interpretative reporting could give Americans the sense of "setting, sequence, and significance" that they needed to orient themselves in the changing Cold War landscape in ways that would point them toward rather away from both their allies and their adversaries.

As Ingold maintained in his discussion of wayfinding, "knowing one's present whereabouts has nothing to do with fixing your location in space… knowing where you are lies not in the establishment of a point-to-point correspondence between the world and its representation, but in the remembering of journeys previously made, and that brought you to the place along the same or different paths."[129] Markel conceived of *The Flow of the News Study* as an exercise that would do more than fix Americans' location in space by tracking the comings and goings of information across borders. It would be instead the first step in a turn toward interpretative journalism that would give Americans a purchase on both the origins and future trajectory of the Cold War and the interests and concerns they shared with the people of other countries, interests and concerns that, if properly understood, could allow the twain of East and West to meet. The failure of the study to go beyond counting and coding stories was thus disappointing to Markel. He did not merely want to track international stories. He wanted to demonstrate how

interpretative reporting could help Americans manage the uncertainty spawned by the nuclear age by highlighting the interests they shared with both their adversaries and their allies.

The Cold War foregrounded the precarious nature of peace in a way that prompted new fears. The management of a moment when "peace and war kiss each other"[130] even in the performance of daily tasks, required, Markel believed, a press that could give the public the context and explanation it needed to understand where they were and wither they were tending. Markel maintained that interpretative reporting could situate Americans in both time and in space in a way that would allow them to see commonality where the bellicose political rhetoric of the Cold War suggested there was only division. It was a conviction he did not relinquish even after the failure of *The Flow of the News Study*. Lester Markel continued to wage his own personal twilight struggle against his critics until the end of his career.[131]

Notes

[1] Lester Markel, "The Great Need—An Informed Opinion," *New York Times Magazine*, April 9, 1950. Markel maintained in his 1972 exploration of public opinion in *What You Don't Know Can Hurt You* that these challenges had by that time become even more daunting: "Almost daily the problem [grows] in proportion and urgency—the problem of informing and spurring public opinion. For years the issue has been evolving, until now it has become the topmost national concern—a matter of prime import for the future of the country, for the welfare of the people, for the course of democracy itself." Lester Markel, *What You Don't Know Can Hurt You: A Study of Public Opinion and Public Emotion* (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1972), 1.

[2] See Christian Appy, "Introduction: Struggling for the World," in Christian G. Appy (ed.), *Cold War Constructions: The Political Culture of United States Imperialism, 1945-1966* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000), 1-2 for a discussion of how NSC 68's heated rhetoric "was a staple of public discourse in the early Cold War." Nitze was clear in NSC 68 that the Soviet Union posed a new type of threat, one that required Americans to re-think the relationship between liberty and order: "It is apparent… that the integrity and vitality of our system is in greater jeopardy than ever before in our history…. The Kremlin design seeks to impose order among nations by means which would destroy our free and democratic system. The Kremlin's possession of atomic weapons puts new power behind its design, and increases the jeopardy to our system. It adds new strains to the uneasy equilibrium-without-order which exists in the world and raises new doubts in men's minds whether the world will long tolerate this tension without moving toward some kind of order, on somebody's terms." "A Report to the National Security Council-NSC 68," April 12, 1950, President's Secretary's File, The Harry Truman Papers, 34. Nitze was correct to conclude that he Soviet Union sought to "impose order" on the world. What Nitze did not realize at the time was that this quest to export the revolution was fueled less by ideology than by a sense of profound insecurity. As Vojtech Mastny notes, "Created by a minority coup rather than by exertion of popular will, the Soviet state was always intrinsically insecure…. Its founders did not consider it secure unless the revolution they promoted to keep themselves in power would triumph abroad as well." Vojtech Mastny, *The Cold War and Soviet Insecurity: The Stalin Years* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 11.

[3] As quoted in John Lewis Gaddis, *George F. Kennan: An American Life* (New York: Penguin Books, 2011), 391.

[4] Appy, *Cold War Constructions*, 2.

[5] Ibid., 2.

[6] Stephen J. Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War*, 2nd edition ((Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 5.

