

學術對談

記者調查研究與新聞業的發展趨勢

對談人：大衛·韋佛、蘇鑰機



大衛·韋佛教授
(Prof. David H. Weaver)

「我認為新科技對於記者來說亦敵亦友，但從總體上來說，我認為天秤是傾向於『敵』的一方。記者在日常工作中非常依賴互聯網和社交媒體，大多數記者都用這些新技術來查閱突發新聞，監測其他新聞機構的活動。但是用新技術來核實信息和採訪消息來源的記者就少得多，極少有人說社交媒體減少了他們的工作量、提升了他們的生產力、讓他們採訪更多的新聞或提高了他們的可信度。互聯網造成了美國大多數新聞機構的廣告收入大幅下降，進一步導致新聞從業者驟減，做深度及調查性報導的時間也被大幅壓縮。所以從總體上看，我認為新科技使美國和其他國家的高質量新聞減少了。」

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Dialogue

Journalist Survey Studies and the Development Trend of Journalism

Discussants: David H. WEAVER, Clement, Y. K. SO

Abstract

David Weaver has been on the forefront and has contributed greatly to the study of American journalists for the past few decades, and he is also pivotal in coordinating the efforts to study journalists around the world. In this interview, Weaver reveals how and why he first started the survey on American journalists, the difficulties and changes in the process, as well as his observations on the changing landscape of American journalism since the 1980s. In comparing the journalistic scenes in different countries, he finds that the differences in journalistic practice are more prominent than the similarities. He further comments on the influence of new communication technology and market competition, the impact on media ethical standards, the threats to professional journalists, and the future of journalism. Weaver also suggests a few promising lines of study for journalism researchers.

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大衛·韋佛教授簡介

大衛·韋佛 (David H. Weaver) 是著名的新聞學教授，他對美國記者進行的縱向研究尤為學術界稱道，世界各國很多同類研究均以他的研究作為藍本，他在近年兩度將多國的記者研究編輯成書，令大家更了解不同國家的新聞工作者之間的異同。韋佛教授在1960年代於美國印第安納大學獲得學士及碩士學位，在1974年於北卡羅來納大學獲博士學位，旋即回到印第安納大學任教新聞學，直至2011年榮休。

韋佛教授對媒介的議題設定研究很有貢獻，並就傳媒偏向、民意、選民投票、報章閱讀、外國新聞報導、新聞教育等方面的研究均着力甚深。他和同事共出版了13本著作及眾多論文，包括曾獲獎的美國記者研究系列：*The American Journalist: A Portrait of U.S. News People and Their Work* (1986)、*The American Journalist in the 1990s* (1996)、*The American Journalist in the 21st Century* (2007)，以及近年出版的*The Global Journalist: News People around the World* (1998)及*The Global Journalist in the 21st Century* (2012)。

自1988年起至其榮休，韋佛教授是印第安納大學的Roy W. Howard講座教授，並於2010年被授予傑出教授榮銜。他在2009年獲美國的新聞及大眾傳播教育協會(AEJMC)頒發終身研究成就獎。他曾於1987-88年度擔任新聞及大眾傳播教育協會的會長，及於1986-87年度擔任中西部民意研究協會的會長。

DW: David H. Weaver

CS: 蘇鑰機

CS: 甚麼原因促使您開始在美國啟動全國性的新聞人員問卷調查？

DW: 在1970年代末，甘奈特基金會(Gannett Foundation)的傑里·薩斯(Jerry Sass)邀請理查德·格雷(Richard Gray)、克里弗蘭德·維爾霍伊特(G. Cleveland Wilhoit)和我去回顧新聞與大眾傳播的研究。在過程中，我們發現關於媒介信息及其使用和影響的研究，比關於信息生產者的研究更多，所以我們發起了一項全國性的美

國新聞人員研究，以此來修正這種不平衡現象(Weaver & Gray, 1979, 1980)。我們仿效了伊利諾伊大學芝加哥分校的約翰·約翰斯通(John Johnstone)和他的同事所做的首個全國性的關於美國新聞人員的綜合性研究(Johnstone, Slawski, & Bowman, 1976)，因為這是我們在當時能找到的最全面也最有代表性的關於美國新聞人員的研究。

