

Is the Internet 'Europeanizing' or 'Americanizing' Global Journalism? An Analysis of the Form of Print and Online Newspapers in Denmark, France and the U.S.

Authors: Rodney Benson, Matthew Powers, Sandra Vera, Ida Willig, Mark Orsten.

Abstract

This study examines the extent to which media system differences in print newspapers (neo-liberal U.S., polarized pluralist France, and democratic corporatist Denmark) are preserved online or whether the shift to online is leading to cross-media system convergence, either toward a more commercial/informational style journalism or a more deliberative/commentary-oriented journalism. Quantitative analysis of the "form of news" shows: U.S. and French newspapers, moving from print to online, become more commercialized, more localized, and more "light" news oriented, while also shifting, if only slightly, toward more opinion, deliberation, and non-journalistic voices.

Nevertheless, both online and print, U.S.-French differences remain, and Danish newspapers, surprisingly, tend to be the most commercialized and information-oriented. Findings thus support both "medium" and "media system" hypotheses.

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Introduction

Previous cross-national comparative research has shown that the form and content of news continue to vary significantly across national boundaries (see, e.g., Esser, 1999; Ferree, Gamson, Gerhards, & Rucht, 2002; Strömbäck & Dimitrova, 2006). But does this pattern hold for online news? To what extent and in what ways are existing cross-national differences in print newspapers being maintained or transformed online, due to the unique technological characteristics and geographic reach of the internet? This study, a comparison of U.S., Danish, and French newspapers – both the print and online versions – seeks to put these questions to the test.

Hallin and Mancini (2004) argue for the persistence of three distinct media systems within Europe and North America that result in markedly different relations between journalism, politics, and the larger society: the (laissez-faire) “liberal” model of the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom, versus the more state-dominated “polarized pluralist” model of France and southern Europe, and “democratic corporatist” model of Germany, Scandinavia, and other central and northern European countries.

These cross-national differences have been maintained, Hallin and Mancini argue, for a variety of reasons, including state laws and regulations, links between media and political parties, journalistic professional traditions, and structure of audience and advertising markets. As a result, the content and form of news and opinion ought to differ in these systems – including such aspects as the relationship between news and opinion writing, the mix of journalistic and non-journalistic authors, and the formats through

which information and ideas are presented (such as news analyses, commentaries, excerpts from other media, transcripts of interviews, etc.). Through such distinctive writing styles and formats, journalists in each of these systems crucially shape democratic participation and debate in the public sphere (Wessler, 2008).

While Hallin and Mancini's work is path-breaking in many ways, it does not examine to any significant extent online media. Moreover, this comparative media systems model does not theorize the ways that new technologies may be producing global convergence. Global convergence is usually conceived of as "Americanization" (Hallin & Mancini, 2004), defined as a more news-oriented, commercialized journalism, but it seems just as likely that convergence, if there is any, will be toward a more "European"-style deliberative and opinion-oriented journalism (Bertrand, 1995). Although an increasing number of international and cross-national studies of online media (e.g., Reese & Rutigliano, 2004; Van der Wurff, 2005) or comparisons of print and online media (e.g., Barnhurst, 2002) are being conducted, there has not yet been a systematic comparison of both print and online newspapers representing distinct western "media systems."

Literature Review

To what extent should we expect print newspapers and their online versions to be similar or different across "media systems"? The scholarly literature in the sociology of news, new institutionalism, and new media studies suggests three broad schools of thought.

The new institutionalist or field approach suggests that all media, whether print or online, within a given national context will tend to share important characteristics. There is good reason to believe that Hallin and Mancini's conclusions about print newspapers will also hold for online media as well, since most of the leading online news media sites are owned by traditional offline media, and are linked in myriad economic, cultural, linguistic and social ways to other media in their respective national journalistic fields. Indeed, at the *New York Times*' website, Boczkowski (2004, pp. 86-87) shows that online journalists largely "repurposed" rather than transformed "editorial practices" from the print version, including "the dominance of textual material, the pre-established length [of stories] ... and the relatively fixed publication cycle." This is also the conclusion of the special issue of *Gazette* on European internet newspapers edited by van der Wurff, who writes: "online newspapers are subordinate and subservient to print news media" (2005, p. 107).

