



JOURNALISM IN A SMALL PLACE: Making Caribbean News Relevant, Comprehensive, and Independent by Juliette Storr

ISBN 978-1-55238-850-1

THIS BOOK IS AN OPEN ACCESS E-BOOK. It is an electronic version of a book that can be purchased in physical form through any bookseller or on-line retailer, or from our distributors. Please support this open access publication by requesting that your university purchase a print copy of this book, or by purchasing a copy yourself. If you have any questions, please contact us at ucpress@ucalgary.ca

Cover Art: The artwork on the cover of this book is not open access and falls under traditional copyright provisions; it cannot be reproduced in any way without written permission of the artists and their agents. The cover can be displayed as a complete cover image for the purposes of publicizing this work, but the artwork cannot be extracted from the context of the cover of this specific work without breaching the artist's copyright.

COPYRIGHT NOTICE: This open-access work is published under a Creative Commons licence. This means that you are free to copy, distribute, display or perform the work as long as you clearly attribute the work to its authors and publisher, that you do not use this work for any commercial gain in any form, and that you in no way alter, transform, or build on the work outside of its use in normal academic scholarship without our express permission. If you want to reuse or distribute the work, you must inform its new audience of the licence terms of this work. For more information, see details of the Creative Commons licence at: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>

UNDER THE CREATIVE COMMONS LICENCE YOU MAY:

- read and store this document free of charge;
- distribute it for personal use free of charge;
- print sections of the work for personal use;
- read or perform parts of the work in a context where no financial transactions take place.

UNDER THE CREATIVE COMMONS LICENCE YOU MAY NOT:

- gain financially from the work in any way;
- sell the work or seek monies in relation to the distribution of the work;
- use the work in any commercial activity of any kind;
- profit a third party indirectly via use or distribution of the work;
- distribute in or through a commercial body (with the exception of academic usage within educational institutions such as schools and universities);
- reproduce, distribute, or store the cover image outside of its function as a cover of this work;
- alter or build on the work outside of normal academic scholarship.



Acknowledgement: We acknowledge the wording around open access used by Australian publisher, **re.press**, and thank them for giving us permission to adapt their wording to our policy <http://www.re-press.org>

Practicing Journalism in Small Places: National and Regional Implications

The literature on the effects of a country's size on its economic and political performance indicates that size matters in some areas but not in others.¹ For example, economic theorists argue that a larger population is more effective for economies of scale, while political philosophers believe that a smaller population is more conducive to democratic governance. In their book *The Size of Nations* Alberto Alesina and Enrico Spolaore identify five benefits of large population size: lower per-capita costs of public goods (monetary and financial institutions, judicial system, communication infrastructure, crime prevention, and public health, etc.) and more efficient tax systems; cheaper per-capita defense and military costs; greater productivity due to specialization; greater ability to provide regional insurance; and greater ability to redistribute income within the country.² Economic and social theorists at the World Bank and United Nations regard small states as economically disadvantaged or handicapped because of size. Plato, Aristotle, Rousseau and other philosophers posit that smaller countries have more effective democracies as citizens know each other, and therefore are more likely to support and protect each other. Governance in such countries is more likely to be effective because the impact of policies and programs are more visible in smaller populations and can thereby be more easily adjusted to affect greater benefits.³ These benefits are also often equated with strong national identity, strong interpersonal relations, and greater transparency.

The arguments for the advantages and disadvantages of small states continue to shadow the economic, political, and social development of these countries. There are successful stand-alone models, like Iceland and Singapore, but the majority of small nations are hampered by limitations of size. One of the many challenges of small nations is the overreliance on the model of large nations to solve their problems. Small nations should reduce this dependency and develop more endogenous models that fit their complex ecosystems and distinctive characteristics. While the Caribbean is a region of small states, and thus shares many of the characteristics of other small states, it also has distinct characteristics.

Vulnerabilities of Caribbean Small States⁴

Small markets like the English-speaking Caribbean, as Jamaica Kincaid elucidates in her essay *A Small Place*,⁵ have had a difficult time providing accurate and comprehensive accounts of their societies. While many read Kincaid's description of her place of birth, the island nation of Antigua, as an angry indictment against colonization, government corruption, post-colonial societies, and tourism, she successfully illuminates many of the sociological and psychological postcolonial issues and conditions of many of the Caribbean island nations. Kincaid's book is an important text on postcolonial theory. One of its major themes—expressed at the beginning of chapter one of this book—is the enduring trait of ambivalence common throughout the region. This is expressed in the internalization and resistance of cultural dominance, described throughout postcolonial theory as “the colonizing culture,” and economic dependency. Kincaid's description of ambivalence supports Bhabha's theory of a hybrid third space—a space that requires Caribbean people to “cut ‘n’ mix,” that is, to bring together all of the components of the various cultural influences found in these spaces to create a new model that incorporates multiple perspectives. Such a model, which helps Caribbean people to relocate their identity, is based on Bakhtin's idea of heteroglossia.⁶

The small states of the English-speaking Caribbean were forged by a history of extermination, piracy, colonization, slavery, indentureship, geography, and state control models of economic, social, and political development. This historical trajectory has also been influenced by various internal and external influences, many of which—globalization for

example—continue to complicate the region’s development. These inherited characteristics permeate all levels of Caribbean society; it is therefore not surprising to find them in the present-day practice of journalism and the coverage of everyday life.

“Antigua is a small place. Antigua is a very small place. In Antigua, not only is the event turned into everyday, but the everyday is turned into an event.”⁷ Here Kincaid explains how the people of Antigua live trapped between the domination of their colonial past and the domination of American consumer culture. She believes Antiguan, and Caribbean people as a whole, have a distorted perspective of their lives: “small things loom large, and major events are reduced to an ‘ordinary’ occurrence.”⁸ Kincaid repeatedly asserts the phrase “a small place” throughout her book to emphasize the physical, psychological, and sociological constraints that overwhelm the people who live in Antigua. It is a colonized society that cannot, nor wants to, escape its colonial history, and ultimately, according to Kincaid, lives with and struggles with its ambivalent existence. For Kincaid, Antigua, like other Caribbean countries, becomes the ultimate “small place” as it struggles to define itself against the larger places of the world. It is from this context that questions arise concerning the role of journalism in sustaining and advancing democracy in small postcolonial Caribbean societies. How can journalism play a central role in advancing liberty and equality in Caribbean democratic societies when it remains trapped by the constraints of small states? How can journalism become relevant, comprehensive, and independent when it remains confined by the ambivalent nature of the region? How can journalism function to advance democracy in these microstates when commercialism and new technologies are challenging the relevance and significance of journalism throughout the region?

