Journalists in The Netherlands

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Concept and Method of Journalism Studies

As noted in the introductory chapter, the project at hand empirically addresses two separate research purposes: providing a framework for profiling Dutch journalists in particular, and offering an assessment of the emergence and development of a more or less shared occupational ideology of journalism by looking specifically at journalists working in areas of potential challenges to such an ideology (cf. the multicultural society, the Internet and infotainment). In opting for a combination of these purposes, I hope to contribute to building a theoretical perspective on journalism studies, particularly for the contemporary Dutch context. This is not to say there are no existing more or less coherent theories of journalism: on the contrary, recent overviews have offered a multitude of theoretical ways of looking at journalism in society. But what I intend with the project at hand, is not to test a working theory, but rather to work inductively towards building a theoretical perspective more or less distinct to the Dutch setting and particular to what was described in the previous introductory chapter: a media-centric, communicator-oriented perspective on the study of journalism and its role in society.

The first research purpose of the project – a descriptive profile of journalists in The Netherlands – is served by replicating and adapting an established international research design of journalism surveys, as predominantly laid out by US scholars Weaver and Wilhoit (1991 and 1996) and their predecessors Johnstone, Slawski and Bowman (1976). By replication and cross-national comparison one may develop new ways of looking at the national data (McMane, 1993: 208; see also Blumler, McLeod and Rosengren, 1992). Even though the project closely follows the design of Weaver and Wilhoit for the sake of effective comparison, several steps have been taken to make the sample of journalists more inclusive, and to make the questionnaire more particular to the Dutch media context. The second part of this chapter in particular addresses how the research design is conceptualized in terms of data gathering methods and definition of journalists. In terms of methodology issues regarding sample design, the survey and the applied questionnaire are considered accordingly.

The second research purpose of the project will be addressed by a study of the ways in which journalists in different areas of the contemporary Dutch newsmedia give meaning to what they do, and how these developments are articulated to journalism in The Netherlands in general. For this purpose a qual-
It is important to note here that the survey and the in-depth interviews are both distinct and conceptually equal phases in this particular project. This multimethod approach is based on the assumption, that a triangulation of methods offers the scholar more and better ways of looking at the complex subject matter at hand (Flick, 1998: 229; Denzin and Lincoln, 2000: 4).

As a first step the way in which journalism - and the different thematic areas of change and challenge to the professional ideology of journalists - is conceptualized for the project at hand is addressed in detail. What is needed is a framework for analysis which allows for a discussion of (inter-) national differences and similarities among journalists, as well as an assessment of the different ways in which newsworkers confronted most directly with the multicultural society, the Internet and infotainment give meaning to their work and their (sense of) professionalism as journalists.

**Conceptualizing Journalism**

The literature suggests that journalism is difficult to conceptualize as something 'other' than other information-based domains in society because of its many 'gray areas', mainly caused by the widespread proliferation of information professions with a shared purpose of gathering and further distributing of information (see Scholl, 1996). Another problematic aspect is its lack of formal structure in terms of professional codes, barriers of entry or codified body of knowledge. On the other hand one can argue that journalism is a highly organized and hierarchical domain (or: social system) in society, based on a shared professional ideology and operating with the specific expected function of gathering and disseminating public information.1 Journalism as it has professionalized particularly in the latter half of the 20th century, and as it has functionally differentiated itself from other domains in society enjoys a high degree of (formal as well as informal) functional organization and hierarchy (Hallin, 1992; Bardoel, 1999). This organization has been well defined and empirically established in Western democracies.4 Although journalism is most certainly a 'fuzzy' profession if one considers its outmost borders, the authors on journalism studies are in agreement that one may assume journalism to be a professional occupation, of which the population consists of newsworkers responsible for the editorial content of a wide range of media: newspapers, magazines, Websites, radio and television programs, wire services, and a range of wired digital systems such as mobile phones via Short Messaging Systems.
(SMS) and Wireless Application Protocols (WAP), Personal Digital Assistants (PDA) and so on.

As argued in chapter 1, journalism is considered to be constituted as a profession by a consensual occupational ideology. This ideology consists of several key ideal-typical values, which can be summarized as: providing a public service; being neutral; operating editorially autonomous; being accurate, and working ethically – all functioning to some extent in order to be considered legitimate in contemporary (democratic) society. The concept of ideology is particularly fruitful in a media-centric and communicator-oriented study like this one, as it allows for inconsistencies, contradictions and a variety of (possibly conflicting) interpretations of what the core elements or values of a particular person's or group's ideology mean (Carey, 1989 [1971]; Hartley, 1982: 55; Hall, 1982; Fowler, 1991). Yet at the same time, ideology can be seen as the social cement that binds together different notions, groups, peoples, and alliances (Stevenson, 1995: 16-17; following the work of Gramsci on the 'common sensical' properties of ideology). In the context of the project at hand the ideology of journalism is regarded as consisting of the abovementioned five values, of which the interpretations and meanings shift continuously in varying national and cultural contexts. The previously defined key developments in the inter-relationship of media and society – broadly one could speak of multiculturalism, digitalization and infotainmentization of the media – must therefore be seen as potential factors changing, challenging, and possibly redefining the ideology of journalism in The Netherlands. A first step in conceptualizing journalism as it functions and operates in contemporary (Western) societies and how it can perceived to be challenged with respect to its dominant values here is presented in Figure 1.

The elements listed within the realms of the three developments summarize the areas within these are expected to impact upon the dominant values of journalism (see chapter 1 for the detailed exploration of the various elements). These can also be considered to be the areas where one might expect to find empirical support for changes or challenges to the ideology of journalism. Such changes or challenges do not necessarily mean that a new ideology is emerging, or that values like the public service ideal are undermined; changes in the environment of journalism can for example also be seen as contributing to an even stronger emphasis on (or perceived necessity of) existing values. In short, one would expect journalists dealing directly with multicultural issues in their work – those who are for example assigned to a 'multicultural beat' in the newsroom – to be actively negotiating between the constraints of occupa-
tional ideology and daily decision making regarding individual knowledge, representational issues and (perceived) responsibilities regarding diversity in Dutch society. A similar case can be made for shifts within the other two domains as well, as journalists who produce editorial content most exclusively for a Website may be quite acutely aware of the interplay between consensual ideology and learning (by doing) the art and craft of the new media profession of online journalism. Regarding infotainment, it has been noted in the previous chapter that the literature considers (supermarket) tabloids as the 'archetype' of news and entertainment crossover genres — suggesting that tabloid journalists and editors are those newspeople, who can be seen as sharing a practical consciousness on how tabloid journalism relates to the dominant ideology in their profession.

