

Journalism in history, history in journalism: A historiographical critique of the newspaper as a source material for research

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Abstract

This historiographical critique explores the dual function of newspapers as both historical records and active agents in shaping historical narratives. It interrogates the value and limitations of newspapers as source material in historical research, emphasizing their potential to provide rich, contemporaneous insights into past events, while also cautioning against their inherent biases and ideological underpinnings. Drawing from media theory and critical historiography, the paper employs an interdisciplinary methodology that includes content and comparative analysis of literature from media studies, journalism, and history. This approach uncovers how newspapers reflect societal norms, power structures, and political agendas, thereby shaping not only public opinion but also historical interpretation. The study highlights the methodological challenges in using newspapers as sources, such as editorial bias, selective reporting, and the political economy of print media. Despite these challenges, the paper demonstrates that newspapers, when critically examined and contextually grounded, can serve as valuable and corroborative materials for understanding historical processes. It underscores the importance of treating newspapers not merely as passive channels of information but as dynamic texts that both mirror and mold historical consciousness. Ultimately, the study advocates for a critical and reflexive engagement with newspapers in historiographical work, proposing that with careful analysis and triangulation with other sources, newspapers can enhance the depth and nuance of historical inquiry. By situating newspapers within their broader cultural and political contexts, researchers can better appreciate their role in both documenting and constructing the past, thus affirming their relevance and reliability in historical scholarship.

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1. Introduction

In a speech in 1963, Philip L. Graham, former president and publisher of the *Washington Post*, confidently claimed that “journalism is the first rough draft of history.” Whether this statement has proven true or not, one can only look at the contribution of journalism, in this case, the print media in the form of the newspaper, as an alternative source to history writing to surmise the extent and validity of the aforementioned statement. Perhaps the statement was assumed within the backdrop of the turbulent 1960s, where significant and history-altering events have taken place (i.e., JFK assassination, the Vietnam War, the Cold War) on which media organizations and pundits, whether in print or broadcast, have built their careers on and became a felt presence in matters of information dissemination, of public opinion and in shaping them. The statement may have been made considering that any history writing’s first sacred and indispensable source material is a record of past events expressed through the written text. The newspaper, with its daily description, documentation, and record of actual events as they happen, can be a valuable reference for eyewitness accounts of these events in the future.

Can newspapers, despite their inherent limitations and biases, be critically and effectively used as valid and valuable historiographical source materials in history writing and research? What are the significant contributions of newspapers in historical research and interpretation? These are the main premises upon which this critique was pursued and conducted. Furthermore, this paper examines the critical role of the print media, in this case, the newspaper, as a critical source of information in historical research. It considers the nature and character of newspapers as record-keepers of actual events and people; revisits and analyzes the insights of Tomas Donaldson, James Rhodes, Lucy Maynard Salmon, and Jerry W. Knudson on the use of newspapers in history; evaluates the methodologies for assessing newspaper reliability and utility; and affirms the place of newspapers in the writing of social history, supported by the findings of scholars such as Woodward, Miller, and Jones.

Throughout the course of time since the invention of writing, and eventually, of the printing press, which has revolutionized the world in its capacity to reproduce knowledge and to distribute it to a wider audience, humans have constantly sought to put into record their experiences and that of their community and to pass it on to the next generation. Whether in the form of primitive stone inscriptions or the complexities of the print media, the written record is indispensable in the practice of history and historical research writing. The keeping

and preserving of public knowledge and records expressed in newspaper reporting, thus, becomes valuable in light of this belief and practice. Whether used as primary or secondary historiographical source material, by considering its nature and character as a record-keeper of actual events and people, newspapers can serve a valuable purpose in reconstructing historical narratives. This is the main premise upon which this research paper was pursued and conducted.

Although the conversation concerning the validity and usefulness of the newspaper as a resource material for history writing and other scholarly studies has not been entirely settled up to this day, the use of newspapers as alternative and valuable source materials for history writing and research has been advocated for a long time. For example, in an 1845 speech by Tomas Donaldson delivered at the Maryland Historical Society, he advanced the idea that newspapers add life to history writing by asking: how much more compelling is an account of any transaction from the mouth of someone who has personally seen, or at the very least witnessed, the scenes he portrays than even the most elegant recital from the pen of someone who has heard the story secondhand? (Jones, 2016). This observation, of course, has come from the belief that newspaper news reports are eyewitness accounts of unfolding events and that reporters are more often part of or have direct knowledge of the event they are trying to cover and document. According to Donaldson, newspapers can be used as primary source material in history writing.