The vulnerabilities of small states theses, as advanced by Lino Briguglio,⁹ Lino Briguglio and Eliawony Kisanga,¹⁰ and Manuel Puppis¹¹ reveal the constraints in the development of Caribbean media, particularly broadcasting. Whereas smallness, based on population size, as Manuel Puppis argues, is an absolutist approach to defining small states, as state size interacts with other variables, population size is still a useful measurement for characterizing media systems, but its effects are complex.¹² Smallness is not the only factor in the development of these countries and their media systems, but it remains one of the forces that drive the

dependent relationships that continue to characterize the development of Caribbean states. Other factors include geographic dispersion, vulnerability to natural disasters, fragility of ecosystems, isolation from external markets and the limits of internal ones, migration of highly skilled citizens, limited commodities and dependence on imports, and limited abilities to reap the benefits of economies of scale.¹³

These societies have been trapped by the circumstances of smallness. Kincaid maintains that Caribbean people have learned the ways of their masters very well and those elected to govern repeat the exploitations of their past slave masters by visiting those exploitations upon their own citizens. Why? The answer, according to Kincaid and other postcolonial theorists, lies in the fact that they have had no other model to follow, and they are hard-pressed to create their own. They assimilated the ways of their former colonizers and it is this “model” that continues to constrain the daily lives of Caribbean people, and leads to continued issues of corruption and abuse of power, clientelism, dependency, and cultural dominance—first by the old colonizers, and now by the new colonizers, the United States of America and China. The people’s seemingly passive acceptance of these issues angers Kincaid. Although there are those who disagree with her premise by pointing to exceptional aggressors such as Cuba, Jamaica, and Haiti, collectively, the region has exhibited more passive inclinations. Caribbean peoples’ passivity, though propagated in the malaise of colonization, is symbolic of their passive participation in effective governance in democratic societies. Although these states are lauded as highly participatory, as evidenced by free elections, open political debate, religious tolerance, constitutional government, and free press, citizens abdicate their responsibilities once the electoral die has been cast. Their homophobic and xenophobic inclinations also call into question their ability to advance the ideals of liberty and equality for all.

But Caribbean citizens are not alone in this critique of passivity. Contemporary democratic theorists, such as Benjamin Page, Robert Dahl, and Jürgen Habermas,¹⁴ provide comprehensive explanations for public apathy and lack of participation and question the effectiveness of modern democracy, particularly in the United States and Europe, in providing the major tenets it aims to deliver: liberty and equality for all citizens. Kincaid’s anger is also symptomatic of other scholars and theorists throughout human history who have questioned the power of ideologies to dominate

and control the masses (see Marx, Althusser, Hall, Foucault, Gramsci, and Freire et al.).¹⁵ The spread of democracy after the Second World War, as well as the recent movement for democratic rule known as the Arab Spring, continues the debate on the actual fulfillment of the ideals of democracy and the role of journalism in sustaining and advancing democratic ideals (see Barber, Hayek, and Schumpeter).¹⁶ One of the symbols of democratic societies is a free and independent press that holds elites accountable. However, according to Robert Dahl, Jürgen Habermas, John Keane, and Benjamin Barber,¹⁷ the model of democracy that emerged after the Second World War, and journalism's role in safeguarding it, have not lived up to the ideals of liberty and equality as outlined in constitutions throughout the democratic world. One of the reasons for the failures of journalism is the overreliance on commercialism or market-driven ideals and the rise of consumer culture. Media scholars Aukse Balčytienė and Halliki Harro-Loit, Ben Bagdikian, James Carey, Robert McChesney and Jon Nichols, Herbert Schiller, and Michael Schudson,¹⁸ have lamented the demise of effective journalism in the face of growing media conglomerates and commercialization. In his work *Journalism and Democracy Across Borders*, John Keane warned of the dangers of communication poverty and market censorship that result from market-driven forms of media.¹⁹ Keane makes the case for strengthening global journalism, the global public sphere, and global civil society to function as vital checks and balances on powerful institutions—whether for-profit, nonprofit, or governmental. He labels this new form of global monitoring power “cosmocrazy”: “a global civil society that monitors the globalization process through journalism and makes power publicly accountable.”²⁰ The issue of growing media conglomerates and the rise of commercialization is becoming a prevalent issue in the Caribbean. However, at the time of publication none of the governments of the region were addressing this issue. Mark Alleyne discussed this in 1990 in his review of media in Barbados, concluding that there was a need to create comprehensive public policy to address this issue.

The vulnerabilities of small states these are also prevalent in the work of Caribbean scholars such as Norman Girvan, an economist and staunch advocate of regional integration, and Mark Alleyne, a media scholar and former journalist. Alleyne isolated smallness as a continual influence in the structure and control of media, the liberal democratic standards of media, legal environment, media policy, professional standards and media

ownership.²¹ In the twenty-first century, Girvan believes, the small states of the Caribbean remain encumbered by size-related macroeconomic vulnerabilities, lack of economies of scale, natural disasters, and capacity constraints. One of the region's most defining features, and its greatest limitation, is the archipelago of islands, which are scattered over a wide area, encouraging isolationist tendencies. Girvan outlines other challenges, such as the distinctions between English-speaking and non-English-speaking nations, CARICOM (Caribbean Community) members and non-CARICOM members, larger and smaller island states as well as those on the mainland, and independent and dependent states.²² These distinctions are part of the region's uniqueness.

Other Caribbean scholars, like Keith Nurse, recognize the challenges facing small states but express more optimism about future opportunities in the creative industries. Since the beginning of the 2000s, one of the areas gaining more attention for economic diversification is the creative or cultural industries. However, as Nurse points out, these industries "are not seriously regarded as an economic sector, the key stakeholders are poorly organized, and its economic value remains largely undocumented."²³ Journalism and communications are recognized as key components of the cultural industries. However, these industries remain scattered, hit-and-miss attempts due to poor infrastructure and lack of policies, regulations, legislation, and economic support.

Practicing Journalism in Small States²⁴

How do small state theses apply to the field of journalism and communication? Henrik Örnebring and Epp Lauk, in their recent work "Does size matter? Journalistic values and working conditions in small countries,"²⁵ conclude population size is less of a factor in explaining value orientation differences among journalists in small, medium, and large countries, but found indicators that size does matter in other areas, like the basic working conditions of journalists as related to job market size and the skills valued by journalists. Örnebring and Lauk also found some support for the notion that social control and consensus are greater in small nations. They acknowledge the size of the market, as well as the number of practicing journalists, could affect levels of cultural and social organization in journalism.²⁶

This research is helpful in identifying some of the challenges and complexities of practicing journalism in small markets. However, Örnebring and Lauk focus on small European states with populations of one million or more; they do not provide a structured or detailed analysis of the practice of journalism in places like the Caribbean, where national populations can be as little as fifty thousand, and where a long history of colonization and external dependency prevail.