Figure 1 also relates to the replicated nationwide survey among journalists working for all media types in The Netherlands. Although several authors have tested several explanatory frameworks in order to determine how and why journalists do what they do, the overall conclusion of such studies must be that
journalists are both 'steered' by changing external factors, as well as 'guided' by their own individual, personal particularities (see comprehensive overviews in: Berkowitz, 1997; Weaver, 1998: 455-480; Tumber, 1999; Loeffelholz, 2000). Weaver for example maintains that the interplay between media organizational and actor variables most powerfully explains the behavior of professional journalists (in personal communication, June 1999). But he and his colleague Cleveland Wilhoit stress in their 1996 summary of three decades of US journalism surveys that a majority of journalists are pluralistic in their self-perceptions, and that most journalists indeed see themselves as serving seemingly contradictory functions in society (1996:141). This is an important conclusion for the project at hand as I am particularly looking for a way to conceptualize journalism, allowing for contradictory perspectives and interpretations of shared values in contemporary journalistic discourses as a discursive space; a way, found in the application of ideology as an overarching framework.

As journalists can be seen as both actors guided by discursive structural factors – society, economy, culture, media system and history – and influenced by personal characteristics (or: subjectivities) – background, upbringing, commitment, involvement, gender, ethnicity, age – the way to analyze data from journalists should take into account the apparent tensions between these principles. One should therefore stress the continuous negotiation between individual and collective level variables as shaping the behavior of "the people behind the keyboards", as Van Zoonen puts it (1998a: 123). Although Weischenberg for example also acknowledges the relative autonomy of individual newsworkers, the German scholar argues that their actions are to a certain extent shaped by media systemic, organizational and production variables (Weischenberg, 1995: 69). Others – particularly in the German tradition of communication research – have argued that all influences from 'the outside' on journalists and mass media decision-making are predominantly moderated by self-organization and self-referential processes within journalism (Kinceid, 1987; Krippendorff, 1987; Marcinowski, 1993; Huber, 1998: 49; Weber, 2000). Figure 11 attempts to deal with this particular research problem by emphasizing the continuous negotiation processes going on regarding the individual media actor – a negotiation between the dynamics of the journalist as a person and as a professional, each of which functions with its own characteristics, conditions, perceptions and (thus) factors of influence on news decision-making and media production.

Figure 11 is taken and adapted from Van Zoonen (1998a), where she attempts to model structure, agency and subjectivity in contemporary journalistic discourses. In this respect Van Zoonen suggests a definition of 'organizational identity' in jour-
A journalist's professional identity is shaped by the interplay between the structural constraints of the media production process and the diversity of subjective personal aspects. Essential to this understanding is its assumed dynamics between the concepts of structure and agency (Giddens, 1984). Although agency is a concept that by some authors is considered 'notoriously labile', it is understood in our context as the constitution of individual subjectivity through diffuse power relations (Sewell, 1992; Foucault, 1994). This approach connects the concepts of structure, agency and subjectivity in the model as presented in Figure 11, whereas Van Zoonen opts for agency as located primarily on the individual (right-hand) side of the model. Figuratively speaking, I would like to suggest that agency is the 'fuzzy' line around the discursive concept of the individual communicator's professional identity. In this I follow the original theoretical definition of agency offered by Giddens (1984: 9):

"Agency concerns events of which an individual is the perpetrator, in the sense that the individual could, at any phase in a given sequence of conduct, have acted differently."
Giddens' emphasis on the possibility of an action (in a given context) instead of the action itself, saves the analysis from overtly reductionist explanations—like for example claiming that journalists are either governed by media systemic, or economic, or cultural imperatives.

Beam (1990) has argued that the process of professionalism in journalism can be defined by looking at the identity of journalists as an organizational-level concept; as in the success of journalists in gaining control over the products and production processes within their organization. In figure 11 the notion of 'professional identity' is chosen instead of 'organizational identity', since the latter locates the media actor—like Beam does as well—within a more or less given medium-specific organizational context, which is hard to maintain in a contemporary situation where journalists can be seen as having multiple organizational identities—through working for different realms within one or more organization(s), 'windowing content', freelancing or producing content independent from organizational constructs for example as 'Net-native' reporters, in different ways structuring their own professional identity through the negotiation between structures and agency.6

What this particularly means in the project at hand, is that the quantitative and qualitative data gathered will be used as indicators of the context in which an individual journalist works. The concluding analyses and discussions in each chapter therefore address this in terms of how it helps us to understand the elements of structure, agency, and subjectivity in contemporary (Dutch) journalism. Using this model is particularly meaningful for this project, as it prevents the researcher to be trapped by either structurally-deterministic thinking (relying too heavily on one or more explanatory factors as elements of structure), or by overtly emphasizing a kind of solipsism in reasoning that only each and every individual account by a journalist is valid as an explanation of his or her behavior. In different circumstances and in different contexts, determinants change and are redefined— which consideration will be the underlying assumption when analyzing both the survey and in-depth interview data in the project at hand. In other words, what this conceptualization brings to the data gathering and analysis of the project at hand, can be seen as an investigation of:

- what journalists bring to their job(s);7
- in which structural context journalists perform their work;8
- how they perceive their roles and work in that context;9
- how certain journalists give meaning to the work that they do in terms of changes and challenges to the professional ideology of journalism.10
The methodological ramifications of this conceptualization of journalism regarding the survey (operational definitions, sampling, questionnaire) are described hereafter. As noted, the project at hand consists of quantitative as well as qualitative phases of data gathering and analysis. The conceptualization of journalism as an occupational ideology within which individual journalists' agency is negotiated through structural and subjective elements allows us to analyze both 'sets' of data more or less similarly, taking the viewpoint of the individual media professional as the starting point of interpretation. As all data in this project can be seen as texts by journalists (describing themselves, their competitor-colleagues, and their professional 'group'), these two models can be applied in structuring the analysis of those texts. What is described is the context within which a journalist in The Netherlands works, and how he or she gives meaning to his or her work. Taken together, these considerations should answer our research questions and purposes.

A final note on the conceptual approach in this project has to be made on the research questions, as these have been formulated in the previous chapter. These questions reflect the search for the relationships between (the characteristics of) individual journalists and their context – whether this is a national and international environment, a multicultural societal context, or whether this relates to a media professional working in a digitalized or 'infotaining' context. The questions have been formulated using articulation theory. The concept of articulation with respect to the research questions and data analyses is used in terms of the description Stuart Hall has offered, referring to the work of Laclau and Mouffe (1985):

"An articulation is thus the form of the connection that can make a unity of two different elements, under certain conditions. It is a linkage which is not necessary, determined, absolute and essential for all time [...] The theory of articulation [...] enables us to think how an ideology empowers people, enabling them to begin to make some sense or intelligibility of their historical situation, without reducing those forms of intelligibility to their socio-economic or class location or social position" (Hall, 1986: 53).