This was seconded by American historian James Rhodes in his defense of the newspaper as historical source material in the 1900s when he said in his study that newspapers are valuable source materials because they are contemporary to their times and are written to describe factual events as they transpired (Rhodes, 1909). He also claimed that the historian's duty is not to decide if the newspapers are as good as they should be, but to measure their influence on the present and recognize their importance as an ample and contemporary record of the past. This is highly suggestive of the argument that the historicity of a given source material is contingent upon historical sense-making, which historians attempt to do when faced with a piece of potential evidence (Cambridge University Faculty of History, n.d.). This paper argues that the arbitrariness of events covered by the newspaper does not discredit it as a useful source material, even for contemporary and modern historical research and studies.

In fact, the ProQuest Historical Newspapers, sponsored by the *Reviews in History Journal* (RHJ) of the University of London, has an extensive online platform that collects,

collates, and digitizes more than 30 historical newspapers, predominantly from the United States, spanning the years 1764–2005 and totaling some 27 million pages (Mussell, 2011). This massive collection of newspapers was organized and is being made accessible to the public as an important contribution to the study of the press as well as modern history in general. Moreover, by providing access to comprehensive runs of these newspapers in a searchable form, ProQuest Historical Newspapers constitutes a major resource of value to anyone interested in modern history (Mussell, 2011). The aforementioned objective of this online collection as a treasure trove of historical data is not an exaggeration, considering about more than 200 years of recording and documenting actual events, the political and cultural hypes of the era, the ebbs and flows of time so-to-speak, and peoples in communities with their day-to-day lived experiences in the context of the larger society. On the other hand, the groundbreaking research of journalism historians and experts Lucy Maynard Salmon and Jerry W. Knudson has paved the way for the rethinking and reconsidering of newspapers as valuable historiographical resource materials for historical writing and research. Despite the fact that their body of work is separated by a good 70 years in between, Salmon and Knudson both have reached the same conclusion that newspapers are usable and alternative source materials that historians and researchers can utilize.

Although Salmon (1923), in her massive work with the very fitting title “*The Newspaper and the Historian*,” has discovered limitations and weaknesses of the newspaper as source material, she argued convincingly that the historian could utilize them to “lend color and vivacity to the past” and to create a “graphic description of society.” Admirers and critics have consistently hailed her work as probably one of the most thorough and extensive analyses of the value of newspapers as historical source material. Salmon’s work answered the questions on the possible justification historians can obtain from using the newspapers as a source and whether they can confidently produce historical narratives from such documents. She also explored in her study the evaluative tools that can be applied to the newspaper in order for the historian and researcher to separate the “wheat from the chaff” and the principles that can be inferred from assessing the truthfulness or falsity of the documents under study. To arrive at conclusions, Salmon interrogated the newspapers regarding the inherent logic of their “personality.” By personality, she implied the set of expressed beliefs, opinions, and values that the newspapers, including their writers, have and the kind of authority upon which these beliefs, values, and opinions are grounded. She also meant by personality the certain emphasis

a particular newspaper has for particular kinds of news and the systematic processes the production of news reports has undergone, from recording, verifying, writing, editing, to publishing and distribution. As a result of her novel and critical analysis of the significance of newspapers in historical research, historians could not help but give well-deserved commendations (Salmon, 1925).

On the other hand, Knudson (1993) concurred with the observations made by Salmon and further claimed that historians who “neglect” the use of newspapers were missing something because these were not only valuable sources of historical information but also in understanding public opinion that might have changed or have indirectly affected historical outcomes. In his compelling case study of Bolivian newspapers using what he termed the “cluster method,” he elucidated that newspapers as sources and arbiters of public opinion can either hinder or instigate social change. In this manner, newspapers can be a probable source material for a historian, especially in understanding or giving context to a particular historical event, answering what happened and why it happened. Cognizant of this, Knudson, as a matter of reply to skeptics and critics, has said that to historians and researchers trying to understand public opinion, newspapers become primary rather than secondary sources. Knudson’s critical findings validate the work of cultural, political, social, and even intellectual historians, specifically on their roles as “historical sense-makers” and interpreters of the past, by giving credence to the newspapers as repositories of not only facts and information but also of the social and cultural milieu of the time.