CS: 在過程中遇到了哪些主要的困難？您是如何克服的？

DW: 最大的困難就是沒有美國新聞人員的完整名單(即一個全面的抽樣框架)，所以我們不得不使用多步程序來抽取美國記者的代表性樣本。工作涉及到以下幾個步驟：首先對新聞機構進行隨機抽樣，收集在這些機構工作的所有全職記者的名單及數量，再預估我們在每一類新聞機構(日報及週報、電台及電視台、新聞雜誌、通訊社，以及近年來出現的新聞網站)中所需要的記者數量，從每類新聞機構中隨機抽取記者，之後對選中的一千多名新聞人員進行了45分鐘的電話訪問。有些新聞機構非常配合地提供了記者名單，也有些機構認為這些名單屬於私密信息。不僅拿到這些名單相當困難，讓工作繁忙的記者們願意接受冗長的電話採訪也十分具挑戰性，更困難的是讓每次問卷調查達到較佳的完成率。

CS: 不同時期做的問卷，在內容和方法上是否有重大的變化？

DW: 從1980年代早期到2013年的多次問卷調查中，我們盡可能採取一致的抽樣方法、訪問方式和問卷問題，使我們可以對不同時間進行的調查結果進行比較。但我們不得不在2002年和2013年的問卷中，詢問互聯網和社交媒體的角色及影響。另外，由於經費減少，而且記者更希望能通過電子郵件與他們聯絡以及在網上完成問卷，所以我們在2013年改變了單一的電話訪問方式，使用了混合的訪問方式(電子郵件、網站以及電話)。

CS: 在下一輪的美國記者問卷調查中，您想提出哪些新問題？

DW: 正如我剛才所說的，我們在最近的兩次研究中加入了互聯網和社交媒體的使用及影響，如果有新的研究，我們也打算再次加入這些問題。在2013年的研究中，我們還詢問了記者認為新聞業面臨

哪些最重要的問題，以及他們所在的新聞機構的規模在過去一年內是縮減還是擴大，或是保持不變。

CS: 在過去幾十年中，美國新聞界發生了哪些重大變化？

DW: 顯然美國記者的平均年齡更大了。在從業者中，女性比男性稍多一些，少數種族或少數民族的人減少了，大學畢業生增加了，自稱「無黨派人士」的人更多了。他們對工作環境的滿意度也降低了，他們不太認為自己能夠「完全自由地選擇故事」，也不那麼重視「覆蓋到盡可能廣泛的受眾」及「把信息迅速地傳達給公眾」等媒介角色。他們更為注重調查政府聲明及分析複雜問題。在我們2013年的研究中，更少有記者認為「在報導重要事件時採取一些具爭議性的報導手段」是合理做法，這些手段包括：未經許可使用機密文件、騷擾消息來源、臥底受聘進行採訪、冒充他人，以及購買信息。

CS: 現今的記者面臨哪些重大挑戰？

DW: 這些重大的挑戰包括：和競爭媒體的網站及社交媒體保持同步，以及在人手越來越少的新聞編輯室持續更新自己的新聞網站和社交媒體。互聯網不僅使24小時都成了「截稿時間」，也減少了很多新聞機構原本的廣告收入。從業的記者因而也減少了，他們現在要花更短的時間做出更多的深度或調查/分析報導，而這些報導是需要數週乃至數個月才能完成的。美國記者的就業市場變得非常不景氣，這令一些記者在處理具有爭議性的話題或做獨立的企劃報導時更加謹慎了。

CS: 《21世紀的全球記者》一書描述和對比了多個國家的新聞業情況，在編輯此書的過程中，您認為最有趣的發現是甚麼？

DW: 從30多個國家的對比中，很難說哪些是最有趣的發現，但是總體來說，不同國家記者之間的差異給我留下了深刻印象，即使是政治、文化、經濟方面很相似的國家，記者之間仍有差異。這些差異並不是按照那些常見的給國家歸類（西方和東方、發達國家和發展中國家、第一世界和第三世界等）的政治或文化維度那樣清楚地分類，但是在一些媒體較不自由的國家有這樣的趨勢：記者

認為新聞的重要作用是「迅速報導」及「讓公眾接觸到這些報導」。他們對媒體「作為政府監督者」的重要性則較缺乏共識，這種現象即使在一些較民主的國家也是如此。

對於在報導重要事件時是否可以採取一些在倫理上有爭議的手段，不同國家記者之間的看法也有巨大分歧。他們在「購買信息」、「冒充他人」、「糾纏或騷擾消息來源」，以及「未經許可使用私人文件」這幾方面存在很大差異，但總體上較能接受「未經許可使用商業及政府文件」和「隱瞞身份臥底獲取內幕消息」。這些比較研究的總體結論是：一種全球新聞界的文化尚未興起，不同國家的記者之間仍然異大於同。