The relevance of the theory of articulation for this particular project lies in the fact that it allows the researcher to frame questions in terms of how (the professional ideology and practice of) journalism is articulated to (elements of the contemporary and historical embedding of) its contexts. Articulation theory should be seen as a way to broaden possible answers to a research question by looking at the widest possible variety of ways to examine the interlinkages between a concept (like journalism) and its context (for example: the multicultural society). As Hall (1986) himself has remarked on occasion, articulation is
not so much as a coherent set of propositions describing or explaining ‘reality’ - it should not be seen as a full-blown theory. It can however be seen as a useful tool to construct more or less ‘open’ research questions – which is the way I use it here.

As duly noted, I have used both a quantitative study and a qualitative research design for this project. The interpretation of these survey and in-depth interview data should be located in the same conceptualization of journalism, as presented above. This has specific consequences for the way in which I will draw conclusions per chapter, and how I will present the conclusions and discussion in the overarching final chapter (viii). The research purposes and questions have been framed using an articulated perspective, which allows for an exploration of the widest variety of ways how certain elements are connected. Modeling journalists according to its structures and subjectivities further builds on this assumption, as it locates different journalists or groups of journalists in an open setting in terms of their agency. Conceptualizing journalism furthermore in direct dialogue with contemporary developments in society which can be seen as having effects in one way or another on the way media practitioners go about their work, further helps us to assess the broader impact of the intermittent data and conclusions based on these data.

Design
The project at hand addresses a wide range of topics and contemporary issues within the broad field of what journalism can be expected to be. In doing so, it attempts to be sensitive towards a consensus in the recent literature on the need to redefine and widen our notions of what journalism is and who journalists can be perceived to be (Scholl, 1996: 333). This issue has also been addressed in the conceptual model of journalism (see Figure 1), by including the realms of infotainment, the Internet and the multicultural society and thus their respective journalism with an articulated understanding of professional journalism. Furthermore journalism has been modeled as a specific domain in (a democratic) society, which is more or less formally organized and performs certain tasks and functions that allow it to be identified as something other than for example the domain of public relations (PR). One could argue that the kind of journalism professionals in PR do, can be distinguished from journalism as it is specifically intended to create certain texts in service of a particular client (Scholl, 1997: 473). Most authors seem to agree that journalism is a more or less powerful prerequisite for contemporary (civil) society, since it gathers, selects and edits 'public' information which allows citizens to function better (as in: well-informed) in a democracy (see Ettema and Whitney, 1987; Zelizer, 1993; Bardoel, 1999). Figure 11 (above) further elaborates our understanding
of journalism from the perspective of the individual journalist as negotiating a professional identity, which means in terms of our definition that a professional communicator operates within the context of one or more media organizations, whether in a fulltime, part-time, independent contract of freelancing capacity. With respect to the individual communicator this means that journalists are considered to be those individuals working within one or more media-organizational contexts (be it fulltime, part-time, independent or freelance), who can be expected to perform at least one of four core tasks with respect to the journalists’ sphere of performance: selecting, researching (news-gathering), writing (newsprocessing) and editing news (following Scholl, 1996:335 and 1997:480). Other activities related to the journalists’ cultural system such as interpreting, qualifying and sourcing operate through these four tasks and therefore are problematic when one attempts to define them as distinct operations (Schudson, 1995:14).

In terms of exclusiveness this assumption refers to journalists in different hierarchical positions (from the editor-in-chief and news director to the trainee and intern), working within the physical or contractual context of newsrooms of Dutch media outlets and organizations, therefore discounting the many (both Dutch and foreign) journalists working for foreign media, wire services and organizations in The Netherlands. An editorial board or newsroom is seen as an independent working unit within a media organization – whereas a media organization can be referred to on two levels as a broadcast, print or cable (including online) media outlet and as a media organization incorporating more than one media outlet (such as a publishing house like Wegener or a broadcasting organization like the Holland Media Groep). One may note here that because of the process towards full digitalization of all media formats involved it has become increasingly difficult to speak of different ‘types’ of media in the convergent industry of today (Dahlgren, 1996; Bardoe and Deuze, 2001). The definition in this project therefore will not adopt the segmented approach of the most recent national survey of (n=237) Dutch journalists, which project both used medium-specific operationalizations and different questionnaires for four ‘groups’ of reporters and editors: press (mainstream news and special interest magazines), television and radio (see Van Gaalen-Oordijk, Offenberg and De Vries, 1993:131).

By using the criterion of the media organization as the key defining mechanism, one should take the organizational segmentation of journalism into account. Traditionally the literature talks of segmentation along lines of format or genre: dividing up journalism into print and broadcast media, news agencies and media services or between mainstream general interest (cf. the Weaver
and Wilhoit-related studies) and special interest or 'popular' media (cf. work on US tabloid journalists by Bird, 1990 and 1992; Dutch gossip reporters by Van Zoonen, 1998b and 1998c). In this particular project these kind of distinctions are not used as a basis for a definition of journalists, because that would limit the options for including specific online and infotainment newsmedia, as well as for example excluding magazines that aim specifically at a 'multicultural' audience or set of topics.

The main issue to address in our definition of journalists is its appropriateness to use as a means for comparison with data findings from survey studies in other countries, notably the ones by Weaver and Wilhoit in the United States. As noted in chapter 1, such studies have – with exceptions in Finland where online journalists where specifically included, or in Germany and Great Britain where freelance journalists were also interviewed, or in France where only newspaper journalists were used as respondents – focused rather exclusively on 'hard' mainstream news journalism, as in full-time reporters and editors working for media types like newspapers, 'quality' public interest magazines, broadcast news programs and general news (wire) services (see: Heinonen, 1999; Scholl, 1997; McMane, 1998). Our definition does not exclude these categories, but adds new ones – therefore the data gathered can be used effectively for cross-national comparisons when cases are selected which are functionally equivalent, as Weischenberg and Sievert noted in a comparison between German and French journalism survey research (1998:397).