This is similar to the important findings of Woodward (2008) on the use of local records, including source materials such as court documents and newspapers, in the writing of social history. He asserted that local records are the foundation on which social history is constructed and that the discipline of history can benefit much by utilizing these records. Under this context, Frederic Miller (as quoted by Woodward, 2008) asserted that social historians are theoretically interested in everything because social history often takes as its subject common human experience; ordinariness is a positive virtue. Thus, newspapers become useful records for social historians in ways that they can capture daily events, though some may be considered mundane and ordinary, as Miller has suggested; nonetheless, they are records worth considering primarily because of social patterns and trends and their evolution and development over time, can be mined from these publications.

Concerning the current use of newspapers by historians and researchers from other fields, Jones (2006) commented that although they do not rely exclusively on newspapers for their research materials, many different types of historical studies have used newspapers as a major form of primary source material. Regardless of how they are used, many historians consider them to be invaluable sources. As stated previously, this paper examines the critical role of the print media, in this case, the newspaper, as a critical source of information in contemporary research.

2. Theoretical Framework

This historiographical critique is grounded in the intersection of journalism and historiography, examining newspapers as vital sources for historical research. It foregrounds the arguments on two frameworks, namely:

Critical Historiography. The application of critical historiography allows the paper to look into how historians have traditionally utilized newspapers as primary sources and critique these methodologies. Historians often rely on newspapers for contemporaneous accounts of events, but this approach raises questions about objectivity, selection, and bias. Like any other form of media, newspapers are shaped by editorial decisions that reflect particular viewpoints, political leanings, and cultural assumptions (Bo, 2005). The paper examines the construction of historical narratives through newspapers by critiquing how historians interpret these sources. This historiographical approach allows for a critical reassessment of historical knowledge production through newspapers, questioning the completeness and neutrality of the sources while arguing for the mainstream use of such sources in contemporary research.

Media Theory. Media theory serves as the foundation for understanding newspapers as cultural artifacts that reflect the norms, biases, and power structures of the societies in which they are produced. Newspapers are not merely passive records of events; they actively participate in shaping societal values and narratives. By applying media theory, this study explores how newspapers of different periods reveal underlying societal ideologies, including gender norms, class structures, and political hierarchies. For example, the way newspapers reported on labor movements or independence struggles during the colonial period could reflect the broader socio-political climate, showing the tensions between the ruling powers and the marginalized classes. This approach uncovers how the press actively reinforces or

challenges dominant power structures by portraying historical events (Hansen, 1998; Hui et.al., 2004).

3. Methodology

This paper uses a qualitative approach to examine the relevance of newspapers in academic research. It aims to provide a critical review and analysis of the use of newspapers in historical studies, shedding light on their role as primary sources in constructing historical narratives. Through a review of existing scholarship, the paper evaluates the ways in which historians and scholars have used newspapers to understand and interpret historical events, developments, and social trends. This analysis draws upon a wide range of materials, including case studies, books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and critiques from historians and media scholars, offering a multidisciplinary approach. Materials were gathered from credible research databases and online sources. By synthesizing these findings, the paper not only assesses the strengths and limitations of newspapers as historical sources but also explores key challenges involved in their use, such as bias, selective representation, and the influence of editorial agendas on portraying events.

Moreover, this critique addresses how journalism has shaped historical narratives, considering the evolving nature of print media, the role of newspaper editors and journalists in framing public discourse, and how newspapers have reflected or distorted the realities of the times they document. The paper also critically examines the intersection between journalism and historiography, highlighting how media sources can illuminate and obscure certain aspects of history, depending on their context, readership, and ideological positioning.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. History, Journalism, and the Pursuit of Truth

History and the practice of journalism are two significantly interconnected features of human society, especially when considering humans' propensity to keep records of and about themselves and pass them on to the next generation. In fact, according to Horgan (2014), the skills of journalism and historiography are not mutually exclusive. This observation demonstrates that one of the primary goals of history and journalism is to document, record, and make a factual narrative of events as they happened. If historical analysis and interpretation

are merited, it is only done in hindsight, after the events have occurred, and with the historian trying to make sense of what has transpired and carefully identifying and demonstrating connections to other events. To this definition, the craft of journalism expressed in news reporting and other journalistic forms is valuable to historians and its output as a viable historical source.