CS: 美國的方式是否仍在主導其他國家的新聞範式？這些年來有哪些變化？

DW: 在對比多個國家記者的研究中，沒有出現有力的證據表明某種單一新聞範式的存在。因此，我認為美國的新聞範式——尤其是對於客觀性、獨立性及作為政府監督角色的強調——並沒有在全世界佔支配地位。我認為很多國家都已經發展出自己的新聞範式，但由於互聯網、社交媒體以及更頻繁的國際往來，各國記者之間的溝通更多也更迅速，未來也許會出現更多的相似之處。

CS: 新的傳播科技對記者來說是敵還是友？他們應該如何適應新的技術環境？

DW: 我認為新科技對於記者來說亦敵亦友，但從總體上來說，我認為天秤是傾向於「敵」的一方，至少在目前是這樣。在最新的美國記者研究中，我們發現他們在日常工作中非常依賴互聯網和社交媒體。大多數記者都用這些新技術來查閱突發新聞，監測其他新聞機構的活動，但是用新技術來核實信息和採訪消息來源的記者就少得多。大多數記者認同社交媒體促進了他們的工作，讓他們更多接觸受眾，也能實現更迅速的報導。極少有人說社交媒體減少了他們的工作量、提升了他們的生產力、讓他們採訪更多的新聞或提高了他們的可信度。毋庸置疑的是，互聯網造成了美國大多數新聞機構的廣告收入大幅下降，進一步導致新聞從業者驟減，

做深度及調查性報導的時間也被大幅壓縮。所以從總體上看，我認為新科技使美國和其他國家的高质量新聞減少了。

CS: 日益激烈的市場競爭和科技革新正在影響新聞業。在此背景下，
有哪些主要的倫理挑戰？

DW: 對我而言，主要的倫理挑戰是缺乏時間和人力去核實信息，以及把信息放在更大的背景下去討論。對於速度和競爭的注重，導致了很多錯誤、不全面，以及誤導性的報導，損害媒體的名譽，也給公眾提供了錯誤信息。另一個倫理挑戰是記者能夠通過網絡和社交媒體更快捷地找到他人的私人信息。在互聯網和社交媒體出現之前的時代，有些信息是非常難以獲得的，且被視為隱私。很多新聞機構需要更多的編輯來監督并批判性地對記者的工作提出質疑，但編輯和事實核查員往往是新聞機構在精簡人手時解僱的第一批人。

CS: 倫理標準可以是一個相對的概念，而且會受到不同社會背景的影響。但您是否認為記者是否有一些共有（甚至是世界性）的倫理準則及做法？

DW: 在30多個國家記者的比較研究中，我們並未發現很多是世界性的倫理準則。唯一幾乎可以說是世界性的做法是「不要透露你承諾保密的消息人士的身份」。在幾乎每一個國家，絕大多數記者都認同這一點。然而，記者們對於問卷中其他倫理上有爭議的報導手法則意見分歧。另一個共有的準則是「事實要準確」。大多數國家的多數記者認同「準確報導」是新聞的一個非常重要功能。當然，鑒於政治、經濟及個人限制等因素，他們能否做到這一點就是另一回事了。

CS: 新聞行業尤其是印刷報紙的生存，是近年的熱門話題。整個新聞界都在尋求一個可行的商業模式。您對此怎麼看？

DW: 如我之前所說，我認為互聯網導致了很多新聞機構收入大幅減少，尤其是那些主要依賴廣告收入的商業媒體。他們嘗試向民營基金會尋求支持，也在互聯網上徵收閱覽新聞的費用，但是這些收入和廣告收入的損失相比只是杯水車薪，至少在美國的情況是

這樣。曾有人呼籲讓新聞消費者來承擔更多新聞報導的成本，但也有跡象表明，人們不願意在一般的新聞報導上花費太多，尤其是那些能夠用低成本甚至是免費在網上看到的內容。對我而言，為支持新聞機構而進行強制收費——一些國家的公共廣播公司已經實行了——再結合一些廣告收入，以及對提供新聞機構鏈接的谷歌和雅虎這類新聞聚合網站進行收費，是一些更為可靠的保證高質量新聞報導的資金來源。