[7] This religious revival saw, in particular, an increase in the number of Americans who identified themselves as "pre-millennials, people who believed that the apocalypse

would bring on the second coming of Christ." Thomas Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States, 1945-1974* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 331. The sociologist David Riesman often became impatient with Eastern elites who failed to acknowledge the evangelical streak that ran through much of America during the 1950s and 1960s. He told the story of lunching with two social scientists in the Kennedy administration who seemed to Riesman to embody "the arrogance and hubris of the era." Riesman finally interrupted their conversation to ask if either of them had ever been to Utah? When they responded, "No," Riesman proceeded to tell them about the influence of the Church of Latter-Day Saints in that state and the spread of evangelicalism more generally. See David Halberstam, *The Best and the Brightest* (New York: Random House, 1992), 42.

[8] Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War,* 12.

[9] The notion that the future of the American experiment hinged on "the control of man" was not as new as Markel suggested. James Madison's famous challenge in "Federalist #51" that "you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place, oblige it to control itself" is perhaps the most notable statement of the framers' conviction that "self-regulation," either through the working of institutional checks on "the passions and the interests" or the cultivation of virtue, would be necessary for the republic to survive.

[10] The Commission on the Freedom of the Press, *A Free and Responsible Press: A General Report on Mass Communication: Newspapers, Radio, Motion Pictures, Magazines, and Books* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1947), 8-9.

[11] In a March 11, 1961 *Saturday Review* article, Markel claimed that "The problem of American public opinion is of paramount importance. If American public opinion is well-informed, our course is likely to be a sound one. If it is uninformed, or badly informed, our course may well be disastrous." Lester Markel, "Interpretation of Interpretation," *The Saturday Review* (March 11, 1961), 89.

[12] The Commission on the Freedom of the Press, *A Free and Responsible Press*, 4.

[13] Text of Talk by Lester Markel, Chairman of the Executive Committee, at the First Meeting of the International Press Institute Assembly, Wednesday, May 14, 1952, Box #17, Folder #2, New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library.

[14] Allegra Goodman, *Intuition* (New York: Dial Press, 2006), 344.

[15] "Uncertainty management theory" has been an important strain in social psychology since the turn if the 21st century when the work of, in particular, Ian McGregor and Kees van den Bos on how exposure to uncertainty influences subjects' self-conceptions and need for justice generated considerable interest in how uncertainty affected human judgment. See, for example, Ian McGregor and Denise Marigold, "Defensive Zeal and the Uncertain Self: What Makes You So Sure?" *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 85(5) (November 2003), 838-52 and Kees van den Bos and E. Allan Lind, "Uncertainty Management by Means of Fairness Judgments," *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* 34 (2002), 1-60. Van den Bos and Lind's work has advanced our understanding of why people desire to believe in a "just world," a desire that was identified by Michael Lerner back in 1965. See

Michael Lerner, "Evaluation of Performance as a Function of Performer's Reward and Attractiveness," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 1(4) (April 1965). Since, as Tom Pyszczynski, et al. note, "a just world is a predictable world," the desire for a just world becomes more acute the more uncertainty people confront. For an explanation of "the just world hypothesis," see Michael J. Lerner, *The Belief in a Just World: A Fundamental Delusion* (New York: Plenum Press, 1980). For a review of recent work in uncertainty management theory, see Tom Pyszczynski, Jeff Greenberg, Sander Koole, and Sheldon Solomon, "Experimental Existential Psychology: Coping with the Facts of Life," in Susan T. Fiske, Daniel T. Gilbert, and Gardner Lindzey, *Handbook of Social Psychology*, Volume 1, 5th edition (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 2010), 730, quote on 730.

[16] Adam Prezeworski, *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 10-14.

[17] Ira Katznelson, *Fear Itself: The New Deal and the Origins of Our Time* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2013), 34.

[18] Laurence Tribe and Joshua Matz, *Uncertain Justice: The Roberts Court and the Constitution* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2014), 2-6.

[19] Ian Shapiro and Sonu Bedi, *Political Contingency: Studying the Unexpected, the Accidental, and the Unforseen* (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 12.

[20] Michael Schudson, *Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers* (New York: Basic Books, 1978). Lippmann first presented the pseudo-environment concept in *Liberty and the News*, but it was in his next book, *Public Opinion*, that he teased out the implications of the pseudo-environment for human understanding and action. See Walter Lippmann, *Liberty and the News* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008, first published in 1920), 33 and Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997, first published in 1922).