By deliberately including popular, online and multicultural fields in our definition, this particular project relates in its operationalizations strongly to the system-theoretical definition used by Weischenberg and Scholl in their 1993 face-to-face survey of German journalists (1998: 305-321) and to the definition chosen by Koecher in a survey (conducted in 1980) of German and British journalists, which specifically included journalists working in the fields of politics, business, local news, culture and sports (Koecher, 1986: 44; see also reports in: Donsbach, 1981 and 1983). Although the sampling procedures differed in these projects, both designs opted for including 'gray areas' in journalism into the operational definition of the professional journalist; Koecher by specifically labeling fields, Weischenberg and Scholl by defining journalism externally as a social system in society instead of distinguishing internally in (sub-) genres or fields.

This widening of the operational definition of journalism and journalists has implications for the overall research design of the project at hand. Because of the dual nature of this project – replicating the Weaver and Wilhoit survey, and studying particular (groups and individual) journalists in different do-
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mains of the media – different methods have been chosen to provide data and answers to the research questions. As argued earlier, this multimethod approach consisted of three distinct steps: [1] conducting a nationwide phone survey among a representative sample of journalists in The Netherlands; [2] theoretically oversampling and surveying specific segments of journalists according to the thematic research questions (the multicultural society: ethnic minority journalists, the Internet: online journalists, and popular culture: infotainment journalists); and [3] within each thematic segment selecting and in-depth (face-to-face) interviewing of experts.

The phone survey ran from September 1999 to January 2000. The phone interviews with samples of ethnic minority and infotainment journalists started parallel to the main survey in January 2000, and took until the end of February 2000 to complete. The online journalists were interviewed via a Website, where the same questionnaire (with some additional questions, see chapter v) was programmed in HTML-format, from August 1999 to October 1999. Online journalists have mainly been interviewed during March and April 2000. The in-depth interviews with multicultural experts were all held in May and June 2000. The infotainment experts – editors and journalists working for tabloids – were contacted and interviewed during May and June 2001. The planning of the interviews during these months was part deliberate (as some of the questions posed to the experts meant to be informed by the survey results), part dependent on practical constraints like finding a MA-student motivated to work with in conducting and transcribing the interviews. Details on selection and numbers of experts follow in their respective chapters (iv, v, vi) whereas chapter iii contains a full report on the data gathered in the first step of the project. In the following paragraphs the different sampling procedures for (parts of) the survey, the questionnaire and interviewing method, and the details of the qualitative second step of the project are addressed.

Sampling

Having established the elements of the dominant ideology of journalism, the realms by which this ideology can be seen as being challenged and coming to terms with the way in which to conceptualize, define and gather data on journalism and journalists, one should now turn to the operational construction of the main sample of journalists in The Netherlands. The operationalization of the concepts used in defining and modeling journalism is guided by two concerns: functional equivalence with the sample structures used by recent Weaver and Wilhoit-based studies in a number of comparable Western democracies – notably Germany, Great Britain, Australia and the US – and including fields of journalism appropriate for studying the realms of online
journalism, infotainment and journalism articulated with the multicultural society. In order to do so, a step by step approach was used in the sampling design by first defining and constructing a general sample of (mainstream) journalists and then designing different group samples within the three outliers of the mainstream.

For the general sample design, to be used in comparison with the Weaver and Wilhoit sample, the national organization of journalists – the Nederlandse Vereniging voor Journalisten (NVJ) – was contacted to see whether their member directory could be used. The NVJ claims to represent between 60% and 70% of all journalists in The Netherlands – which total population this organization estimates at approximately 14,000 people (source: NVJ statutes, 1999). An industry-wide study commissioned by the four Schools for Journalism in The Netherlands in 1993 extrapolated the number of journalists to a total of 11,525, predicting an increase by 2,000 journalists in the three years to come (Van Gaalen-Oordijk et al, 1993: 190-192). The same study also revealed that 59% of participants (who fulfilled the requirements for inclusion in the operational definition of our project and matched the membership criteria of the NVJ) were in fact members of the NVJ. Such figures suggest that the NVJ estimate is more or less on the mark. The literature furthermore suggests that journalism professionalization is generally seen as partly dependent on a degree of formal organization (Beam, 1990; see Vasterman and Aerden, 1995: 18-19 for The Netherlands).

A specific advantage of using the NVJ database was the fact that it contained a vast number of freelancers, which group of journalists can be seen as highly organized in The Netherlands. The same goes for journalists with a migrant background; the Werkgroep Migranten en Media (MenM; workgroup migrants and media) is a subsection of the NVJ, which has received an EU-award in 1999 as an example of 'good practice' regarding improving the organization and position of ethnic minority journalists in The Netherlands.

GENERAL SAMPLE. The NVJ generously agreed to a one-time only use of the relevant sections of the NVJ-address book. This revealed another advantage: the organization had subdivided its membership database into media formats, which allowed for including only those people who fitted the needs of the project. Included were: all freelancers (2,002) and journalists working for daily newspapers, general interest magazines, special interest magazines, national broadcast organizations (both public and commercial), regional broadcast organizations, new media (cf. Internet) en wire services (all-in-all 4,080 names). Since oversampling in any of these categories was not deemed
necessary, from the total list of 6,082 addresses every third person was selected to be included in the net sample for the phone survey, totaling 2,039 people. The listing of these respondents contained a number of inconsistencies and errors. In collaboration with the NVJ this list was cleared of:
- retired or unemployed journalists;
- people whose address was listed as 'unknown';
- people working as volunteers for small local broadcasters.

After clearing the final sample consisted of 1,151 journalists. Although this list of people was quite diverse (the membership database revealed type of labor contract, as well as medium-type and organization), each of the three identified realms had to be addressed separately as well in order to fulfill the needs of the thematic research questions. Although the chapters dealing specifically with the Internet, infotainment and the multicultural society will offer detailed descriptions of additional methods regarding the selection of expert interviewees, some key observations can be made here. Since the literature at hand describing populations of for example online journalists or infotainment reporters was either not available in terms of published studies or too unspecific in terms of appropriateness, three different approaches had to be used which fitted the contemporary realities within these realms in a satisfactory way, and were in accordance with existing research in these fields.