CS: 隨着網絡記者和公民記者的興起，記者的定義正逐漸模糊。新聞的界線因此而受到密切關注。您認為這是一個必然趨勢嗎？有沒有一些改善這個問題的方法？

DW: 我認為要把記者和公民傳播者區分開來。大多數公民都不是記者，即使他們透過社交媒體公開傳播一些及時的事件。大多數公民都沒有受過報導方法和倫理的訓練，而且也不會像記者那樣為特定的新聞主題去花時間開發新聞線索。大多數的公民傳播不是依賴於多個信源，也不像記者那樣試圖去核實信息。綜上所述的理由，我認為把公民稱為「記者」是具有誤導性的。有很多公民做公開的傳播，但是這不會使他們成為記者。但是，公民傳播者與記者角色的模糊對於記者及其可信度來說是一個問題。如果記者期望維持他們在公眾心目中的可信度，記者需要更好地解釋他們如何核實信息以及如何決定報導內容。

CS: 您如何看待新聞業的未來？是樂觀、悲觀，抑或喜憂參半？為甚麼？

DW: 我對新聞業的未來有複雜的感覺，尤其是在美國這樣的發達資本主義社會。但總體來說，我目前持較悲觀的態度。我認為美國及其他國家新聞業的資金遭到削減的問題，在短期內很難克服。加上日益激烈的競爭和24小時的新聞運作給記者帶來的巨大壓力——他們要不間斷地更新網站和監測競爭對手，因此在現時很難對高質量新聞的未來抱樂觀態度。

CS: 新聞學研究一直很活躍而且不斷發展。有哪些更有潛力的方向是研究者應該注意的？

DW: 同時看到新聞學研究的興盛和新聞業在很多國家的衰落，是很諷

刺的事情。毋庸置疑，這個世紀以來，新聞學研究在很多國家有了突飛猛進的發展，比如中國。在我看來，議題設定的機制是一個有潛力的研究方向，尤其是較新的社交媒體和傳統的新聞機構之間的動態關係，以及把問卷調查和觀察式研究中得出的結果與記者實際生產出來的新聞內容連結起來的研究。另一種非常重要的新聞學研究課題，是關注高質量新聞不同的資金模式，從而發現能促成高質量新聞出現的條件。這些研究不僅包括經濟環境，還要考慮哪些因素有助於促成更加獨立、信息量更加豐富的新聞。很多此類的研究都需要有國際比較的視角，以期發現適用於其他國家的方式，以及在歷史上有哪些因素促成了高質量新聞的生產。

大衛·韋佛教授著作選

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Academic Dialogue with **David H. WEAVER**

Journalist Survey Studies and the Development Trend of Journalism

DW: David H. WEAVER

CS: Clement Y. K. SO

CS: What inspired you to first start the nation-wide journalist survey in the United States?

DW: In the late 1970s, Richard Gray, G. Cleveland Wilhoit and I were asked by Jerry Sass of the Gannett Foundation to review journalism and mass communication research. In doing this review, we discovered that there had been much more research about media messages, and the uses and effects of these messages, than on message producers. So we proposed a national study of U.S. journalists to remedy this imbalance (Weaver & Gray, 1979, 1980). We modeled it after the first comprehensive nationwide study of U.S. journalists by John Johnstone and his colleagues at the University of Illinois Chicago campus (Johnstone, Slawski, & Bowman, 1976) because at that time this was the most thorough and representative study of U.S. journalists that we could find.

CS: What were the major difficulties in the process, and how did you overcome them?

DW: The biggest difficulty was the lack of a complete list of U.S. journalists (a comprehensive sampling frame), so we had to use a multi-step procedure to draw a representative sample of all U.S. journalists. This involved random sampling of journalistic organizations, collecting lists and numbers of all fulltime journalists working for these organizations, estimating how many journalists we needed from each kind of news organization (daily and weekly newspapers, radio and television stations, news magazines, wire services, and more recently, online news sites), randomly selecting journalists from each kind of news organization, and then completing 45-minute telephone interviews with more than 1,000 journalists. Some news organizations were very cooperative in providing lists of their journalists and others regarded these lists as private information. Not only was it difficult to get some

of these lists, but it was also very challenging to complete lengthy telephone interviews with busy journalists. And it has become more difficult to get a good completion rate with each survey we have done.

CS: Were there major changes in content and method in doing the various rounds of surveys at different time periods?

DW: We tried to keep the sampling, interviewing methods and question wording identical during the various surveys from the early 1980s until 2013 to allow for more controlled comparisons over time, but we found that we had to ask new questions about the role and impact of the Internet and newer social media in the 2002 and 2013 surveys. We also had to modify our method of interviewing (telephone) in the 2013 survey because of reduced funding and the preference of journalists to be contacted by email and to complete the survey online. So we used a mixed method model of interviewing in this study (email, web site, and telephone).