The observation of renowned Filipino journalist and broadcaster Howie Severino (2008) concurred with this idea when he said in a speech: “If history is journalism in a hurry, journalism is history in slow-motion.” In the compelling arguments of the preeminent journalism history thinker John Nerone (2013), he explains that historians and journalists concern themselves with one thing: the pursuit of truth. Nerone has evinced that historians and journalists know that their truths are finite. Because of this realization, their clinical practice is both privileged and important. Thus, we would not need trained journalists or historians if the facts were not perishable. We need these occupations to engage in a process of continuous updating because reality is often a matter of adjustment. They exist to keep public opinion alive and relatively fair and reasonable. This pursuit of truth, whether in history or in the practice of journalism, is the primary arbiter in the reproduction of public information and historical knowledge, its crucial interpretation, and its distribution thereafter (Tosh, 2015). Moreover, this is cognizant of the time-honored recognition that the work of the historian does not only end in archival research, documentation, and distribution of historical knowledge to society but also engages society to carry the moral burden towards an expected action once history has exposed and elucidated the truth (Carr, 1961). As mentioned in the works of Salmon (1923), Knudson (1993), and Woodward (2008), the use of newspapers in the sacred halls of academia has benefited those who practice social, cultural, and political history.

It is likewise established that written accounts serve as chroniclers of the past, and human history often relies heavily on written documents. As Allen and Sieczkiewicz (2010) noted, newspapers have long been valuable tools for historians. The majority of what we know today—knowledge of every culture's early history, the evolution of science and technology, the progress of human politics and society, the growth of world religions and ideologies, and so on—was made possible by writings that were preserved and passed down from generation to generation. For example, in the 5th century BC, Herodotus, considered the father of history, wrote a famous account of the Persian Wars. Thucydides wrote his classic study of the Peloponnesian War between Athens and Sparta shortly afterward. These men recorded

contemporary or near-contemporary events in prose narratives of striking style, *depending as much as possible on eyewitnesses or other reliable testimony for evidence* (Partner, 2008). We can surmise that what Porter meant by “other reliable testimony” included those that advance historiography through alternative sources such as oral narratives, biographies, diaries, and newspapers.

In modern and contemporary times, there is a realization that journalism can contribute significantly to history because of the changes that have been taking place in historiography since the late 1970s. This is referred to by O'Malley (2012) as a time when conventional studies of national political, diplomatic, and constitutional history have given way to social history, broadly conceived as history from below, based on class, race, and gender. As evinced by Knudson (1993), this history from below—of depicting and examining the social histories of a particular community—can be effectively and alternatively obtained from the careful analysis of information from newspapers and how these newspapers understand the process and interpret these events within the currents of their time.

The “history from below” is reminiscent of what Reynaldo Ileto (1979) profoundly and effectively did for Philippine historiography through his study of popular movements from 1840 to 1910. Though not without flaws and criticisms, his work *“Pasyon and Revolution”* has revolutionized the process of historical knowledge production not only in the Philippines but also in Southeast Asia by appealing to alternative sources, which his reviewers and critics refer to as non-documents which include the lyrics of the *“pasyon”* (literally “passion”) which depicts the sufferings of Christ. Although practically not a newspaper, by using alternative sources in the production of historical knowledge, Ileto has provided a historiographical corrective on how historians should look at Philippine history and to open the debate on and advance historical methodologies by using “other sources” as viable source materials. The same can be done, apparently, when a historian studies news reports, editorial articles, or even poetry, comic strips, and classified ads in newspapers, as demonstrated by Salmon: the production of a historical narrative, representation, and interpretation effectively deduced from these “other” unlikely source materials.

An important study by Tibbo (2002) demonstrated that newspapers remain vital to historians and identified them as their “most important” and “most often used” type of material. For some historians, as findings suggest, period newspapers were the only source of information on some aspects of their study. In some instances, microfilm copies greatly aided

their work and were the only remaining evidence to allow for investigations. A historian's challenge is finding source materials to build his or her work. However, when faced with a seemingly inevitable scarcity of documents about a particular topic, the diligent historian must search for other reliable alternative materials to utilize.