At the same time, institutional and field approaches suggest that professional practices may be reinforced (or altered) not only at the level of individual media companies but at the broader field or institutional context in which they exist. In this vein, Boczkowski and de Santos (2007) find an increased level of homogeneity in online news coverage not only between a news organization's "dominant" print product and its "subservient" online version but between news organizations, where a nascent culture of professional monitoring leads to homogenized coverage across media outlets. Thus, Boczkowski and de Santos suggest the dominant characteristics of a national media system will only be reinforced online.

Alternatively, medium theory (Meyrowitz, 1994) would suggest that online media themselves have certain characteristics that make them markedly different from print news and that will tend to unite them across national boundaries – either in an Americanizing (e.g. higher levels of commercialization and fact-based reporting) or Europeanizing (e.g. higher levels of opinion, commentary and discussion) direction.

In the Americanizing direction, Barnhurst and Nerone (2001, p. 285) argue that the “most striking quality of on-line newspapers is the dominance of promotion [and] advertising ...” According to the internet industry research group, Forrester Research, internet advertising and e-commerce “introduce new tensions to the media’s perennial balancing act between editorial integrity and the bottom line” (cited in McChesney, 2000, pp. 173-174). In a study of online journalism, Cohen (2002, p. 537) similarly finds that “the online commercial news environment increases market pressure at all levels.” In the online environment, competition for audiences is also intensified, placing a premium on often sensationalistic breaking news or human interest (lifestyle, entertainment, etc.) news (Fenton, 2009).

Finally, while this commercialization of mainstream media websites seems indisputable, it appears to be co-existing with other aspects of the medium which may be “Europeanizing” rather than Americanizing online journalism around the world. Barnhurst and Nerone (2001, p. 294) emphasize how online media break down local information monopolies that were crucial in establishing American-style non-partisan media (since a single urban newspaper had to appeal to audiences across partisan divides). Now that audiences can (and increasingly do, see Thurman, 2007) access London’s *Guardian* just as easily as their hometown newspaper website, there is the

possibility at least of a global marketplace for news and opinion, with “opinion” in particular serving to distinguish one media outlet from another. This rise of more opinion-oriented journalism on the net has been noted by journalism scholars and prominent “traditional” journalists alike (see, e.g., Kovach and Rosenstiel, 2001, p. 140; Singer, 2003, p. 153). Yet the empirical research on this development is mixed. Cassidy (2005) finds no significant differences between online and print journalists in their self-perceptions of professional journalists as “populist mobilizers” of public opinion, suggesting that opinionated reporting tends not to differ between print and online news. Likewise, the Europeanizing model suggests a greater variety of perspectives and voices in the presentation of news, though Cohen (2002, p. 540) finds: “There is little indication that online news organizations attempt to seriously enable viewers to become 'co-authors' in the presentation of their news.”

Hypotheses

This article posits causal relationships between, on the one hand, either (a) media systems, as repositories of political, economic, and cultural institutional constraints, or (b) technological capacities and potentials as embodied in internet technology (Deuze, 2003), and on the other hand, the “form” of news. As Barnhurst and Nerone define it (2001, p. 3), form is “the persisting visible structure of the newspaper Form includes the things that are traditionally labeled layout and design and typography; but it also includes habits of illustration, genres of reportage, and schemes of departmentalization.”

All hypotheses concern the following elements of news form that have been argued (Hallin and Mancini, 2004; Albert, 2004) to especially distinguish “(neo-)liberal”

Anglo-American news media and “polarized pluralist” southern European news media: (a) relative prominence of advertising; (b) mixing of genres of news content, especially information and commentary; (c) relative emphasis on discussion and deliberation, as evidenced by interactive (either synchronous or asynchronous) genres such as interview transcripts, bulletin-board forums, and live chats; (d) incorporation of texts or images produced by non-journalists, whether academics, activists, or unaffiliated individuals; and (e) relative focus on more audience-friendly “light” human interest (lifestyle, entertainment) or “sensationalistic” news (e.g., crime, natural disasters, etc.) versus “serious” political news. Because the “democratic corporatist” model is a mix of the opposing structural elements of the “(neo-) liberal” and “polarized pluralist” models, we should likewise expect its news content and form to be a “hybrid” (Kraidy, 2005) of the other two models.