[21] Lippmann, *Public Opinion*, 226. Lippmann underscored that while this picture would be a fiction, it would allow readers, as he had observed a decade earlier in *A Preface to Politics*, the "secret spring of certainty" that was necessary for moderns to be "aggressively active toward the world." Walter Lippmann, *A Preface to Politics* (New York: Prometheus Books, 2005, first published, 1913), 27.

[22] Lippmann, *Public Opinion*, 10-11.

[23] In *Informing the News*, Thomas Patterson chides journalists for gravitating to stories that are readily documentable and quantifiable. His case for a "knowledge-based" approach to journalism hinges on journalists' willingness to embrace rather than recoil from the "new questions and uncertainties" that are the product of the attainment of knowledge. He, however, agrees with Gilbert Orman, the former chair of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, that persuading journalists to adopt a more scientific approach to their craft may fail precisely because such a move would require journalists to court doubt: "Most people think science is about facts and are quite frustrated when they find that science is in large part about uncertainty." Thomas E. Patterson, *Informing the News: The Need for Knowledge-Based Journalism* (New York: Random House, 2013), 70. *In Letters to a Young Journalist*, Samuel Freedman struggles with the same tension between journalistic training that

commands young journalists "to believe only what is observable and quantifiable" and the imperative that journalists "accept the burden of independent thought" by "welcom[ing] the dissonance of human events" (Samuel Freedman, *Letters to a Young Journalist* (New York: Basic Books, 2011), 50). Freedman observes that many important subjects of journalistic inquiry cannot be explored with absolute confidence (e.g., the interior life of one's subjects), yet journalists are often steered by editors and even colleagues not to go beyond "the facts." Finally, Mitchell Stephens in *Beyond News: The Future of Journalism*, argues that even in the 21tst century reporters cannot shed the "the nineteenth- and twentieth-century notion that journalists are primarily collectors of facts." He suggests that "interpretation informed in particular by social science" or "wisdom journalism" can offer a way off of the fallow ground of "who-what-when-where journalism." It is, he claims, bloggers such as Ezra Klein of *The Washington Post*, Matthew Yglesias of *Slate*, and Nate Silver of FiveThirtyEight, whom he calls "the Young Turks of interpretative journalism," who are carving a path "toward 'analysis, meaning, context, argument,' combined with explanation, plus large doses of 'smart ideas' and insight,' all presented with honesty, openness, flexibility, and often enough, relaxed good humor." See Mitchell Stephens, *Beyond News: The Future of Journalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), quotes on xx, 105, 106, and 109. The limits of Stephens' position that interpretative journalism can provide meaning and insight without obscuring the truth in a fog of subjectivity becomes clear when journalists and editors must make tough choices about how far beyond documentable facts the former can go in telling a story without crossing the border into fiction. This question is addressed in *The Lifespan of a Fact*, a book that consists of email exchanges between the writer John D'Agata and Jim Fingal, a copyeditor for an unnamed magazine. Fingal's task is to apply journalistic standards for veracity to a piece that both explores dimensions of actors' psychology that do not have clear empirical referents and engages in cultural commentary that is often based on distortions of data, tenuous extrapolations, and even fictionalizations. Fingal seeks in his correspondence with D'Agata to convince the writer that not all choices in a piece of journalism are literary; that a journalist, even one who wishes to dig underneath the facts to expose the unseen currents that propel human action, must show some fidelity to the facts. See John D'Agata and Jim Fingal, *The Lifespan of a Fact* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2012).

[24] See Stephen J. A. Ward, "Fuzzy Logic: The Collapse of the News-Opinion Distinction," Center for Journalism Ethics, School of Mass Communication, University of Wisconsin-Madison, October 3, 2006.

[25] David T. Z. Mindich, *Just the Facts: How "Objectivity" Came to Define American Journalism* (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 73.

[26] Stephen J. A. Ward, *The Invention of Journalism Ethics: The Path to Objectivity and Beyond* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004), 19.

[27] Walter Lippmann, *Liberty and the News* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008, first published in 1920), 7

[28] Ibid., 9.