Historians typically use newspapers for such tasks as defining general outlines, statistics, and trends, and searching for descriptions or specifics about people, locations, and events (World History Sources, n.d., as cited by Allen & Sieczkiewicz, 2010). One of the historians with a Ph.D. in History who was interviewed in the study of Allen and Sieczkiewicz (2010) said that he uses newspapers to fill in the research gaps and corroborate information from other sources. Newspapers are utilized not only as information sources but also to fact-check other information. This premise is also recognized in this present research, which hopes to find out and establish the significance of the school paper as an alternative and corroborative source material in historical research, especially in evaluating two bodies of work on institutional history. In an important quantitative historical research by Franzosi (1987), it was found that newspapers are valuable sources of socio-historical data; however, it is important to emphasize that one cannot be too cautious in selecting and collecting which reports to consider for research done in the social sciences and in the humanities.

Jones (2006), in her crucial study on the many uses of the newspaper, demonstrated that newspapers serve a critical role in providing a daily record of events and even as a political organ in the promotion of freedom of speech. Jones has affirmed in her study that no other reference source offers as broad a range of potential material or as detailed coverage of everyday life as the newspapers. Scholars in all disciplines, librarians, teachers, students, and genealogists, to name a few groups who have perused the contents of a periodical searching for appropriate material to address their research questions, have all used newspapers as primary and secondary historical sources. Jones's work on the value and utility of the newspaper as a source material in historical research and other disciplines has been one of the more comprehensive treatments on the subject since Salmon's (1923) definitive work on the same subject. Jones, along with Salmon and many other researchers throughout the years, have helped in the intellectually rigorous and challenging task of historical research by giving academic credence to the alternative source material, the newspaper.

Meanwhile, the work of Palacios (2009) on the intersections of journalism and memory stated that journalism is significant in the production and preservation of collective social

memory. Palacios joins the chorus of several other studies cited here in this paper in advancing the essential role that journalism through the print media plays in historical knowledge production. He argued that, as a social practice, journalism has been so centrally located amid this accelerated process of production and preservation of memory. In exploring the crucial relationship between memory and journalism, it is found that journalism is an effective repository of memory for producing historical works in terms of changing patterns and effects of the work of memory in producing journalistic texts. Hutton (2013) has demonstrated within this frame of thinking that historians are both the keepers and arbiters of historical memory. They not only legitimize the past to be remembered, but they also influence and shape how it is presented. This argument is reminiscent of Carr's (1961) thoughts on the sacred responsibility of the historian to ensure that the historical text must not be tampered with so that historical interpretations do not get lost and distorted, thereby preserving the integrity of public memory. And where else do historians turn to in gathering and mining public memory and in the pages of good newspapers and similar materials?

Memory is a crucial aspect of history because what history does, similar to the practice of journalism and newspaper reporting, is the preservation of a community's memory, whether locally or nationally. In the sense of what the great Filipino historian Renato Constantino has claimed, memory is an essential element of national identity and nation-building.

In tracing the intellectual formation and history of the Philippine Revolution, Aboitiz (2020), in her bold new book, has provided a similar historiographical corrective in the "thinking of the Philippine nation" at the critical turn-of-the-century era. By examining crucial articles and writings of the *Ilustrados* (the Philippine elites during the Spanish colonization) published in *La Solidaridad* and other sources, she demonstrated how the leading thinkers of the Propaganda Movement have "imagined" the Filipino nation. Although what Aboitiz has tried to accomplish in her work is to locate this imagining of the nation in the transnational, regional, and Pan-Asian context, she did this effectively by turning to primary writings which are printed in important newspapers and other writings of the Philippine revolution, such as biographies, letter, manifestos, satires, folklore, and poetry. Along with Iletto (1979), Aboitiz has advanced the use of "nontraditional" historiographical source materials in the production and analysis of Philippine history, thereby expanding the historian's horizon regarding historical production and interpretation. Vis-a-vis the foregoing discussion, the works of the national hero, Dr. Jose P. Rizal, and other writers and visionaries in *La Solidaridad* have

successfully recorded and analyzed significant socio-political issues during the Spanish colonial period. Whether published as journalistic writings or as literary satires, their works have made an impact during their time and have become valuable references for historical studies and research.

Other historical newspapers circulated in the Philippines throughout history have been useful historical materials that added flavor and dynamism to the process of historical research and writing in the country. In the arguments of Knudson (1993), such historical newspapers, in hindsight, not only informed the public but might also have been instrumental in shaping and influencing public discourses during their time and might even change the outcome of events, as demonstrated in this similar vein, by the works of the *Ilustrados* in the Propaganda Movement.