Hypothesis 1: Because media models (configurations of state policies, media markets, and journalistic professional traditions) as manifested in particular national journalistic fields shape both internet and print newspaper content, we should expect internet and print newspapers to be substantially the same in each country (U.S., Denmark, France). Likewise, there should be significant cross-national media differences, with French media especially in relation to U.S. media, offering (a) lesser prevalence and prominence of advertising, (b) greater proximity of information to commentary, (c) higher prominence and overall prevalence of deliberation formats, d) higher prominence and overall prevalence of non-journalist produced content and (e) greater topical focus on political, government and international news, and lesser focus on “light” news (such as leisure, arts and culture, health, sports, and weather) or

“sensational” news (crime and courts, natural disasters). We would expect Danish media to be a hybrid of the polarized pluralist (France) and liberal (U.S.) models, though it is not self-evident whether Danish media will end up being more like the U.S. or the French media.

Hypothesis 2: Because the internet facilitates the mixing of advertising content with editorial content as well as the continual updating of news, we should expect that the prevalence (amount of content as a proportion of the whole) and prominence (hierarchical ordering of content) of advertising and news should be higher in online news media than in print news media. If there are cross-national differences, these should be less for online media than for print media.

Hypothesis 3: Because internet technology facilitates interactive debate and easier access to non-journalist produced content, we should expect that the prevalence (amount of content as a proportion of the whole) and prominence (hierarchical ordering of content) of deliberation genres (including forums or chats online, and letters to the editor or interview transcripts in both print and online) and non-journalist produced content should be higher in the online than in the print versions of newspapers. Additionally, because online competition creates incentives for greater partisan differentiation, we should likewise expect a greater prevalence and higher prominence of display of opinion in the online editions. If there are cross-national differences, these should be less for online media than for print media.

Sampling and Coding Methodology

In this study, only the leading national elite newspapers are studied. This method is justified because we want to examine the leading edge of national journalistic practice in each country. In addition, by holding roughly constant the economic and cultural capital of newspapers (both in terms of the professionals who work there, and their audiences), we can be reasonably sure that any cross-national differences we find will be due to media system effects rather than other confounding factors. The following newspapers selected for inclusion in this study are generally regarded by the public and by journalists in their countries as the most prestigious and influential national newspapers (see, e.g., Søllinge, 1999; Weaver, Beam, Brownlee, Voakes & Wilhoit, 2007; Albert, 2004): in Denmark, *Berlingske Tidende*, *Jyllands-Polsten*, *Politiken*; in the United States, the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*; and in France, *Le Monde*, *Le Figaro*, *Libération*.

The first sample consists of the first two “screen shots” of each media outlet’s respective website “homepage.” The unit of analysis is the “element” (including both short texts or images, such as news article, advertisements, photos, etc., as well as “labels,” words or short phrases providing a link to another part of the website or print newspaper), identified according to its hierarchically ordered position (screen number, and position within each screen). Any given news “item” could include several “elements,” e.g., headline, opening paragraph of breaking news article (with link to remainder), photo, and headline links to related analyses, background articles, official editorial, reader comments, links to content produced by various types of professional but non-journalistic authors, etc. In order to capture the diversity of genres of news content, each of these elements are coded separately.

The second sample provides a comparable cataloguing of categories of news and other content available on the front page of the print version of each newspaper, using the “element” as the same basic unit of analysis. Just as with the online sample, each of the elements will also be coded for their hierarchically ordered position via their location on the page.

In order to measure each of the “form” aspects identified in the hypotheses, we created a coding instrument where each element was coded for a variety of related indicators. To assess the prevalence of phenomena such as advertising, as well as news, opinion, and deliberation formats, each element was coded according to its genre. Types of genres include advertising, byline, date, time, event news article, feature news article, breaking news, signed opinion essay, blog, photo and forum. To ascertain the prevalence of non-journalist produced content, each element was also coded for authorship, including journalists and various types of non-journalists such as civil society group leaders, experts, government officials, labor union representatives, and unaffiliated individuals. On this point, we also coded each online element’s “link” status to see whether it (1) provided a link and (2) whether that link was internal or external to the newspaper website (the latter being an indicator of an increase in diversity beyond the newspaper’s own journalists). To account for possible changes in coverage towards more or less political/government and international news, each element was also coded for its topical focus, including: international, national government and politics, local government and politics, crime and courts, religion, business, arts and culture, leisure, environment. Prominence is measured by location on the online homepage or print front page: As operationalized in this study, location on the first online screen or the top half of

the front page is high prominence, and location on the second online screen or the bottom half of the front page is low prominence.