[29] Edwin Emery, *The Press and America: An Interpretative History of Journalism,* 2nd edition, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1962), 633.
[30] Ibid., 633.
[31] Biography of Lester Markel by Lewis L. Gould, 1997, Box #11, Folder: Biography, New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library.
[32] See Emery, *The Press in America*, 647. Emery, however, contends that the Sunday Times' "News of the Week in Review" was not so much an innovation as an effort by Markel to emulate the success *Time* magazine enjoyed at the time because of its intermingling of "opinion and editorial hypothesis" with straight news. See Emery, *The Press in America*, 333. Curtis MacDougall, on the other hand, gives Markel credit for launching the most successful of the experiments with "weekly news reviews." See Curtis MacDougall, *Interpretative Reporting*, 8th edition (New York: Macmillan, 1982), 17.
[33] Lester Markel, "The Future of the Printed Word," Box #13, Folder: Editor and Publisher Conference, 2/23/1956, The New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library. This was a phrase that Markel used often in his speeches and writings.
[34] Lippmann, *Liberty and the News*, 2.
[35] Address by Lester Markel to the Association of American Newspaper Editors, April 1960, Box #9, Folder: American Society of Newspaper Editors, January-June 1960, The New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library.
[36] "The Role of International Journalism," Remarks by Lester Markel at the 13th Annual FIEJ Conference, May 24, 1960, Box #14, Folder: Federation of Internationale Des Editeurs de Journeaux (FIEJ), 1954-1960, 1966, The New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library.
[37] Text of Talk by Lester Markel, Chairman of the Executive Committee, at the First Meeting of the I.P.I. Assembly, Wednesday, May 24, 1952, Box #17, Folder: International Press Institute, 1952, The New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers.
[38] Lippmann, *Public Opinion*, 18.
[39] Ibid., 239-49.
[40] Markel, "The Future of the Printed Word."
[41] Letter from Lester Markel to Alan J. Gould, April 14, 1959, Box #13, Folder: Editorial Policy (General), 1959-1973, The New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library.
[42] Letter from Lester Markel to Alan J. Gould, June 23, 1959, Box #13, Folder: Editorial Policy (General), 1959-1973, The New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library. Markel could be quite waspish with those who contended that background and interpretation were distinct. For example, Markel upbraided E.J.B. Rose, the founding director of the International Press Institute and previously a member of the British code-breaking team at Bletchley Park, for giving the IPI's imprimatur to this, in Markel's view, false

distinction: "I see no difference between 'background' and 'interpretation.' I would be interested in having you define the difference as you see it …. If you have been putting out this view as the Institute's position, I feel strongly that it should be corrected, because I believe 'interpretation' is the one immediately important contribution that can be made to [the] understanding of the news and to the betterment of public opinion." Markel's fusillade, however, failed to dislodge Rose from his position: "I do not consider background and interpretation synonymous. To my mind, background includes all relevant facts antecedent to a particular event, a knowledge of which is necessary if one is to put the event in context. Then when all these antecedent facts have been given it may still be necessary to interpret the meaning of the event." See Letter from Lester Markel to E.J.B. Rose, January 12, 1953, Box #17, Folder: International Press Institute, 1953, The New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library and Letter from E.J.B, Rose to Lester Markel, January 21, 1953, Box #17, Folder: International Press Institute, 1953, The New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library

[43] Memo from Fred M. Huchinger, New York Times Education Page Editor, to Lester Markel, February 9, 1960, Box #13, Folder: Education News, 1953-1963, The New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library.

[44] See Opening Address by the Chairman of the Executive Board, Mr. Lester Markel, at the Second General Assembly of the International Press Institute, May 13, 1953, Box #17, Folder: International Press Institute, 1953, The New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library. See also Lester Markel, "The Case for Interpretation," *The Bulletin of the American Society of Newspaper Editors* No. 353 (April 1, 1953), 1.

[45] Address by Lester Markel at the University of Michigan, March 17, 1965, Box #18, Folder: Newspapers (General), 1954-1973, The New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library

[46] Markel, *What You Don't Know Can Hurt You*, 238.