The challenges of practicing journalism and operating media organizations in small markets are made more complex by the globalization of these markets. Caribbean countries represented here range in population size from Jamaica, with 2.8 million—the largest population in the English-speaking Caribbean—to Grenada, with 104,890. Barbados has a population of 286,705, Belize 321,115, the Bahamas 377,374, and Trinidad and Tobago 1.4 million. In the six countries discussed in this book, the number of journalists working in print (newspapers and magazines), radio and television broadcasting and online (though not playing a significant role at the time of this research, this field is expected to grow) and freelance journalists working in the English-speaking Caribbean does not exceed a few hundred in even the largest countries, and in many cases is as low as fifty. These are estimates, as there is no official registration of journalists in these countries. All of the countries represented in this book have some form of press association but not all practitioners are members, and not all associations are active or effective. The Press Association of Jamaica, founded in 1943, is the oldest, largest, and most active press association in the region. Grenada's Media Workers Association, founded in 1981, is the second-most active association. The Barbados Association of Journalists was relaunched in 2009. The Belize Press Association started in 1995, but at the time of this research it was defunct. With the help of the author, the Bahamas reestablished a press association near the end of 2012 (it was replaced by the "Bahamas Press Club" in 2014), and Trinidad and Tobago's press association was in the early stages of revival in 2009; it had been defunct for several years.

The journalists in these countries, regardless of their numbers, uphold certain values. Although there are some variations in value orientations, Caribbean journalists' values are similar to their global counterparts. No matter the size of the population, journalists value truth, accuracy, balance, fairness, loyalty to citizens, the monitoring of the powerful, providing a

voice for the voiceless, independence, and providing a public forum for critical discussion of important issues.

Manuel Puppis argues the economic realities in small states have significant implications for their media systems. Currently, these economic realities present themselves as challenges in the form of global and local market competition, funding of state broadcasting systems, audience appeal, audience fragmentation and segmentation, and advances in telecommunication and audio-visual technology.²⁷ Perhaps the greatest challenge in the current media landscape is the power of external actors to force changes in policymaking, market structure, and local media culture. According to media scholars, four structural peculiarities of small states, as identified by Werner Meier and Josef Trappel,²⁸ Peter Humphreys,²⁹ and Gabriele Siegert³⁰ (and summarized by Manuel Puppis in his article “Media Regulations in Small States”³¹) have influenced small media systems. These four peculiarities include shortage of resources, small audience market and advertising markets, dependence, and vulnerability.

Örnebring and Lauk posit each of these peculiarities influences the way journalists do their everyday work in small countries as well as their general value orientation. They believe it is not unreasonable to assume a small occupational collective will have different sociocultural characteristics compared to a larger one. “A small job market generally means fewer employers, fewer senior positions, and fewer alternatives in terms of career routes and career progression. And, as in any small social group, social control is likely to be greater: there may be formal and informal pressures and incentives for homogeneity within the group, and an emphasis on collaboration and consensus.”³² The practitioners in each of the six countries in this book would likely concur with these findings. These countries have small job markets with a fixed number of employers and senior positions. Thus, career routes and progression are limited. This leads to high turnovers, with average career spans of three to five years. Journalists described these markets as “merry-go-rounds” where journalists, taking advantage of the increased number of media houses, move from one employer to another to obtain better salaries or positions. There is also frequent movement from journalism to public relations. In the 1980s and 1990s a large number of seasoned journalists left the profession for public relations positions, to work as communication specialists in other business sectors, or to pursue other career opportunities altogether. This left

these markets with a decrease in the number of senior journalists, which has led in turn to a number of challenges: the hiring of young, inexperienced journalists, increased criticism of the practice, defunct professional associations, and a decline in training and mentoring.

Small Caribbean states are constrained by shortage of resources, which creates limitations in production, especially audiovisual, based on unit costs. As Norman Girvan and Manuel Puppis explain,³³ “shortage of resources occurs not only with respect to capital, but also with respect to know-how and creativity.”³⁴ Shortage of resources “impedes the successful establishment of a domestic audiovisual industry”³⁵ in most of these small states. In Surlin and Soderlund’s *Mass Media and the Caribbean*, media scholars identified similar limitations. Sales are limited within these small markets by audience size and constricted advertising markets. Also, Puppis points out that “while production costs are essentially the same in small and big media markets, audience markets in small states are too small to realize economies of scale.”³⁶ Consequently, small states have very costly media production and the small size of the audience sets limits on advertising revenues.³⁷

These endogenous constraints, along with new technologies, have caused many in the region to rethink their markets and seek exogenous means to expand economic growth. However, Jean-Claude Burgelman and Caroline Pauwels believe this deficit cannot be offset by export, as “media productions from small countries are too culturally specific.”³⁸ This economic reality provides some explanation for the limited local production throughout the region. Since the 1980s, Caribbean media scholars such as Aggrey Brown, Hopeton Dunn, Lynette Lashley, and myself, have lamented the economic, political, and social factors that have given rise to the lack of a vibrant local production culture throughout the region.³⁹ These factors include cost of production, lack of production skills, limited markets, lack of government incentives or initiatives, availability of low cost of foreign productions, and the development of audience taste for foreign production quality. In some of these countries local production is as low as 5 percent, if it exists at all; in others it is 25–30 percent. There may be some changes in local production on the horizon, as Keith Nurse points out, with regional governments renewing their interest in the cultural industries.

Also, the strength of Burgelman and Pauwels's argument is being tested through the use of new communication technologies, which are lowering production costs and providing alternative distribution channels. So, although this limitation in audiovisual production is still prevalent throughout the region, new technologies are providing professionals and ordinary citizens with the opportunity to create and disseminate audiovisual material online. There is renewed interest in local production and this may result in an increase in audiovisual production. Much of this new activity has emerged because of advances in technology, and it will take some time to create a profitable cultural industry. There is more audiovisual content on YouTube and other internet portals, but so far this has not translated into a successful production industry. Despite Nurse's optimism and the Caribbean Institute of Media and Communication's (CARIMAC) new programs, the cost of production may have shifted as more people gain access to technologies, but the control of the distribution in the global market remains with external multinational corporations like Sony, Disney, and Universal. Further, it will take some time to develop a demand for culturally specific audiovisual production from the region. Unlike the growing markets for Mexican telenovelas, Japanese anime, or Asian dramas and soap operas now available at Viki.com and Hulu.com, the Caribbean, in spite of the increase in audiovisual output in countries like Jamaica, Barbados, and Trinidad and Tobago, has yet to develop sufficient audiovisual content for a global market. African countries, led by Nollywood, are developing audiovisual content; India has Bollywood. But the Caribbean hopes to develop a successful industry over time as a cultural foundation has been created through reggae, calypso, carnival, and Caribbean food. Over the next five to ten years, Hopeton Dunn anticipates the emergence of a "Jollywood."