CS: In the next round of the U.S. journalist survey, what new questions would you want to ask?

DW: As I said above, we added new questions about the uses and impact of the Internet and social media to the most recent studies, and we would plan to do so again if there is another study. We also asked journalists about the most important problem facing journalism in the 2013 study, and whether or not their news organizations had shrunk, grown or remained the same size in the past year.

CS: What were the major changes in the U.S. journalistic landscape over the past few decades?

DW: It's clear that U.S. journalists are now older on average, slightly more likely to be women, slightly less likely to be racial or ethnic minorities, slightly more likely to be college graduates, and more likely to call themselves political Independents. They are also less satisfied with their working environments, less likely to say they have complete freedom to select stories, and less likely to consider very important reaching the widest possible audiences and getting information to the public quickly. They are more likely to emphasize the importance of investigating government claims and analyzing complex problems. Far fewer in 2013 are willing to justify the use of questionable reporting

methods in the case of an important story, including using confidential documents without permission, harassing news sources, seeking undercover employment, posing as someone else, and paying for information.

CS: What are the major challenges faced by journalists these days?

DW: Major challenges include keeping up with competitors' web sites and social media, and constantly updating one's own news web sites and social media with fewer people in many newsrooms. The Internet has not only resulted in a constant 24-hour news deadline but has also decreased the advertising revenue that many news organizations used to have, resulting in the employment of fewer journalists who have more to do and have less time for in-depth or investigative/analytical reporting that sometimes takes weeks or months. The job market for journalists in the U.S. has become very tight, making some journalists more cautious about tackling controversial subjects or doing independent enterprise reporting.

CS: In editing the book, *The Global Journalist in the 21st Century*, in which journalism situations in many countries are described and contrasted, what were the most interesting revelations you found from the chapters?

DW: It's difficult to pinpoint the most interesting findings from all the comparisons of more than 30 countries, but overall I was struck by how many differences there were among the journalists from these countries, even some countries that are similar politically, culturally, and economically. These differences are not neatly classified by some of the more common political or cultural dimensions used to categorize different countries (Western and Eastern, developed and developing, First and Third World, etc.), but there were some tendencies for journalists in countries with less media freedom to think that reporting news quickly and providing access to the public are important roles of journalism. There was less agreement on the importance of being a watchdog of government, even in more democratically governed countries.

Journalists from different countries also sharply disagreed on whether some ethically questionable reporting practices might be justified in the case of an important story. There were large differences

of opinion on whether it might be justifiable to pay for information, to pose as someone else, to badger or harass news sources, and to use personal documents without permission. There was more willingness overall to use business and government documents without permission and to get employed to gain inside information. The overall conclusion from all these comparisons is that a culture of global journalism has not yet emerged. There are still more differences than similarities among journalists from various countries around the world.

CS: Is the American way still the dominating journalistic paradigm for other countries? Are there changes over the years?

DW: There is no compelling evidence of a single paradigm of journalism in the comparisons that we have done of journalists working in many countries of the world. Therefore, I would say that the American way of journalism is not the dominant one throughout the world, especially not the U.S. emphasis on objectivity, independence and the government watchdog role. I think many other countries have developed their own ways of doing journalism in the past, but there may be more similarities in the future because of increased and faster communication among journalists in different countries due to the Internet, social media, and more frequent international travel.

CS: Are new communication technologies friends or foes for journalists? How should they adapt to the new technological environment?

DW: I think new technologies are both friends and foes of journalists, although on balance I think the scale tips toward foes, at least at this time. In our latest study of U.S. journalists, we found that they rely heavily on the Internet and social media in their daily work. Most journalists use these newer technologies to check for breaking news and to monitor what other news organizations are doing, but far fewer use them for verifying information and interviewing sources. Most agree that social media promote their work, keep them more engaged with their audiences, and lead to faster reporting. Far fewer say that social media have decreased their workload, improved their productivity, allowed them to cover more news or enhanced their credibility. And there is no doubt that the Internet has resulted in greatly decreased advertising revenues for most news organizations

in the U.S., which has led to dramatic cuts in newsroom employees and time available for more in-depth and investigative reporting. On balance, then, it seems to me that new technologies have led to decreases in high quality journalism in the U.S. and other countries.

CS: Increased market competition and technological changes are influencing the journalism industry. What are the major ethical challenges in this context?