[47] Tim Ingold, "To Journey along a Way of Life: Maps, Wayfinding and Navigation," in Tim Ingold, *The Perception of the Environment: Essays on Livelihood, Dwelling, and Skill* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 220.

[48] Ingold's distinction between wayfinding and map-using is pertinent here: "Ordinary wayfinding more closely resembles storytelling than map-using. To use a map is to navigate by means of it; that is, to plot a course from one *location* to another in *space*." Ibid., 219.

[49] Outline for Organization of IPI, January 8, 1951, Box #17, Folder: International Press Institute, 1949-1951, New York Times Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library. See also Minutes of the First Session of the Initiating Group for an International Press Institute, Held at Columbia University, October 9-12, 1950, The Second Day, Box #17, Folder: International Press Institute, 1949-1951, New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library.

[50] Ingold, "To Journey along a Way of Life." 237.
[51] As Ingold notes, "… there is a certain parallel between the processes of knowing and mapping. Both are environmentally situated activities, both are carried out along paths of travel, and both unfold over time." Ingold, "To Journey along a Way of Life," 220. A notable use of navigation as a metaphor to describe efforts by humans to orient themselves emotionally is William Reddy's formulation of a general theory of emotions that takes into account cultural differences while still treating "emotional suffering" as an experience understandable across time and place. Reddy argues that "emotives" or "speech acts" that both describe and change the world allow humans to take charge of their emotional lives by giving them "the freedom to change goals" or navigate onto a new course. See William M. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), especially 122-23.
[52] For the important role that the option to "exit" plays in organizational and political life, see Albert Hirschman, *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).
[53] Ingold is careful to distinguish between "mapping" and "mapmaking." While mapmaking offers "a totalizing vision above and beyond the world," Ingold maintains that mapping and wayfinding are guided by "narratives of past movement." There is, in short, a temporal character to mapping or wayfinding that is missing from mapmaking. Mapping or wayfinding, like a musical composition, "unfolds over time rather than across space," with the consequence that, to use another metaphor, it is "a kind of retrospective storytelling." See Ingold, "To Journey along a Way of Life, " 231-40, quotes on 237, 238, and 231.
[54] Ibid., 220.
[55] Ibid., 224.
[56] Ibid., 237.
[57] Ibid., 227. In another essay, "The Temporality of the Landscape," Ingold seeks to bring together the archaeologist's understanding of the landscape as a "neutral, external backdrop for human activities" and the anthropologist's understanding of the same phenomenon as "a particular cognitive or symbolic ordering of space" in what he calls "a dwelling perspective, according to which the landscape is constituted as an enduring record of—and testimony to—the lives and works of past generations who have dwelt within it, and in so doing, have left there something of themselves." This perspective illuminates the landscape as a temporal space that "enfolds the lives and times of predecessors who, over the generations, have moved around in it and played their part in its formation. To perceive the landscape is therefore to carry an act of remembrance, and remembering is not so much a matter of calling up an internal image, stored in the mind, as of engaging perceptually with an environment that is itself pregnant with the past." Tim Ingold, "The Temporality of the Landscape," in Tim Ingold, *The Perception of the Environment: Essays on Livelihood, Dwelling, and Skill* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 189.
[58] Ingold, "To Journey along a Way of Life," 219.

[59] What Emery calls "old-style journalism" emulated science, which, Ingold contends, suggests it is vertically integrated by maintaining that it can "produce accurate and objective representations of the world 'out there.'" The truth is, however, according to Ingold, that science is also a laterally integrated enterprise, in which "it is unclear where data collection ends and theory building begins [and] there is no unified body of theory under which all of experience can be subsumed." Much of the labor of science "lies in attempts to establish the connectivity and equivalence that would render procedures developed and rules obtained in one local context applicable to another." Ibid., 227 and 229.

[60] Ibid., 219. This effort to learn the landscape by moving through it also, according to Ingold, changes the landscape itself: the "forms of the landscape are generated in movement," forms that "are congealed in a solid medium: with the consequence that "features of the landscape remain available for inspection long after the movement that gave rise to them has ceased." Ingold, "The Temporality of the Landscape," 198.

[61] Ingold, "To Journey along a Way of Life," 219.

[62] Ibid., 219.