With this ongoing discussion and review of relevant studies done by different authors over time, concrete examples have confirmed that newspapers are useful chroniclers of daily events, recorders of public opinion, and preservers of public memory and knowledge of the past, therefore, establishing them as an alternative means of studying, producing, and preserving history. However, as these previous studies have compellingly argued, the usefulness of newspapers does not only end in their ability to record and preserve information about daily events, but they are also significant in their capacity to capture the “vibrancy and dynamism” of life and the human condition in the daily events as they unfold.

4.2. History and Journalism: Similarities and Disparities

In establishing the premise that written materials are imperative in the perpetuation and preservation of human knowledge and collective social memory and thus warrant scholarly attention, it is of first importance to define the difference between journalism and the other forms of writing and whether the practice of journalism can be at par with the skills required in history writing. Arao (2009) has affirmed that journalistic writings or the practice of journalism seriously adhere to facts and actual circumstances, as in the case of history writing. News reports, feature articles, opinion articles, and editorial articles all report, analyze, or interpret news and current issues based solely on facts and factual events; history as a practice and discipline also does the same in the recording and preservation of historical data. On the other hand, other types of literature, such as novels, short stories, poetry, stage plays, and other literary genres, on the other hand, do not often write events based on facts or true events, which

is why they are considered works of fiction. Although sometimes novels and short stories may contain the elements of factual events, especially those classified as “historical novels” or “true-to-life stories,” they are rarely cited as references for historical studies and academic papers, except in literary criticism and comparative literature. This is, of course, due to the inclination of novelists and creative writers to manipulate events and characters so that the story would be aesthetically, instead of intellectually, appealing to the readers.

In general, the aim of a newspaper is to provide current material, or “news,” to a specific audience as quickly as possible. What counts as “news” is determined in part by the target audience. Newspapers targeted at a general audience would cover politics, crime, conflicts, economics, and anything else that might pique the reader's interest. On the other hand, a farm newspaper or a magazine could publish information about new farming techniques, the status of farm-related legislation in Congress, crop prices, and information about national fairs, among other things. On the other hand, history looks at these small details in a broader context and investigates developments, patterns, and connections to better understand the past. While historians may focus on smaller events to study, they do it with a bigger perspective and try to answer bigger questions.

4.3. Local History and the School Paper in the Philippines

The practice of campus journalism is fundamentally the same as professional journalism (Arao, 2009). Like professional journalism, campus journalism reports, analyzes, and interprets news and issues based on factual events. Furthermore, the principles of campus journalism and professional journalism are precisely the same. Constructing news stories, feature articles, and editorials is founded on journalism's same rules and principles. The only inconsequential difference is that while professional journalism publishes newspapers for national consumption and a larger audience, campus journalism releases newspapers intended only for campus consumption.

Moreover, as in the case of the *Philippine Collegian* of the University of the Philippines in Diliman, in which professional journalists also recognize articles and analyses on national issues, the campus paper may always have the right and obligation to address significant national social and political issues in its pages. Through the school paper as a medium, campus journalism records significant campus events and the institution's development, the university on which it operates. These campus publications or school papers, thereby, document and

record the development of an academic institution. Like the mainstream national newspaper, the campus publication is an effective medium to communicate information to the reading public. It also provides relevant opinions on issues with social and political significance. Furthermore, Arao (2009) commented that the campus press serves as the voice of the students in particular and the youth in general. He noted that history has shown that the youth play a significant role in shaping history, as in the case of the Cultural Revolution in China and the 1896 Revolution in the Philippines. In today's setting, the campus press can help strengthen the youth and student movement and consequently foment social change. This observation, which bears repeating here, is similar to that of Knudson (1993) in demonstrating that the newspaper is an effective platform for pushing for reforms and effecting change in the community.

In the Philippines, history has shown the critical position of the campus paper and student journalists during a time when the dictatorship of former President Ferdinand Marcos Sr. stifled the free press. Following the declaration of martial law on September 21, 1972, after more than three decades of a free press, national and local newspapers were forced to cease their liberal operations. In his Letter of Instruction No. 1 (LOI No.1), Marcos ordered: "to take over and control or cause the taking over and control of the mass media for the duration of the national emergency, or until otherwise ordered by the President or by his duly designated representative." The rise of radical campus journalism occurred during this period, in the dark days of martial law. When the Marcos dictatorship froze all national newspapers, some campus publications, such as the Philippine Collegian of the University of the Philippines, took over and became outspoken critics of the Marcos regime's social and political structure. Furthermore, even professional journalists valued the Philippine Collegian's analyses of issues, especially during Martial Law.