**Multicultural Sample.** In an effort to include more journalists with a migrant background in order to assess the issue of representation adequately, organizations for ethnic minority journalists (or journalism) in The Netherlands were contacted for their databases: The Stichting Omroep Allochtonen (STOA; broadcast reporters) and the Werkgroep Migranten en Media (MenM) agreed to do so. This resulted in an listing of well over 200 people. A problem with this list turned out to be that it also contained people working for media organizations – but not necessarily as journalists. Besides this it seemed that not all members of MenM were journalists with an ethnic minority background. By reworking the lists with representatives of the organizations involved the original list was narrowed down to names with addresses of 180 journalists and editors – with still some selections to be made during the phone survey itself regarding the issue of ethnic background. This approach was chosen deliberately to counter the expected low percentage of ethnic minority journalists in Dutch newsrooms in general (see for example Suudi and Burgemeestre, 1991; Ouaj, 1999). Although the MenM list cannot be seen as a systematically constructed, the status of the organization in The Netherlands is
generally considered to be representative, particularly for the so-called Randstad area (an area including the four main cities in The Netherlands which also have the largest number of migrant populations: Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht). The STOA list was constructed in 1998 through a survey among regional and national broadcasting organizations, in which interviewers used a snowball procedure to determine names and (private) addresses of all ethnic minority (fulltime, parttime or freelance) employees.¹⁵

INTERNET SAMPLE. In order to establish an online newsmedia population the online Dutch media database of Joris de Lange Tekst & Beeld Producties was used to identify and select titles with corresponding Websites.¹⁶ This database is based on the authoritative bi-annual Dutch media index, the Handboek van de Nederlandse Pers en Publiciteit. A list was made similar to the overall survey sampling design – therefore consisting of all newspapers, general interest and mainstream news magazines and national broadcasting organizations, also assuming these more or less ‘traditional’ media could be expected to have both the staff and content available to offer (some form of) news online. Regional broadcasters were excluded because of the fact that they get their national news from the main public broadcaster, the Nederlandse Omroep Stichting (NOS). National news was used as a criterion for journalism on the Internet, since the sample would become too unspecific in direction otherwise (considering the World Wide Web being a breeding ground for thousands and thousands of specialized and often unprofessional sites providing some form of news content). Added to this was a listing of all general news sites provided by either Internet Service Providers (with nationwide reach) or ‘Net native’ general news services. A second selection criterion was the need for one or more published editorial email addresses on the site itself. This criterion was chosen for the reason that it allowed both researcher and news consumer to directly approach the Internet journalist(s) via the published content online (Deuze, 1999: 383). In general online newsmedia choose to provide a single editorial address (Schultz, 1999). In total, the number of Dutch newsmedia which had a presence on the Internet in terms of a Website containing one or more editorial e-mail address(es) at the time of the project was 67; 33 newspapers, 16 broadcasters, 6 general interest news magazines and 12 online-only news sites. These 67 sites generated a total of 133 editorial and personal e-mail addresses.

In order to gain a full picture about the identity and size of journalistic population online, a phone survey was conducted to ask for information from the Internet desks of all 67 news outlets available online concerning the number of journalists employed there (either fulltime, freelance, part-time or via inde-
pendent contract) to produce editorial content specifically for the Internet. This step is relevant considering the emphasis among professionals and scholars alike on creating (original) editorial content as the central defining characteristic of online journalism (Deuze, 1998 and 2001d; Pavlik, 1999 and 2001). The nature of journalistic activities for which relevant information was obtained, referred to both editorial supervision of news and other informative (not commercial) items being shoveled from parent media or other sources and to the production of original editorial content. This follow-up resulted in two main findings. For 14 (21%) of these 67 sites, online presence did not coincide with offering any kind of journalistic content, be it hard or soft news, custom news, interviews, general or special interest features and other kinds of information which requires editorial supervision to obtain a form presentable to the public and distinguishable from advertising/promotional content. The exclusive use of their Web sites for sales or PR is the main reason why several public and commercial journalistic companies do not employ journalists for their Web sites. In addition to this, several media publish their URLs and were therefore initially included in the list of media with presence on the Internet, while in fact their Web pages were still under construction at the time – and in most cases, these media only work with a (small) technical staff. This further reduced the number of included sites by 5. Apparently, the employees of these two categories of Web sites can not be expected to be represented in the study, since they do not qualify as online journalists. Of the 48 remaining sites, 15 reported not employing online journalists or being part of a joint initiative of a publisher (such as for example regional daily newspapers of publisher Wegen-er, or the magazines published by the VNU). This reduced the overall number of sites to 33. The second finding revealed a more or less valid estimate – since it still relies to some extent on the perception of who is and who is not an online journalist by the media organizations contacted – of the total number of journalists working for the 33 online news publications with (some kind of) editorial content: 135.¹⁷

INFOTAINMENT SAMPLE. Working on an operational definition of infotainment journalism proved to be quite difficult, since even the most coherently worded definition of 'infotainment' did not offer guidelines for selecting or excluding media professionals. Our approach to this problem can be described as a theoretical sampling procedure: sampling on the basis of concepts that have proven relevance to the evolving theory (see Strauss and Corbin, 1990: 176-193). The approach of Brants was used, in which the Dutch scholar claims that infotainment mixes information elements in entertainment media and mixes entertainment characteristics in traditional news media (1998: 13).
As argued in chapter 1, this basically means that all journalism can be located on a continuous infotainment scale – which perhaps is not particularly helpful for determining a specific infotainment sample (see also Winch, 1997; Sparks, 2000: 10-16). But since the main focus and interest in this project is the journalist as an individual, the dominant assumption of what infotainment is (and what it is not) among the professional communicators themselves – as reflected in the literature was used to base our sampling procedure upon. As argued in the first chapter, this would mean constructing a sample of newsmedia clearly aimed to be entertaining or in terms of the literature: ‘popular’: lifestyle, gossip, sports and specific human-interest genres (Sparks, 1992: 38-39). Since the consensus in the literature seems to be that tabloid-style magazines are in fact the archetypes of infotainment journalism, these (print and broadcast) magazines can be used as a starting point for constructing an effective infotainment sample (Esser, 1999: 291-293).

Sparks identifies five types of printed press in the continuum between the ‘serious’ and the ‘tabloid’:
- the serious press;
- the semiserious press;
- the serious-popular press;
- the newsstand tabloid press; and
- the supermarket tabloid press (Sparks, 2000: 14-15).