Despite the optimism for the development of the cultural industries, one of the prevailing factors that continue to affect all levels of Caribbean society is dependency. Success in the cultural industries will depend on the region's ability to contain external dependency and create demand for indigenous products.

Caribbean Media and Dependency⁴⁰

The dependency thesis emerged in the region in the wake of the colonial period, and it is useful as a framework for understanding political, economic, and social development in the region after independence. The dependency debates were prominent for about two and a half decades, from the 1960s to the early 1980s. They were replaced in the mid-1980s with neoliberal ideas of development, particularly deregulation, liberalization, and privatization. Since the 2000s, theories of globalization have dominated the literature. One of those theories, hybridity, is used as the framework for this book. The dependency thesis is also experiencing a rebirth throughout the region in the wake of disappointments with neoliberalism. “A core component of the dependency thesis is the understanding of the issues of asymmetrical power relations, the core issues of which are economic, epistemic, sociological, psychological, technological, political, functional, and regional considerations.”⁴¹

Since media shares a reciprocal relationship with society, the core issues of the dependency school of thought are also reflected in media systems throughout the region. In the second half of the twentieth century, media systems scholars examined dependency from the perspective of the relationships among media, audiences, and the larger social system in which they operate.⁴² Thus, the media dependency thesis emerged simultaneously with the major discourse on economic dependency after the Second World War, culminating in a field of study that examined the global flow of news and information and the resultant dependency. The discourse of the global imbalance in the flow of news and information posits similar arguments as the dominant literature on dependency and was purposefully advanced after independence. The core issues of these debates were cultural imperialism, cultural domination, and media imperialism. Many of the new countries that came into existence during this period examined the role of the mass media in the development process and protested the unfair technological advantage of advanced countries like the United States and Britain, which led to their global dominance over the news and information flow. The most radical thoughts on this type of dependency were advanced in developing nations, not only in the Caribbean but also throughout the world, who viewed this global

imbalance as unjust. This opposition climaxed in the 1980s, with debates over the new world information and communication order.⁴³

Global imbalances in the flow of news and information still persist. Advances in new communication technologies have shifted some of the power relations but overall control of production and distribution remains with powerful nations like the United States, Western European countries, and Japan. Advancing economies like Brazil, China, India, and Russia, along with Mexico, South Korea and Nigeria, have added new dynamics to the global flow of information,⁴⁴ but the majority of information is still controlled by American, European, and Japanese conglomerates such as Time Warner, Disney, Viacom, News Corporation, CBS, Universal, Google, Apple, Microsoft, Facebook, Bertelsmann AG, Sony Corporation, Associated Press, Reuters, Vivendi, Lagardère Group, and newcomers like Mexican Televisa and Brazilian Organizações Globo. As a result, media systems in small countries are still controlled by dominant external centers.

Manuel Puppis⁴⁵ and Thomas Steinmaurer⁴⁶ believe that while small media systems “are strongly affected by developments in commercialization and globalization, they are less able to influence these developments than big countries.”⁴⁷ Small states are also held hostage to the political decisions of their bigger rivals—the United States in particular—which then “influences their media systems and media regulations without taking their peculiarities into account.”⁴⁸ Werner Meier and Josef Trapel contend media regulation in small states is therefore reactive, as they are forced to rely on ad hoc decisions instead of deliberate strategies.⁴⁹ In the Caribbean region, throughout the liberal 1980s and 1990s, domestic broadcasting, particularly television, became, as Manuel Puppis wrote, “victims of wide scale imported deregulation.”⁵⁰ To compete, Hopeton Dunn explains, “public service television throughout the region pandered to domestic commercial interests with increased foreign commercial content, leading to the devaluation of public broadcasting.”⁵¹

The overall impact of this trend, along with access to direct foreign content through satellite, cable, and internet technologies, led to low domestic and regional production and the demise of state broadcasting in Jamaica and Belize, and a redefinition of state broadcasting in Bahamas, Grenada, and Trinidad and Tobago. The latter two countries have shifted toward public service, but the entity is still owned and operated by the

state. Jamaica reinstated state radio and television broadcasting with the creation of its public service radio and television operations in 2009. State broadcasting continues in Barbados without any major changes. While the Bahamas has a public service orientation, it is also still controlled by the state.

Barbados presents a slightly different model of broadcasting. It retains control of television through the state. Cable is also distributed in Barbados through the state broadcaster, the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), which operates radio and television stations. Private radio broadcasting exists in Barbados but television remains controlled by the state. In all of the other countries television broadcasting comprises a mixture of state and private enterprises. The cable industry is solely private in Jamaica, Bahamas, Belize, Grenada, and Trinidad and Tobago. Barbados has a mix of state and private cable enterprises.

The mix of private and public broadcasting reflects an interesting shift in the internal control and flow of information, but much of the content is still foreign: external dependency and control continues. Yvette Stuart's 2001 study of the flow of international news in the Bahamas national daily newspapers found a continued dominance of foreign news, especially US news, in local coverage.⁵² Ewart Skinner drew similar conclusions a decade earlier.⁵³

This type of dependency makes small media systems vulnerable to exogenous threats. Puppis outlines three areas of vulnerability.⁵⁴ The first threat was identified by both Gabriele Siegert and Josef Trappel as the foreign takeover of media companies and a resulting decline of domestic influence.⁵⁵ The second concerns national media's tendency to conform to foreign media. And the third is the presence of foreign media products in the media markets of small states. The first threat has appeared in the Caribbean telecommunications market, 80 percent of which is under foreign ownership.⁵⁶ Conformation to foreign media has been a trend throughout the region since the introduction of radio broadcasting; with the introduction of television came an increase in conformity. In the 1980s and 1990s, Robert Martin⁵⁷ and Aggrey Brown⁵⁸ drew our attention to the prevalence of foreign media content in Caribbean media markets and the adoption of foreign production values and formats. Both Brown and Martin determined that high foreign content, particularly American cultural products, exert a direct influence on the culture of the region. But while they argued

for more control of foreign content, new technologies like the internet has only abetted the spread of foreign content. In 2013, Keith Nurse recommended to the heads of CARICOM governments that they impose content regulations.⁵⁹ Currently, as Jean-Claude Burgelman and Caroline Pauwels argue,⁶⁰ national and regional sovereignty is threatened by the abundance of foreign television channels via satellite, highly developed cable networks, and internet technology.