[63] In *The Mill on the Floss*, George Eliot draws a parallel between the claim that even the most apparently insignificant of lives contain within them "the suffering, whether of martyr or of victim, which belongs to every historical advance of mankind" and science's ostensible ability to "unite the small things with the great" in one totalizing vision: "… For does not science tell us that the highest striving is after the ascertainment of a unity which shall bind the smallest things with the greatest? In natural science, I have understood, there is nothing petty to the mind that has a large vision of relations, and to which every single object suggests a vast sum of conditions. It is surely the same with the observation of human life." George Eliot, *The Mill on the Floss*, (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1930), 286.

[64] Ingold, "To Journey along a Way of Life," 224.

[65] Ibid., 224.

[66] Ibid., 230.

[67] While editors became increasingly interested in interpretative reporting in the post World War II era as a an approach that could help their readers manage, as Michael Schudson suggests, "a world grown suddenly very complex," by providing them with "'the meaning' of the news and the context of events," there was broad and often intense disagreement about both what were interpretative reporting's critical properties and whether or not it belonged in the news columns. As David Randall Davies notes in his unpublished dissertation, editors did not agree on "exactly what interpretative reporting was. Some believed it was an objective accounting of events with additional background. Others took interpretation as including 'the writer's definition of what a given development or statement may mean, a subjective judgment of the writer, according to George E. Stansfield of *The Hartford Courant*. The debate was evident in a University of Oregon poll of fifty editors across the country. While most of the editors favored the use of some interpretative news articles, the survey found most also believed that such articles should be signed and

that use of objective news articles should be preferred." See Michael Schudson, *Discovering the News*, 148 and David Randall Davies, "An Industry in Transition: Major Trends in American Newspaper, 1945-1965," (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, School of Communication, University of Alabama, 1997), 68-69.

[68] Lester Markel, "Interpretation—Yes!" *The Bulletin of the American Society of Newspaper Editors*, No. 438 (January 1, 1961). *The Bulletin* printed six responses, only one of which, that offered by Herbert Brucker of *The Hartford Courant*, gave unflinching support to Markel's position. Brucker began by stating that he was "shocked, surprised, and outraged that Lester Markel had to come back to *The Bulletin* again with another defense of interpretative reporting, and that there are still some troglodytes out there who don't understand it." Brucker went on to state that he shared Markel's position that interpretative reporting was not a retreat from objectivity or a "retrogression into opinion." Its pursuit was instead merely an acknowledgement that "in today's anfractuous world we have to go beyond the superficial and attributable opinions into underlying causes and meanings." Herbert Brucker, "Actually, Isn't It Just a Matter of Semantics?" *The Bulletin of the American Society of Newspaper Editors*, No. 438 (January 1, 1961), 4-5.

[69] James Pope, "This Noisy Confusion Holds Some Dangers for Newspapers," *The Bulletin of the American Society of Newspaper Editors*, No. 438 (January 1, 1961), 4.

[70] As quoted in Patterson, *Grand Expectations*, 165.

[71] Ibid., 165. A sign of the erosion of this American confidence can be seen in the 1954 film *Sabrina*, which features the patriarch of the entrepreneurial, "can do" Larrabee family telling one of his sons, "The 20th century? I could pull a better century out of a hat, blindfolded, than the 20th century." An interesting alternative reading of the politics of the 1950s is offered by Jennifer Delton in *Rethinking the 1950s*. Delton argues that liberal policies continued throughout the decade not despite but because of anti-communism. "Anticommunism justified liberal reforms, including civil rights." Jennifer A. Delton, *Rethinking the 1950s: How Anticommunism and the Cold War Made America Liberal* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 3.

[72] It is not by coincidence that Fred Siebert, Theodore Peterson, and Wilbur Schramm published their seminal work, *Four Theories of the Press*, in 1956, when what they called the new "social responsibility theory of the press" was beginning to take hold in the United States. One of the most important functions of the press in this model was "enlightening the public so as to make it capable of self-government," a sentiment consistent with Markel's campaign for "self-control." See Fred S. Seibert, Theodore Peterson, and Wilbur Schramm, *Four Theories of the Press: The Authoritarian, Libertarian, Social Responsibility and Soviet Communist Concepts of What the Press Should Be and Do* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1956), 73-103, quote on 74.