DW: The major ethical challenge, it seems to me, is lack of time and people to verify information and to put it into a larger context. The emphasis on speed and competition has led to a number of false, incomplete and sometimes misleading reports that have damaged reputations and misinformed the public. Another ethical challenge is the ability of journalists to find out personal information about others much more quickly and easily using the web and social media. Some of this information would have been much more difficult to obtain and would have been considered private in the days before the Internet and social media. There is a need for more editors in most news organizations to oversee and critically question the work of reporters, but editors and fact checkers are often the first ones to be let go when newsrooms are downsized.

CS: Ethical standards may be relative and are affected by different social contexts. But do you think there are some common (or even universal) ethical principles and practices for journalists?

DW: We have not found many universal ethical principles in our studies of journalists across more than 30 countries. The only practice that seems almost universal is not revealing the identity of news sources who have been promised confidentiality. In almost every country, the overwhelming majority of journalists agree that this should not be done. There are large differences of opinion on all the other ethically questionable reporting practices we have asked about in the surveys of journalists. Another possible common practice is factual accuracy. Most journalists in most countries agree that accurate reporting is a very important role of journalism. Whether they are able to do this, given political, economic and personal constraints is, of course, another matter.

CS: Survival of the news industry, especially print newspapers, is the

hot topic these days. The whole journalistic community is concerned about finding viable business models. What is your view on this?

DW: As I have stated earlier, I think that the Internet has resulted in greatly diminished revenues to many news organizations, especially commercial ones that are mainly dependent on funds from advertising. There have been some attempts by private foundations, as well as fees for viewing news on the Internet, but these have mostly not been able to replace the advertising funds lost to the Internet, at least not in the United States. There are calls to shift more of the funding of news reporting to those who consume news, but there are also indications that people are not willing to pay very much for general news reporting, especially if it is available for very low cost or no cost online. It seems to me that mandatory fees for supporting news organizations, as in the case of public broadcasting in some countries, are more likely to provide a reliable source of funding for quality news reporting, in combination with some advertising revenue and some charges to online news aggregators such as Google and Yahoo for links to various news organizations.

CS: With the rise of online journalists and citizen journalists, the definition of a reporter has become blurred. The boundary of journalism is under scrutiny. Do you see this as an inevitable trend? What can be done to alleviate the problems, if any?

DW: I think a distinction should be made between journalists and citizen communicators. Most citizens are not journalists, even if they communicate publicly about timely events via social media. Most citizens have not been trained in reporting methods and ethics, and most do not develop news sources for particular news subjects over time in the same way that journalists do. Most citizen communication does not rely on multiple sources or attempt to verify information in the same way that journalists do. For all these reasons, I think it is misleading to call citizens “journalists”. There are many citizens who communicate publicly, but that does not make them journalists. This blurring of the roles of citizen communicators and journalists, however, is a problem for journalists and their credibility. Journalists need to do a better job of explaining how they verify their information and how they make decisions about what to report if they expect to maintain their credibility with the public.

CS: How do you feel about the future of journalism? Optimistic, pessimistic, or both? Why?

DW: I have mixed feelings about the future of journalism, especially in more developed capitalistic societies such as the United States, but on balance I am more pessimistic than optimistic at this point in time. I think the reduced funding for journalism in the U.S. and other countries is a big problem that will not be easily overcome anytime soon. When this is coupled with increased competition and a 24-hour news cycle that puts great pressure on journalists to constantly update web sites and monitor the competition, it is hard to be optimistic about the future of high quality journalism at this particular time.

CS: Journalism research has been alive and growing. What are the more productive directions researchers should pay attention to?

DW: It is ironic that journalism research is flourishing at the same time that journalism itself is in decline in many countries. There is no doubt that journalism research has grown tremendously since the turn of the century in many countries, such as China. Among the more productive directions in this research, in my opinion, are studies of agenda setting dynamics, especially between newer social media and more traditional news outlets, and studies that attempt to link what we have learned from surveys and observations of journalists with what they actually produce in terms of news coverage. Another very important type of journalism research are studies that focus on different funding models for high quality journalism and that seek to discover the conditions under which quality journalism is more likely to occur. These studies include not just economic conditions but also the factors that contribute to a more independent and informative journalism. Much of this research needs to be internationally comparative, seeking to find out what works well in other places as well as what has produced high quality journalism historically.

Selected Works by David H. Weaver

Please refer to the end of the Chinese version of the dialogue for David H. Weaver's selected works.