A good example of recent challenges to sovereignty emerged when Wikileaks released “sensitive” information about Caribbean countries in 2011. Caribbean political actors were not pleased with the release of this information; they regarded it as a threat to national security. While some Caribbean media critics believe Wikileaks represents a controversial use of new media, particularly when it comes to issues of ethics, others say it is useful because it provides valuable information to the public, information that would not have otherwise been released by Caribbean governments. At the symposium on “New Media, Journalism and Democracy” held in Jamaica in July 2011, Jamaican political critic and blogger Paul Ashley noted the release of information by Wikileaks about the decisions of Caribbean political actors had a positive impact on society as it exposed how governments, political actors, and power brokers in the region operate. “It is really a stark exposé as to the ‘loyalties’ and dependences of our political actors and how they relate to superpowers in the region. For me it is the most revealing bit of data that has come forth in my lifetime and I’m looking forward to more.”⁶¹

Also present at the 2011 symposium was Mark Beckford, online content coordinator of the *Jamaica Gleaner*, who agreed with Ashley’s assessment of Wikileaks as a useful source and acknowledged that it has caused a lot of debate in the newsroom about issues of morality and whether it is right, ethically, for Caribbean journalists and citizens to have access to this information. Despite issues of ethics, Beckford believed “while it has not dented many politicians’ aspirations, it has just revealed what we have known or suspected all along. It is very good for discussion. ... People are really passionate about their country and the Wikileaks cables help to shed a different light for people.”⁶²

The convergence of digital technologies is transforming the control of information flows. Yet while they are circumventing traditional hierarchies of institutional power, there is still some control being imposed

by corporations and governments. Companies like Google, Facebook, Yahoo, among others, still control the distribution of content. Governments throughout the world—China in particular—have created laws to police these new activities and they are also using technologies to control the flow of information. However, because of the nature of new technologies, citizens are finding ways around the technological blockades to communicate freely. Wikileaks’ use of information to expose corruption in the Caribbean in 2011 provided citizens in the region with an opportunity to understand how political actors were making decisions on their behalf, something to which Caribbean political actors reacted negatively. Some analysts predict governments will try to impose new laws to deal with the perceived threats to national sovereignty. For example, in 2013, Grenada created new electronic communication laws to police these activities. These laws, and the subsequent protest against, will be discussed later in this book.

CARIMAC, CANA, and CBU

In the English-speaking Caribbean, the history of media and journalism has developed in the context of foreign dependency. Media systems in the region were started by people who arrived under colonization. Media in the region evolved through many social, political, and economic changes during and after the colonial period. However, it was not until the middle of the last century, when the region began to see itself as one entity, that a regional emphasis was placed on the role of media and communication in development. Because of their common historical development, the peoples of the English-speaking Caribbean placed significant emphasis on regional integration. “This culminated in 1965 with the creation of the Caribbean Free Trade Association (CARIFTA) following the signing of the Dickerson Bay Agreement.”⁶³ (CARIFTA later evolved into CARICOM in 1973.) The creation of these two entities was an attempt to protect the Caribbean from international threats—economic, political, and cultural.

Shortly after gaining independence, Caribbean state actors, recognizing the need to protect regional cultures and identities, partnered with United Nations agencies and the German Friedrich Ebert Stiftung to create institutions that would promote the role of media and communication in the development of these Caribbean countries. To this end, several

UNESCO projects were created in the 1970s to protect the region from external dependency and cultural domination, and to foster a media and communication agenda that was focused on the needs of the region. These projects culminated in the creation of the Caribbean Broadcasting Union (CBU) in 1970, CARIMAC in 1974, and the Caribbean News Agency (CANA) in 1976. These institutions were established to strengthen regional cooperation and integration.⁶⁴

The CBU started with a mix of private and state broadcasters to advance the regional integration agenda through the exchange of radio and television programs throughout the region. According to Aggrey Brown, the initial efforts of the CBU focused on “collective concerns such as the cooperative purchasing of internationally distributed material, the sharing of technical expertise in areas such as engineering and program production, and the ad hoc live broadcasting of regional events—sports such as the Olympic Games and cricket.”⁶⁵ Brown believes the CBU met the challenge of regional broadcasting by combining the collective resources of its members. Since its inception, the CBU coordinated the transmission of daily news programs between its member systems and live coverage of regional events.

Despite its initial success, the structure of the CBU created many challenges. One of its handicaps was the fact that the majority of its members were government-owned stations. This relationship, according to Brown, resulted in the CBU’s inability “to implement collective decisions expeditiously.”⁶⁶ Further, the membership structure resulted in financial woes, as smaller states were sometimes unable to meet their financial obligations. As a result, the CBU relied on external funding sources for assistance. One of its most successful programs, Caribvision, was launched in 1989 with assistance from the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. “The CBU also produced a weekly television news magazine program, Caribscope, and a number of weekly entertainment and educational programs designed to promote and develop regional cultural expression.”⁶⁷ Based on my research on the development of media and journalism in the region, I believe the CBU has had very little influence on Caribbean regional identity. These countries remain isolated and parochial in their approach to development.

Four years after the creation of the CBU, CARIMAC was established. It began with the objective of providing homegrown training to people who had been practicing as journalists without formal instruction. Prior

to 1974, most of the journalists in the Caribbean were trained on the job; those journalists who had some formal training had had to go abroad, primarily to England. Patrick Prendergast, one of the current professors at CARIMAC, points out that in 1974 the idea was to work with the University of the West Indies in Jamaica to provide journalists with training from a Caribbean perspective.⁶⁸ The institute, which began with a diploma program, now offers undergraduate and graduate programs in media and communication studies, including a doctoral degree.