Although there are no supermarket tabloids in The Netherlands – such as the Weekly World News in the US or the News of the World in Great Britain – there do appear at least four ‘typical’ gossip-style magazines on the print market (Van Zoonen, 1998b; Bakker and Scholten, 1999). Our definition of Dutch infotainment print media can therefore be located within types three and four of Sparks’ definition. From the database of the national organization of publishers (NUV) all so-called ‘glossy’ lifestyle (including specific male and/or female genres) and mainstream sports magazines were selected: 26 magazines in total. The magazine market in The Netherlands is media-savvy to say the least: more than 1,000 special interest titles appear weekly or monthly on the shelves, but the top-100 as listed online by the NUV, reflect the largest share of the market (Bakker and Scholten, 1999: 38). For newspapers the corresponding ‘infotaining’ sections (or: beats) of the five mainstream national daily newspapers were subsequently identified: lifestyle, sports, (celebrity) gossip and popular culture: 25 separate sections in sum which can be defined as being part of ‘popular journalism’, which are seen as applying different news values and priorities than ‘quality’ sections of the newspaper in terms of topics and stories (Sparks, 1988). For national radio and television programs, talkshows were
handpicked as being typical examples of infotainment journalism (see for example Peck, 1998). As a criterion the format of the talkshow was used, with as a further distinction the appearance of people and topics clearly related to the aforementioned elements of infotainment, resulting in a listing of 24 radio and 20 television programs. The analysis of the newspaper and magazine editorial directories and a follow-up phone survey among the broadcast organizations involved put the total number of contributing journalists at 951, working in a total of \((26+25+24+20=)\) 95 editorial teams or newsrooms. This population was stratified in terms of newsrooms: our intention was to interview one journalist per editorial team. Although such a procedure does not offer a representative group of respondents, it does allow for groupwide comparisons (for example between newsrooms of gossip-style magazines and television talkshows) and for testing of theoretical hypotheses about characteristics of infotainment journalists.

All in all, these procedures formed the basis for the survey. The database was thus compiled of a general sample \((n=1,151)\), a multicultural sample \((n=180)\), an infotainment sample \((n=95)\) and an online sample \((n=155)\), totaling 1,581 journalists. These neat numbers seem to suggest that hereby a more or less full account has been given of the 'state of the art' with respect to the number of journalists working in The Netherlands – and even specifically within certain fields or realms of Dutch journalism. There are limitations to this approach, though. Any sampling design does not only not include, but also exclude people. In this particular project lack of comprehensive media directories and registration of editorial employees within media organizations prohibit a full understanding of numbers in journalism. These samples are further complicated by the fact that for establishing operational definitions of online and infotainment journalists no published methodological frameworks are available at this time. Each time, the dominant definitions and consensus among journalists and scholars in the literature at hand was used as a point of departure for establishing frameworks. By locating the sampling design as much as possible in the self-perceptions and definitions of journalists it is argued here that the limitations of the concluding numbers can be justified as being acceptable given the aim and purpose of the study at hand.

**Survey Methodology**

The project replicates existing journalism survey research internationally, more or less following the design of Weaver and Wilhoit related studies. The methodological issues involved are well-established worldwide – even taken for granted, if one considers the fact that few published projects in this regard
provide elaboration on the specifics of the methods applied (see reports in Weaver, 1998). The survey method has been supplemented in the project at hand with face-to-face expert interviews (applied to theoretical samples in the thematic sections) and a Web-based survey (for the online journalists), of which details follow in the respective chapters. Central to our understanding of the characteristics of journalists in The Netherlands is the questionnaire as constructed by Johnstone, Slawski and Bowman in the US (1976) and adapted by Weaver and Wilhoit (1996). Scholars like Delano in Great Britain, Henningham in Australia and Schönbach in Germany have closely collaborated with Weaver in the early 1990s for their specific national surveys of journalists in order to facilitate cross-national comparisons of data findings. The collection of national survey reports in the 1998 volume edited by Weaver reflect an increased interest – both in terms of scholarly attention and financial sponsoring – and perceived relevance of systematic surveys of journalists in the 1980s and 1990s (Weaver, 1998: 2). The surveys in the countries functionally relevant for the project at hand – Western democracies with similar developments in terms of journalism professionalization and modernization (Australia, Great Britain, Germany and the United States) – were all conducted in the early 1990s via phone, using CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing). The scholars involved all worked together (in-) formally with Weaver regarding constructing and wording of the questionnaire, exchanging data and interpreting results.

**QUESTIONNAIRE.** The questionnaire used in the Dutch survey has been adapted from the questionnaires of the most recent journalism survey studies (which were based on the Weaver and Wilhoit design). A set of questions both relevant to the particularities of the Dutch situation as well as enabling international comparison was constructed. Starting points were the original standardized questionnaires of David Weaver and Cleveland Wilhoit (last used in 1992, in 1996: 255-273) and the German surveys of Schönbach, Stuerzebecher and Schneider (survey conducted in 1992, in 1994: 481-497) and Weischenberg and Scholl (used in Germany from April to September 1993). By replicating these well-established and tested questionnaires one may expect functional equivalence with the findings of survey studies in a cross-national comparison (see chapter 111). The main focus of the phone interview: getting the basic, occupational (Weaver: “working conditions”) and professional characteristics (Weaver: “professional values”) of the respondents, allowing for questions to be framed in terms of the differentiation in media systems and values in journalism between countries and within The Netherlands in particular (Weischenberg, 1998: 405-407).
ITEMS. The questionnaire (see appendix 1) followed the structure and design of the examples in the US and Germany closely, starting with a series of occupational characteristics and leaving the sociodemographic variables to the end of the interview. The Dutch questionnaire contained 74 items, the American and German lists were somewhat longer: 83 and 87 (not counting many subdivided items). The occupational characteristics shed light on the structural contexts within which journalists work. In total 33 variables (15 nominal, 8 ordinal, 10 ratio) measured tenure, salary, type of media organization, specialization (if any), relationships with colleagues and the audience, use of Internet and mobile phone and daily practices on the job. Included were also a list of daily tasks on the job; the respondents were asked to estimate how much time they spent on average on each task. Tasks included time spent on newsgathering, editing one’s own or a colleague’s work, and newsroom management. Recent studies have suggested that journalists spend more time in the office than some decades ago – due to the increased availability of electronic resources and time spent on meetings and other management-related tasks – which prompted these items in the questionnaire.

The next set of questions were dubbed professional characteristics, as these were intended to show how journalists perceive their roles and work in terms of changes and challenges to the profession of journalism. In sum 29 variables (all ordinal) measured images of audience, role perceptions and ethics. Although the role perceptions were measured with a fairly standard set of items (introduced by Johnstone, Slawski and Bowman in the 1970s, with additions by Weaver and Wilhoit in the 1980s), I added items from the recent Weischenberg and Scholl questionnaire in Germany (1998) to allow for a wider comparison of media roles, asking journalists for example also how important they rated signaling new trends, standing up for the disadvantaged, and provide a good editorial context for advertisers. It was expected (and proven in the German case) that such role perceptions would shed more light on the level of social and commercial involvement of journalists.