[73] The Commission on the Freedom of the Press, *A Free and Responsible Press*, 4.

[74] Ibid., 12.

[75] Ibid., 12.

[76] Ibid., 20.

[77] Ibid., 22.

[78] Ibid., 23.
[79] Letter from Lester Markel to George W. Healy, Jr. February 28, 1958, Box #9, Folder: American Society of Newspaper Editors, January-April 1958, New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library.
[80] Markel is quoted in a press release issued by the Organizing Committee of the American Press Institute as stating that he had "always found the [American Society of Newspaper Editors'] meetings of great value in that they provide knowledge of the viewpoint in other parts of the country and insight into common newspaper problems. I felt that if the idea of the A.S.N.E. could be translated into international forms, there might evolve an organization with large potentialities as a force for world peace. Press Release from the Organizing Committee of the International Press Institute, April 16, 1951 Box #17, Folder: International Press Institute, 1949-1951, New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Ibid.
[84] Outline for Organization of IPI.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Report to American Society of Newspaper Editors on an International Press Institute by Lester Markel, Chairman of the ASNE Committee, April 20, 1950, Box #17, Folder: International Press Institute, 1949-1951, New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid.
[89] While Markel claimed that the IPI was not designed "to fortify our side in the Cold War," he had made it clear only a few months earlier in a letter to Arthur Sulzberger his willingness to participate in "the propaganda war." See Ibid. and Memo from Lester Markel to Arthur Sulzberger, February 10, 1950, Box #17, Folder: International Relations, 1950 New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library.
[90] "An Informed Public Opinion," Bates College Commencement Address, June 1953, Box #11, Folder: Bates College, 1953-1963, New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library.
[91] Letter from Lester Markel to Jenkin Lloyd Jones, July 18, 1962, Box #15, Folder: International Press Institute, 1962, New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library.
[92] Memorandum from Lester Markel to the Members of the American Committee, Undated, Box #16, Folder: International Press Institute, May-August 1954, New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Draft of Letter from Lester Markel to W. McNeil Lowry, Undated, Box #16, Folder: International Press Institute, 1956-1957, New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library.

[95] Report to the American Society of Newspaper Editors on an International Press Institute.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Minutes of the First Session of the Initiating Group for an International Press Institute,
[98] See Lester Markel, Memorandum on Original IPI Concept, July 27, 1957, Box #16, Folder: International Press Institute, 1956-1957, New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library.
[99] Opening Address to the Second General Assembly of the International Press Institute. Markel described the purposes of *The Flow of the News Study* on this occasion as follows: "The Flow of the News project is designed to discover why the news among nations is not better, why it is not as understandable as it needs to be, [and] what can be done about it."
[100] "An Informed Public Opinion."
[101] *The Flow of the News: A Study by the International Press Institute* (Zurich: International Press Institute, 1953), 3.
[102] Ibid, 3.
[103] Ibid., 11-12.
[104] The published study's treatment of the flow of the news in the United States devoted more text to improving interpretative reporting in that country than to any of the other recommendations proposed in "Suggestions for Improvement"—about five pages to an average of three pages devoted to the other recommendations—and the discussion of interpretative reporting was the only one that included new information in the form of a transcript of an exchange between wire service editors at the 1953 General Assembly of the International Press Institute, an exchange that will be discussed below.
[105] *The Flow of the News*, 73.
[106] Ibid., 73.
[107] Ibid., 75.
[108] Ibid., 9.
[109] Ibid., 75.
[110] Markel had actually been the one who championed Rose's candidacy to direct the IPI. In a letter to Oskar Pollak on October 22, 1951, Markel asked Pollak to approve his choice of Markel to head the IPI. Markel testified that it took only one conversation with Rose to convince him that Rose "was a chap who had the three qualities I felt were essential [in a Director]—first, a sense of dedication; second, a good deal of news imagination; and, third, a considerable measure of executive ability." It would take less than three years for Markel to move from heaping garlands on Rose to stating that he could not even sit down for a meeting with him. For Markel's endorsement of Rose, see Letter from Lester Markel to Oskar Pollak, October 22, 1951, Box #17 , Folder: International Press Institute, 1949-1951, New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library. For Markel's fracture with Rose, see Letter from Lester Markel to Ejas Eriko, June 4, 1954, Box #16, Folder: International Press Institute, May-August, 1954, New York

Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library and Letter from Lester Markel to A.P. Wadsworth, March 1, 1954, Box #16, Folder; International Press Institute, January-March 1954, New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library.
[111] Letter from Lester Markel to E.J.B. Rose, September 17, 1953, Box #17, Folder: International Press Institute, 1953, New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library, 1.
[112] Ibid., 2.
[113] Letter from Lester Markel to E.J.B. Rose, December 7, 1953, Box #17, Folder: International Press Institute, 1953, New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library.
[114] See letter from E.J.B. Rose to Lester Markel, April 9, 1954, Box #16 , Folder: International Press Institute, April 1954, New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library and Memo from Lester Markel to Members of the American Committee.
[115] Lester Markel, Memorandum on the Flow of the News Project, April 20, 1954, Box #16, Folder: International Press Institute, April 1954, New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library. Four years later Markel was still struggling to justify staying in the IPI: "I am up against a black and mysterious barrier. I am intent on realizing the original objectives of the IPI and I want to do it through IPI. I am ready to collaborate, but I cannot continue to buck my head up against a stone wall built of intrigue and prejudice." Letter from Lester Markel to Oskar Pollak, February 12, 1958, Box #15, Folder: International Press Institute (1958), New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library.
[116] Letter from Lester Markel to A.P. Wadsworth.
[117] Letter from Lester Markel to E.J.B. Rose, March 24, 1958, Box #15, Folder: International Press Institute (1958), New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library.
[118] IPI Memorandum by Lester Markel, April 21, 1958, Box #15, Folder: International Press Institute (1958), New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library.
[119] Letter from Lester Markel to Mark Ethridge, April 4, 1958, Box #15, Folder: International Press Institute (1958), New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library. Markel wrote to Dean Rusk to disabuse Rusk of any notion he might have that Markel's "whole objective" in requesting funding for a follow-up to *The Flow of the News Study* was "to do away with Rose and, thereby, the IPI. I say to you again that my objective is not to kill, but to save what was an important idea in 1951 and 1952 (when you heartily endorsed it) and which is more important than ever today." Letter from Lester Markel to Dean Rusk, August 13, 1958, Box #15, Folder: International Press Institute (1958), New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library.
[120] Letter from Lester Markel to Jenkin Lloyd Jones.
[121] Ibid.

[122] Ibid.
[123] "Talk to IPI," Undated, Box #15, Folder: International Press Institute, 1963-1973, New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library.
[124] Remarks before the International Press Institute General Assembly, New Delhi, 3, November 1966, Box #15, Folder: International Press Institute, 1963-1973, New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library.
[125] Ibid., 2.
[126] Ibid., 3.
[127] Ibid., 4.
[128] As quoted in Gaddis, *George Kennan*, 284-285.
[129] Ingold, "To Journey along a Way of Life," 237.
[130] The phrase is from Thomas Hardy's *Far from the Madding Crowd*. Harding's subject is the way that the rhythms of agrarian life in the 19th century matched those of warfare in ways that allowed agricultural works to shift quickly from farm fields to battlefields. The complete quote is "Peace and war kiss each other at the hours of preparation—sickles, scythes, shears, and pruning-hooks ranking with swords, bayonets, and lances, in their common necessity for point and edge." Thomas Hardy, *Far from the Madding Crowd* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1986, first published in 1874).
[131] Markel was still campaigning in 1973 for a new *Flow of the News Study*. In a letter to his *New York Times* colleague James Greenfield, Markel lamented the turn the IPI had taken away from the path he had set it on: "I talked with [Associated Press Vice President] Sam Swinton and he reported that he… felt that [the recent IPI] meeting had been very successful…, I told him that if, as he seemed to believe, it was to have been a meeting in which the Japanese were to be informed about what was happening in Japan, then this was a sure indication that what was needed was a study of the flow of the news because here were editors on both sides who apparently did not get the picture of what was happening out of reading their own newspapers." Letter from Lester Markel to James L. Greenfield, January 18, 1973, Box #15, Folder: International Press Institute, 1963-1973, New York Times Company Records: Lester Markel Papers, The New York Public Library.