There were two major challenges that hindered CARIMAC's development and the fulfilment of its mission. First, like the CBU, the governments of the region fund the University of the West Indies, and by extension CARIMAC. This financial arrangement constrains autonomous decision-making and as a result journalism and communication programs, as well as all other programs, are heavily dependent on state resources. Second, CARIMAC was hindered by the continued lack of understanding about the role of journalism and communication in the development of the region. Prendergast believes the institute and the region needed to understand the role of the journalist, "and the role of communication in general, the journalist more specifically and in the new dispensation, the role of communicators in the development of the region. If we continue to see that role as primarily one of information sharing and information dissemination, then I think we are putting ourselves at a disadvantage."⁶⁹

Prendergast admits that in some areas, for example technological research, the region did not have the capacity for the type of research that it needs. However, he believes the region could advance a more comprehensive research agenda, though it needs financial resources to do so. Caribbean governments have not yet fully embraced the role of academic research in national development—economic, political, and social—and have therefore not invested in research and development institutions nor in building human capacity to do so. They still rely on the old model of colonization—that is, bringing in the foreign consultant. In an interview in June 2015, the new director of CARIMAC, Hopeton Dunn, explained how the new goals of the institution would address these deficiencies. CARIMAC's new goals include the addition of several new undergraduate and graduate programs—the Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA), Master of Fine Arts (MFA) and Master of Arts (MA) in integrated marketing communications (or IMC) to prepare students to work in the cultural industries,

create a new research agenda targeting governments, institutions, and organizations in the region to assist with regional development, fashion new training programs for practicing professionals, and build collaborative partnerships with other media institutions in the region.⁷⁰

However, it will take more than a new set of goals for CARIMAC to change the attitudes of Caribbean people and decision-makers. The Caribbean, despite its close proximity to the United States, with its rich history in journalism and communication, still does not appreciate communication as a field or professional discipline, and this shows in the level of research that has been done in the region. Some Caribbean scholars believe this is due to the geopolitics of the region and its continued external dependency. Prendergast explained that until Caribbean people learn to think more independently, they will continue to be beholden to external actors:

We have not fully gone past the idea that we are [independent], we remain too dependent on those who we have given pride of place to determine our destiny. We're just too dependent on that process still. ... We are not doing enough ... [research] to support the way we see things, the way we think the region can go. We're just not. And if we have become so dependent on this external way of doing things, and accepting that, in a sense we have to basically produce the way they would want to see us produce as part of that ... demonstration that we know what we are doing. ... It's always a challenge.⁷¹

Prendergast argues that, because of the region's orientation towards journalism and communication as information dissemination, there was very little value placed on media and communication from the perspective of development. He described the region as having a "big country" way of looking at things while not responding to what was on the ground. "We tend to look down on some very small but important things and we don't know that it's important until somebody [external] gives it some kind of validation."⁷² As long as the Caribbean has this external orientation, it will not place emphasis on important areas like research and development and thus all sectors of society will continue to react to external actors' determinations of what is and is not important. Decision-making in media and communication will therefore continue to be driven by an external agenda.

With the help of UNESCO, a regional media institution, the Caribbean News Agency (CANA), was created in 1976 in an attempt to balance the flow of news and information in the region and between the region and the world. CANA failed in this mission. A former general manager of CANA described it as “a real interesting experiment of private enterprise and government enterprise.”⁷³ The main objective of CANA was to circulate news and information in the Caribbean that would bring Caribbean people closer together. The former general manager conceded that this was a very idealistic approach, especially for those who worked at CANA during the 1980s and 1990s and believed in the idea of uniting Caribbean people through the exchange of news and information. This idealism is reflected in Marlene Cuthbert’s 1981 description of CANA as a unique third world model because it was “jointly owned by [the] private and public mass media of its region, and is independent of both government and foreign news agencies.”⁷⁴ However, because of its organizational structure, there were built-in tensions from the start between journalists and the Caribbean governments that financially supported CANA. Journalists were interested in presenting the news that was relevant, accurate, balanced, and engaging. Caribbean governments were more interested in publicity that framed their agendas in a positive way—as one of public relations. The former general manager of CANA describes the conflict in the following terms:

We were working on the premise that if we know more about one another we will be able to come together in a sensible and sensitive way. I am not sure that that really panned out as we thought because I found that our countries were so singular, so narrow in their outlook that really and truly what the governments were interested in was in getting their own public relations out and very often what the people [who worked there] were interested in, as distinct from the government, would be something entirely different and nobody wanted to build a community based on just government handouts.⁷⁵

CANA’s failure was also related to economies of scale. The news agency began with sixteen subscribers, a mixture of government and private entities. The market did not grow rapidly and therefore the news agency had to

rely on the financial support of its subscribers, who were asked to pay more as the cost of operating the agency increased. Operating the news agency for a Caribbean domestic audience became too expensive. The agency did make some attempts to gain subscribers from the Caribbean diaspora, but most of the targeted subscribers were in the United States, and they did not see their contributions to CANA in the same way the initial subscribers did. Several attempts were made to rescue the news agency in the 1990s, but CANA closed its doors in 2000. The former general manager of CANA believes it “would still have been in existence today if we had looked forward and change ... from just being a distributor of news ... to go into a whole host of other things—news and advertising and the whole media gamut.”⁷⁶ That is, if it had been allowed to diversify.

CANA not only failed because its rates were too high for subscribers to continue their support; there was also competition from the Associated Press and Reuters, who were offering their services at a cheaper price. These factors led the news agency to shift its focus to the electronic media in an attempt to survive. CANA merged with the CBU in 2000 to form the Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC).

One of the valuable lessons that came out of the CANA experiment was that Caribbean journalists and governments learned it takes more than news and information to integrate people. Today, there is still a Caribbean regional media institution, the CMC, but the goals and objectives of this organization are different. Some of the Caribbean journalists that I interviewed saw the failure of CANA as a setback for regional integration because the information from other countries in the Caribbean was no longer readily available, as it was under CANA. When CANA and the CBU joined to form the CMC in 2000, some practitioners and media scholars were against the merger. They felt that the two entities should have been allowed to continue separately. Others felt that the merger would bring about a clearer mission and consolidate the financial costs of operating these two institutions. However, neither position has brought about regional integration. If the Caribbean integration project is to succeed it will have to rethink the role of its regional media and communication institutions. The success of the integration project requires a daily flow of news and information about the region, and collaborative journalism and communication projects—scholarship and praxis.

In conjunction with the challenges of sustaining and advancing such institutions, the region is also affected by its strategic location, close to the world's largest economy and most dominant media empires, which has limited its ability to resist the influence of external agents, especially foreign media. The influence of CNN, BBC, FOX, Associated Press, Reuters, Google, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, and WhatsApp is highly visible in contemporary Caribbean societies. While there have been changes in the channels of influence, with technological shifts from wireless services to online services through internet and other telecommunications media, the overall level of dependence remains high. The era of convergence has shifted the distribution pipeline but the content owners remain the same. The technological and commercial changes of the last three decades impose continuous threats to the region's plans for regionalization and integration. New digital technologies are creating more fragmented audiences, while commercialization continues to trump public service and public interest.

The World Summit on the Information Society, the United Nations, UNESCO, and other world organizations, along with CARICOM, believe the only way to balance the dependence of the region is to forge new relations among these countries to enhance their bargaining positions on the world market. To achieve this goal the region has to rethink not only how it utilizes communication and journalism to advance regional integration but also give up on the neoliberal model of integration. Regional institutions like the CMC and CARIMAC will have to be restructured to advance a sociocultural integration agenda. New ideas for how to use new communication technologies in the integration process must emerge.