Each interview concluded with 10 items on basic characteristics – on what journalists bring to the job – regarding age, gender, ethnicity, education, political and religious views, household situation. The standard items and Likert rating scales (3-5) used in the original questionnaires to determine image of audience, role perceptions, ethics and working conditions were replicated without editing (except for issues related to translation). Especially the question of ethnicity was cause for concern in this study, as the question of whether or not include someone’s ethnic background in for example news stories is a sensitive and hotly debate issue in The Netherlands (see for example Sterk, 2000).
stead of offering respondents specific 'ethnic' categories to choose from, it was decided to first ask them whether or not they were willing to answer a question regarding their ethnic background. When they accepted, the interviewers asked the journalist in question to describe his or her background. These answers were pre-coded in the so-called governmental 'TMSA' categories (Turkish, Moroccan, Surinam, Antillean; a term used in government documents regarding the largest migrant communities in The Netherlands), plus Indonesian/Moluccan and 'other' (which category was entered in the statistical computer program SPSS as a string variable as well).

**Interview Methodology.** The choice of interview method is an important factor when attempting to answer the research questions in a way that can state a claim to validity. It has been noted in the literature that interviewing journalists is problematic in terms of validity – since reporters are aware of professional interview techniques (Van Cuilenburg et al, 1992: 238). Most contemporary survey studies have opted for interviews by phone – for example in Australia, Great Britain and the US – although the most recent survey conducted face-to-face interviews only in Germany, whereas Thomas Patterson and Wolfgang Donsbach's recent “Media and democracy” cross-national journalism survey project used interviews via regular mail (1996). Another journalism survey project in Australia (of May 1998) used interviews via an electronic mailing list.²⁰

In this project phone interviews were used as the basis for the general survey. The literature suggests a number of advantages and disadvantages of several interview methods (see in particular: Den Boer, Bouwman, Frissen and Houben, 1994: 108-109; Converse and Presser, 1986; Billiet, 1994: 215-23; for computer methods the Web Survey Methodology www-site was used <http://www.websm.org/>). Although many of these 'pros and cons' can be addressed effectively in certain situations regarding certain populations and research problems, these advantages and disadvantages can also be attributed to general journalism survey projects (see the various chapters in Weaver, 1998). The main advantages of using phone interviews are: it is a good way to get the attention of 'busy' people in an office environment, it is less expensive than for example a face-to-face project like Weischenberg and Scholl's in Germany (1998), and there is more social control possible regarding explanation and elaboration on certain questions than in for example a mail survey. Disadvantages include that a phone interview has to be (relatively) brief and simple, and it can be intrusive as it interrupts the daily program of the respondent. As the survey intended to more or less replicate the Weaver and Wilhoit-studies, the choice for the telephone interview was made early in the project. Since the NVJ-
address book allowed us to select respondents with access to their personal information, each potential respondent was sent a personal letter describing the project at hand. The letter explained that the individual journalists were selected from the database with support of the NVJ and were kindly invited to cooperate if an interviewer would contact them. From the interviews I could conclude that almost every respondent remembered receiving this letter.

FIELDWORK. The phone survey interviews were conducted in a newly established research laboratory at the Amsterdam School of Communications Research, the so-called 'Comlab'. The interviewers responded to ads in the University of Amsterdam newspaper Folia and to personal e-mails to former students.21 The Comlab consists of eight cubicles equipped with phones, headsets and computers that run on a separate network server. There is also an area with a central phone, desk and conference table from where one can monitor proceedings. The full list of respondents was printed on separate sheets and randomly distributed among the interviewers (including the author), who each worked for a maximum of 4 hours daily (2 days a week). Every sheet contained 22 respondents; each name was marked when called but unavailable because of absence, refusal or when an appointment for the interview at a later time was made, and crossed out when actually interviewed. After completing one sheet, the interviewer would receive another sheet. The interviews started on 9am and lasted until 6pm; respondents were called at their offices. In case of respondents working night shifts, they were contacted later on in the month in order to get them during daytime. This was done mainly because of the practical issue of (not) getting interviewers who could work late hours and the fact that the University building closes anywhere between 5pm on Fridays and 9pm on other weekdays.

Concluding this section on the fieldwork of the phone and online survey, information on response rates can be mentioned. The original database of the survey phase consisted of a general sample (n=1,151), a multicultural sample (n=180), an infotainment sample (n=95) and an online sample (n=155), totaling 1,581 journalists. In total 773 interviews with respondents in the original sample were completed within the time set for the project (September-November 1999 and February 2000). For the main sample the refusal rate was 1%, the response rate (a net sample of approximately 900 successful calls made, 773 completed interviews, our aim was for at least 700 respondents) was 86%. The multicultural sample turned out to be quite a 'contaminated' list, as many of the names on for example the database supplied by the SroA referred to ethnic minorities working for broadcast organizations - but as for example caterers and secretaries. The MenM list had the same problems as the overall NVJ data-
base (MenM is a formal section of the NVJ): a lot of people had moved, were unemployed or retired. In total 91 interviews were completed within this sample of 180, of which 59 people said they had a non-Dutch ethnic background. The infotainment sample contained 95 journalists, of which 15 refused cooperation: 80 interviews were completed (response rate: 84%). Most of these refusals were based on a protest against being dubbed ‘infotainment journalist’, or on a perceived lack of time. The completion rate of the online questionnaire comes up to 66 people, putting the response rate at 43% of the estimated total online journalistic staff size at the time of the survey. An important reason for this low response rate is that a lot of online journalists at mainly regional newspapers are merely functioning as webmasters, responsible for maintaining their medium's website (and nothing more). Another problem was the way newsrooms respond to e-mail: successful receipt depended many times on the initiative of a secretary to distribute a printed copy of our initial mail among all journalists. This did not work very well, as most of the e-mail addresses we found were general (as in: 'newsroom@medium.nl') ones.

Qualitative Research Design

The second phase of the project concerns the relationships of Dutch journalism with developments regarding the multicultural society, the Internet and infotainment. As argued earlier, an articulated perspective allows for a broad range of relationships to be studied. These relationships have been conceptualized as the different and sometimes inconsistent ways in which journalists give meaning to their work, thereby constantly negotiating their professional identity with elements of structure (cf. the context in which they work) and subjectivity (cf. what they bring to the job). Following Giddens, these elements are seen as both enabling as well as constraining the range of actions and choices for individuals (1984). The notion of a more or less shared occupational ideology can be seen as instrumental in this conceptualization, as it functions as an overarching discursive set of ideal-typical values, carried by journalists through common discourse, and functioning as (less than clear) benchmarks in their work. To the various survey designs I added a distinctly qualitative method for gathering data, in order to allow informants to talk as open and freely as possible about their work. As the operational approach in all three thematic sections of this project the in-depth expert interview was chosen. Within each theme the experts in the field were defined, identified and contacted for interview appointments. The interviews with multicultural experts were structured by the concepts of knowledge – representation – responsibility, and the Internet experts were questioned regarding CAR and online journalism. Interviews with experts in popular journalism have been informed
by perceived distinctions between information and entertainment. Although the corresponding chapters iv, v and vi offer more details on the relevant and specific literature, and the fieldwork and analyses involved, here I will address the methodological steps taken in gathering and preparing the data of these in-depth interviews for analysis.