In recent decades, social movements have become more often the product of concerted action by key actors in a society faced with such changes. People must find a way to convey the appropriate message to an audience to create a new order that fits the status quo. The right medium must strategically mobilize people to take action to achieve the necessary social change. Viewed from this context, the print media as a means of communication is an effective channel that affects public opinion and eventually foments social change. The importance of campus newspapers as "the voice of the students" continues to be recognized today. Student publications and the practice of campus journalism support the integration and distribution of

knowledge on campus. Students are kept informed of important activities at the university via the publication of student news organs.

Student organs, which may range from colorful broadsheets to monochrome tabloids, are a distinctive mark of an educational institution. The Campus Journalism Act of 1991 provides funding for the medium, affirming that the state should implement numerous initiatives and projects to develop student journalistic skills and encourage responsible and free journalism. Furthermore, student publications are the means exclusive to the student writers to propagate information on campus through print media. Its primary constituency is the university and college students. Thus, the content and focus of the campus papers are issues relevant and valuable to such a constituency. Moreover, because of its capacity to record actual events with the same care and discipline as the history writer, the school paper can eventually become a valuable source for documenting and narrating the history and development of the university as an institution.

5. Conclusion

The literature presented and analyzed in this paper critically interrogates and examines the extent to which mainstream newspapers can become helpful and valuable sources for historical research and study. Primarily, the point of departure of these studies was their search for alternative sources for historical writing and whether they could find a significant place for newspapers in the discipline of history.

As findings have demonstrated, historians can utilize newspapers for research, implying that they add not only factual data but also elements of “vibrance,” “meaningful interpretations,” and a “human touch” to the events they were documenting. Newspapers often capture the immediacy and emotion of historical events in ways that official documents or later historical analyses might not. The daily or weekly publication cycle of newspapers allows them to reflect public sentiment, societal concerns, and even cultural trends that might otherwise be overlooked in more formal records. These sources provide rich, detailed accounts of people's everyday lives, social dynamics, and the political atmosphere of the times, giving historians access to a more grounded and humanized perspective on events.

Furthermore, newspapers often serve as a bridge between the official historical narrative and the lived experiences of individuals and communities, offering insights into how events were perceived and discussed. They can reveal public reactions, controversies, and

diverse viewpoints that add depth and complexity to historical interpretation. This immediacy and emotional engagement allow historians to construct more extensive and layered accounts of the past, incorporating voices that might have been marginalized or excluded from official accounts. Therefore, newspapers can significantly enrich historical narratives, providing a more vibrant and meaningful context for understanding events and the cultural and social undercurrents that shaped them.

Moreover, previous studies have explored the significant role that journalism plays in complementing historical research and studies, emphasizing that the journalism profession, through its adherence to the “pursuit of truth,” is an indispensable discipline in relation to the work of historians. Journalism’s commitment to documenting current events as they unfold, often in real-time, serves as a crucial counterpart to the historian’s task of recording and interpreting the past. By capturing the immediate context, voices, and perspectives of the time, journalism provides a rich source of primary data and preserves the raw and unfiltered emotions, controversies, and public reactions to events as they happen. Journalism’s pursuit of truth, while different in methodology and intent from the historian’s work, shares a common goal of preserving and disseminating knowledge for future generations. With its focus on accuracy, investigation, and public accountability, the discipline of journalism provides an additional layer of verification for historical research. News reports often serve as contemporaneous checks against later historical revisionism, offering factual anchors that historians can use to evaluate conflicting sources or interpretations. Similarly, it is concurred in this paper that campus newspapers are also complementary records that assist in writing historical narratives and research. Student coverage of campus, local, and national events adds vibrancy to narratives and provides a more nuanced interpretation of historical events.

Ultimately, the practice of journalism and history, especially in matters of keeping records and documenting an event, as underscored by previous studies, is basically similar and is not mutually exclusive from each other. This gives credence to the mainstream newspapers as alternative, corroborative, and valuable source materials. Although these studies demonstrated comprehensive findings and analysis on the value of the mainstream newspaper as a historical source, research undergoing similar rigor in analyzing and investigating the newspaper as a valuable tool for historical research is still ripe for exploration. It is recommended that future research conduct an analysis by covering a longer time period to assess the effect of newspapers in historical writing over time.

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