CARICOM has had some success in bringing the region closer together, but it still suffers from parochialism and isolationism. Norman Girvan describes CARICOM's four pillars of integration as economic integration, foreign policy coordination, functional cooperation, and security.⁷⁷ In 1989, CARICOM revised its goals for Caribbean integration. The primary focus consisted of the creation of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), a neoliberal Open Regionalism integration scheme. But the CSME is still far from completion. According to Girvan, the CARICOM Single Market was formally inaugurated in 2006, "but some elements are still not yet in place; and there has been but little progress towards implementing the CARICOM Single Economy."⁷⁸ Implementing the CSME

requires a great deal of work; particularly challenging is the quest to bring together the policies, laws, institutions, and regulations that all member countries can agree on. Not all of the countries have signed on to the new policies of CSME, which are especially troubling for countries with the strongest economies. Most of these countries' economies are characterized by monoculture (agriculture, tourism, and petroleum) and the new policies for the free movement of people throughout the region and a common currency are worrisome for countries with strong economies.

The CSME is a daunting task because it strains the human and institutional capacities of most of these small member states. Also, some countries believe there are limited economic benefits to be derived from the new agreements. As long as intraregional trade is dominated by energy-rich Trinidad and Tobago, with its strong manufacturing base,⁷⁹ some Caribbean economists believe there is little hope for the success of CARICOM's economic integration. Further, Girvan explains, "the majority of member countries have very little to export to one another, and their exports consist mainly of primary products, tourism, and international financial services oriented toward international markets."⁸⁰ As Havelock Brewster and Clive Thomas,⁸¹ and Moreira Mesquito, Mauricio and Eduardo Mendoza⁸² have shown in their work, market integration by itself is likely to bring few benefits in regional groupings that consist of small and undiversified economies with competitive, rather than complementary, structures of production and trade. According to Girvan, "the neoliberal model of integration is therefore of limited relevance as a strategy of development for CARICOM."⁸³

Since the start of the twenty-first century, Caribbean integration policies have become more complicated with new agreements emerging between various countries in the region, as well as with the European Union (EU) and alternative partnerships. "In 2008, CARICOM states, along with the Dominican Republic, signed a new Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the EU."⁸⁴ The EPA brings new restrictions to Caribbean governments' ability to control their own economic policy and protect local market initiatives or pursue alternate south-south partnerships. Alternative economic partnerships have also emerged within the region. These new agreements include Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de Nuestra América (ALBA), an economic partnership created by Venezuela and Cuba to counter and balance the impact of restrictive agreements like the

FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas) with the United States and the EPA agreement with EU, and growing partnerships with the People's Republic of China.

Caribbean countries struggle to implement these new strategies for integration and economic development, what Girvan calls “asymmetrical neoliberal integration,”⁸⁵ mainly because very few citizens in the region understand these agreements. Caribbean journalists have lagged behind in providing an accurate and comprehensive account of these policies and their effect on the region. This benightedness was particularly apparent during the 2008 negotiations between CARICOM and the EU over its EPA agreement and the collapse of 2003 negotiations for the extension of the American FTAA policies. Caribbean journalists did not present a detailed, comprehensive, and accurate account of the social, economic, and political implications—both negative and positive—of these agreements for Caribbean societies. The limited coverage, mostly talk show commentaries and editorials, raised important questions about the relevance of Caribbean journalism in disseminating information concerning regional integration. One of the responsibilities of journalists is to help their communities make sense of important policies like CSME, EPA, FTAA, and ALBA. Caribbean journalists have not done this, nor are they discussing the region's new relations with China.

Although some of the blame for this lack of public understanding came from a lack of information on EPA from official sources, journalists should have provided information on the agreement and its impact on Caribbean societies. Journalists play a pivotal role in disseminating critical information to the public about policies that could affect the daily lives of people. When they fail to do this effectively, the public is ignorant of the changes that are being made on its behalf by policymakers who have a tradition of making decisions in secret or closed sessions without apprising the public of their decisions. This approach diminishes the citizen's role in democracy. The media could help to raise awareness of policymakers' decisions on new policies before they are implemented.

One of the major critiques against journalism throughout the region is its failure to make sense of complex political, economic, and social issues. Wendall Jones, owner of Jones Communication Network in the Bahamas, believes journalists have an obligation to educate the people so that they understand what these issues mean to them personally. “For instance, the

whole question about EPA ... we need to get people to understand where the Bahamas is in matters of trade," Jones explained. "It is the role of the media ... in my opinion, to get them [Bahamians] to understand that we have to be competitive in the global market and we have to move with the times because we have in our country many people who are phobic and many people that believe that we don't need outsiders to help us to develop our country."⁸⁶ He feels citizens are harmed when the media and journalism fail to fulfill this obligation.

With regard to salient national and regional issues, veteran journalist Nicki Kelly explains the importance of journalism in the region in the following terms:

I think today's journalists need to take another look at the profession, to understand what it is to be a journalist. I don't think many of them understand what it is. I mean, doctors have a Hippocratic Oath and they pretty well know that their job is to save lives. What is a journalist's job? I don't think many of them fully understand what it is they are supposed to do. To me, journalism is one of the most responsible and also most significant jobs or professions that anyone can undertake because you are the recorder of history, and that, believe me, is a very, very responsible job. When you write, you don't just look at the immediate thing: twenty-five years from now somebody is going to read this. Am I presenting the truth? Are they going to be able to count on what I say? Have I told it the way it should be told, the way it is? They need a broader outlook, and a greater appreciation of their profession. I don't think they fully appreciate the job. I think until they have that appreciation, I don't think anything is going to improve.⁸⁷

Related to issues of integration is the impact of new technologies on journalism. The new communication revolution is granting unprecedented access to information and providing citizens of the region with more opportunities than ever to circumvent national and regional control and form new alliances in regional and global markets. Unfortunately, most of these opportunities also aid the spread of commercialization and consumption, which some scholars blame for the decline in civic-mindedness.

Contemporary Threats to Journalism

Beate Josephi identifies modernization, secularization, and commercialization as “the three endogenous forces of change.” Later she added technological innovation, which has produced its own communication culture that cuts across national boundaries.⁸⁸ Of these, Josephi believes commercialization in particular is shifting media systems away from the world of politics to the world of commerce. Like Daniel Hallin and Paolo Mancini,⁸⁹ Josephi concludes this changes the social function of journalism, as the journalist’s main objective is no longer to disseminate ideas and create social consensus around them, but to produce entertainment and information that can be sold to individual consumers.⁹⁰ As a result, scholars like Josephi, Hallin and Mancini believe journalism has to guard against the possible “subordination of the media to the political interests of business,”⁹¹ which could turn out to be the most serious threat to the professional autonomy of journalists worldwide since it “could diminish [the] political balance in the representation of social interests.”⁹²

This assumption threatens Jürgen Habermas’s and Benedict Anderson’s position on journalism: a communal force to provide a public sphere in which an issue can be debated.⁹³ Stig Hjarvard believes continued political, economic, and technological pressures will lead to “the convergence, homogenization, and denationalizing of news.”⁹⁴ These pressures jeopardize journalism’s role in regional integration. The market-centered approach, which focuses on commercialization and consumption, puts at risk national and regional concerns, and threatens to erode the normative values of journalism. These issues are discussed further in chapter three.