Qualitative research is often distinguished from quantitative designs using the conflicting concepts 'objectivist science' and 'soft scholarship', or applying a distinction of data between 'quantitative' numbers and 'qualitative' words (De Boer and Brennecke, 1998; Schwandt, 2000). Recent historical assessments of qualitative research argue, that such distinctions are somewhat artificial, as scholars in all disciplines rely on interpretative narrative accounts when reporting their data, theories or models (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). Or, as Byrne remarks in a book on complexity theory and the social sciences: "...quantitative is merely qualitative which has not yet become qualitative" (1998: 175). By using a multimethod (triangulated) approach – like in the project at hand – one should be able to secure more or an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question (Flick, 1998: 229-231). Weaver and Wilhoit (1996; 1998) for example supplemented their reports on the quantitative survey data with anecdotal references to interviews with American editors and reporters. Weisenberg and Scholl (1998) even more or less replicated the American survey design solely using face-to-face interviews instead of faceless phoners. The main difference between this project and those attempts is, that I use the qualitative part of the study not as a (mere) supplement, but as an equal part of the overall research design in order to better grasp the complex and contextualized realities of the work of journalists in The Netherlands. In doing so, I accept the following definition of the application of qualitative research in the project at hand by Denzin and Lincoln:

"Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world [...] this means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (2000: 3).

By opting for interviews with experts per theme, I consider that what these journalists and editors say constitutes the wide variety of meanings they bring to the phenomena under investigation: multiculturalism, digitalization, and infotainmentization. This project utilizes the transcribed in-depth interviews with (expert) professionals to explore and analyze the various ways in which they give meaning to their everyday work. The analysis of the interview transcripts closely follows the so-called 'Grounded Theory' (GT) coding procedure as offered by Strauss and Corbin (1990) and Wester (1987). Strauss and Corbin (1990)
identify three coding steps: open, axial and selective. Wester (1987) mentions four: exploration, specification, reduction and integration. Heinze (1995) describes six more or less similar steps: formal text-analysis, structural description of text-content, analytical abstraction, interpretation, comparative analysis of multiple texts and construction of a (theoretical) model. These three approaches share the characteristics of the inductive scientific method: starting the analysis with a 'tabula rasa'-agenda (cleared as much as possible of a priori concepts), then slowly and reflexively constructing building blocks out of the available texts, finally working towards a model containing all relevant concepts and categories used by the actors to give meaning to their social world(s).

By selecting and coding each sentence or phrase in the transcript, the open coding sequence was used to identify the various topics and issues, which were addressed by the participating journalists. This results a variety of different topics. These were then grouped and labeled. In the axial coding phase, the statements were categorized and tested against the transcripts to verify whether our grouping matched the setting offered in the interviews. These steps result in more or less distinct topical categories, allowing the researcher to summarize what people are talking about when confronted with the phenomenon under study. The selective coding phase – reducing the categories to a concept or a coherent model – was omitted from the analysis, as the approach in the project at hand is directed towards allowing the full bandwidth of views and opinions (however inconsistent or contradictory these may be) to be explored.

The third coding phase in the analysis is based on the work of discourse analysts Potter and Wetherell (1987). Their work can be seen as an addition to the GT-approach as it provides a way to interpret the inherent inconsistencies of concepts and categories, by regrouping and understanding propositions in terms of possible repertoires, used by participants (like theatre actors) to perform certain roles in everyday life and give meaning to the issues at hand. The propositions of which the topical categories consist, are built on utterances of people, and therefore inherently consist of shifting, inconsistent and varied accounts as people describe their social worlds not as neatly and coherently as one would wish (as a social scientist). Wetherell and Potter offer a way to pattern the 'regularity in the variation' by looking at interview transcripts to lay bare interpretative repertoires. They write:

"Inconsistencies and differences in discourse are differences between relatively internally consistent, bounded language units which we have called [...] interpretative repertoires. [...] Repertoires can be seen as the building blocks speakers use for constructing versions of actions, cognitive processes and other phenomena" (1988: 172).
In the analytical procedure the topical categories are considered to be an index of what journalists talk about when discussing multiculturalism, the Internet or infotainment. The repertoires are seen as the full range of ways to talk about these topics. The main question is, in other words, to see how journalists make sense of the three selected themes. The final step of the analysis involved assigning labels to the repertoires and explore in which ways these repertoires were used by the interviewees to discursively give meaning to what they do. Concluding this overview of the qualitative design chosen in this project, I would like to quote Coster Meijer, where she specifies that an analysis of repertoires is particularly helpful for scholars to determine not only what these repertoires are used for, but also how these may be used by scholars to help informants to better understand themselves, as she writes: "[...] discursive repertoires are important, but flexible organizing tools for making sense of everyday dilemma’s" (2001b: 23).

The use of interpretative repertoires in the analysis of the in-depth interviews also connects with the use of (consensual) occupational ideology as the overarching framework for thinking about journalism in contemporary society. Ideology (like religion) can be seen as an answer to the inconsistencies of everyday life, and serves particularly on a professional level as a social cement for a certain group in society as it is ‘carried’ by members of a profession. Through the analysis of repertoires, I aim to show the various ways in which this mobilizing potential works for journalists working in specific arenas of the contemporary media.

Summary
The two introductory chapters set the stage for the empirical chapters ahead. The argument has established journalism as a domain in society that performs certain tasks and functions in (Western) democracies that have allowed it to be identified and defined accordingly. During the 20th century journalism has professionalized to the extent that its professionals have freed themselves from political and religious interests. These professionals have been studied extensively throughout this professionalization process, which has led to the establishment of a well-tested research design for studying and in particular surveying journalists. A number of key contemporary developments in the milieu of journalism were identified and explored: journalism and its roles in a multicultural society, the rise and establishment of infotainment in journalism and the impact of new media technologies such as the Internet on journalism. It was argued that any contemporary study on journalism should take these developments into account when developing research questions, models, definitions and an analytical framework aimed at adequately describing and ex-
plaining the basic, occupational and professional characteristics of journalists (in The Netherlands).

The next four chapters address data gathering and analyses on the profile of Dutch journalists (iii), the role of journalism in the Dutch multicultural society (iv), the impact of the Internet on journalism (v), and regarding infotainment and tabloid journalism in The Netherlands (vi).