Perhaps the most significant threat to the survival of journalism today comes from the technological sphere, the rise of citizen journalism and the use of new technologies such as blogs, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Although, at the time of this research, citizen journalism as expressed through new media did not yet have the same impact in the Caribbean as it has had in the United States and Europe, it is bloggers, Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, and WhatsApp users who are undermining the professional model in the United States and Europe. A similar trend is now emerging in the Caribbean. While most of the journalists interviewed for this book did not feel threatened by citizen journalism, blogging, tweeting, and other internet activities were becoming competitive

sources of news. For a region that has already had a difficult time telling its own stories, these new versions could be both beneficial and harmful to journalism's progress.

One recently created news organizations that represent both sides of this debate is the controversial On the Ground News Report (OGNR). Founded in Jamaica in 2010, OGNR immediately caused a sensation. It uses ordinary citizens as reporters and claims to be first with many news reports. Using new technology, Twitter and Facebook, citizens gather and disseminate information on OGNR's Facebook page, website, and Twitter feed. While some citizens, particularly journalists, criticized OGNR for inaccuracies, unethical practices, and defamation, others have welcomed this new media player, readily turning to it as an information source. There are several similar online news sources throughout the region, and their impact on traditional media and society will be discussed in the second part of this book.

Organizations like OGNR, with its offer of a higher rate of participation in public debate, raises questions about journalism's relevance. The majority of the journalists in this research were more inclined to agree with Peter Dahlgren, Ari Heinonen, and Klaus Bruhn Jensen, who raise the question, If journalism is to foster the public sphere, how then can communication facilitated and shared by the internet, and also text messaging (SMS), not be seen as contributing to that exchange?⁹⁵ Heinonen suggests that the "loci of journalism as a practice" are moving and that these "new loci should be embraced."⁹⁶ But not all journalists embrace this perspective. Dane Claussen, outgoing editor of the *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator* in the United States, does not place citizen journalism on the same level as traditional journalism; he warns against its use to supplant professional practices:

Overall, you will excuse me if I think that the term citizen journalism, while perhaps a noble ideal and something that a few will strive for and achieve, is almost entirely an oxymoron. (This goes for the other silly concepts—stand-alone journalism, participatory journalism, open-source journalism, crowd-sourced journalism, and representative journalism—that assume that more than 1 or 2 percent of the population has always been dying to be journalists, if only professional journalists would

allow them or assist them.) The reality is: citizen fact-gathering, yes, citizen fact-transmitting, yes, citizen-opinion-about-news-and-trends, yes. In the old days, average people did these things through writing letters to each other, keeping dairies, having conversations, taking notes, writing letters to the editor, and many other activities, none of which were called “journalism.” But we have “citizen journalism” now, all of a sudden? Yes, but it is extremely rare and likely to remain so if one defines journalism the way it should be defined, and is defined, by good professional journalists such as those who met with Kovach and Rosenstiel and whose discussion formed the basis of their fine book.⁹⁷

Claussen’s perspective reframes the importance and relevance of professional journalism. His warning comes at a time when there are debates on the accuracy and credibility of the information disseminated by citizens via digital technologies. Old ethical issues have reemerged in the new free-for-all distribution of content. To date, these cautions and ethical concerns have not been addressed within the citizen-centered approach to journalism. Journalism educators, lawmakers, and civil society will have to address these issues and find solutions to the problems that have emerged under citizen journalism if democratic principles are to be upheld.

While Claussen sounds the alarm bells on citizen journalism’s effect on the future of professional practice, Denis Weaver predicts economic pressures will bring about the demise of journalism. In his assessment of the future of US journalism in the twenty-first century, Weaver is pessimistic.⁹⁸ In the current climate of cuts and layoffs, buyouts and closures, he believes journalism in the US will have a very hard time surviving in the future. As Weaver concludes, this will lead to less effective monitoring of society and less dissemination of important information. Nowhere was this more evident than in the 2014 downgrading of US and UK press freedom by the international monitoring organization Reporters Without Borders. According to the 2014 report, there was “a profound erosion of press freedom in the United States in 2013.”⁹⁹ (The United States dropped thirteen spots from its 2012 ranking.) The report cited several cases of increased crackdown on whistleblowers, from the trial and conviction of Bradley (now Chelsea) Manning, to Edward Snowden’s leak of National

Security Agency documents, to the Justice Department's seizure of Associated Press phone records in an attempt to find the source of a CIA leak. The United Kingdom was downgraded by three points for its harassment of the *Guardian* newspaper. Reporters Without Borders warned American and British journalists to perform their duties as monitors of the powerful in the public interest and recommended a federal "shield law" to protect journalists in the United States.

David Cuillier, president of the Society of Professional Journalists in the United States agrees with the findings of the 2014 report and believes journalism in that country is becoming more imperiled. "The main problem," says Cuillier, is that "the public no longer trusts journalists and believes it is acceptable for government to intimidate reporters, hide information, and threaten journalists with jail time for doing their jobs."¹⁰⁰ This trend should sound warning bells in the Caribbean, a region with a long history of state control of information and political influence.

The impact of economic stresses and government control of information are major concerns for Caribbean journalists, as well as for all democracies where journalism plays a watchdog role. If these stressors are unchecked, journalists will not be able to perform the role of analyzing complex problems, investigating government claims, and avoiding stories where facts cannot be verified. This is particularly important in the current acrimonious relationship between journalists and politicians in the Caribbean. This may be an opportune time for journalists throughout the region to advocate for their own shield laws. So far, citizen journalists are not held to the same standards as professional journalists. There is an increase in the dissemination of distorted, untruthful information; a lot of this information is coming from people's increased access to new information technologies. Some Caribbean governments have created new laws to protect citizens from harmful information. But these activities do not bode well for advancing the democratic process.

On a more optimistic note, Weaver believes "nonprofessional" journalism may provide a more optimistic picture of the future, but it relies on professional journalism as its source and professional journalism is under attack from the breakdown of the old paradigm. This book is concerned with how Caribbean journalists respond to these threats and advance democracy.