After the completion of coding, some of the categories were combined in order to create “summative indices” (Cassidy, 2005, p. 270) related to hypotheses. For example, “event news article,” “feature news article” and “news analysis article” were grouped together under the larger category of “news genre.”

Both print and online data samples were collected on three separate dates over a three-month period beginning in July 2008 and ending September 2008. Three coders – each native to the three media systems analyzed – recorded snapshots of online editions at 8 a.m. (local times) in order to ensure rough temporal equivalences. Using Krippendorff’s alpha, overall inter-coder reliability (determined by three sample tests constituting roughly 10% of the overall data) between coders was 0.803. For authorship, average reliability was 0.805; for genre, 0.736; and for topical focus, 0.855.

Findings

Prevalence and prominence of advertising

Advertising is generally more prevalent and more prominent online than in print for newspapers in all three countries, and cross-national differences are less online than for print. See Tables 1 and 2.

Prevalence of advertising is about the same for both print and online French newspapers (2.4% to 3.6% of elements, difference NS) but increases from print to online for U.S. newspapers (1.0 to 7.9% of elements, $p < .001$; note: all reported p-values are based on Pearson chi-square tests). Such a low amount of advertising for U.S. print newspapers might seem surprising, given the high reliance of the U.S. press on

advertising (Baker, 1994). However, U.S. newspapers have also traditionally maintained a strict separation of news from advertising on their front pages; clearly, a data set that included the entire print newspaper would yield much higher levels of advertising in the American sample. Danish newspapers, on the other hand, have more advertising in their print versions (12.9%) than in their online versions (5.2%, $p < .001$).

<Insert Table 1 here>

Prominence of advertising sharply increases from print to online for all three countries. Advertisements, when they do appear on the front pages of print newspapers, almost always appear in the bottom half: none of the U.S. print advertisements were high prominence (above the fold), versus just 12.9% in Denmark, and 25.0% in France. In their online versions, however, the majority of advertisements appear prominently, that is, in the “first screen capture” of the newspaper home page (p-values for within-nation print to online differences in “high prominence” follow in parentheses): 58.4% for the United States ($p = .001$), 69.8% for Denmark ($p < .001$), and 57.9% for France ($p < .05$).

<Insert Table 2 here>

Moving from print to online, cross-national differences diminish in both prevalence and prominence of advertising. Due to a print-to-online increase in advertising in U.S. and French newspapers, and a decrease for Danish newspapers, the three country “high-low” percentage gap in advertising prevalence drops from 11.9 percentage points to 4.3 percentage points. Advertising shifts from being predominantly low prominence in print versions to being predominantly high prominence for online in all three countries, with the high-low percentage gap across the three countries diminishing from 25 percentage points (for print) to 11.9 percentage points (for online). This trend, however,

cannot simply be described as “Americanization”: while U.S. online newspapers include a slightly higher prevalence (raw percentage) of advertising than Danish ($p < .01$) and French online newspapers ($p < .001$), Danish and French online newspapers give as much prominence to advertising, when it does appear, as their U.S. counterparts (differences NS).

Mixing of News and Opinion

Prevalence of opinion genres (official editorials, signed commentaries, and blogs) increases from print to online for U.S. newspapers (2.8% to 12%, $p < .001$), stays about the same for French newspapers (6.4% to 8.3%, difference NS), and decreases for Danish newspapers (7.1% to less than 1%, $p < .001$). Notably, the increase in opinion is most substantial for U.S. online newspapers, thus reversing the French relatively greater emphasis on opinion in print newspapers (U.S. versus French print and online differences both significant at $p < .01$). See Table 3.

<Insert Table 3 here>

Likewise, prominence of opinion increases from print to online for both U.S. and French newspapers: opinion displayed prominently (either in the top half of the newspaper page one, or the top screen save of the homepage) increased from 13.6% in print to 65.6% online for U.S. newspapers ($p < .001$), and from 18.8% to 47.7% for French newspapers ($p < .01$). Again, the U.S. increase is such that its emphasis on opinion exceeds that of French newspapers online ($p < .01$). See Table 4.

<Insert Table 4 here>

On the other hand, opinion virtually disappears online for Danish newspapers: whereas signed commentaries and official editorials make up 7.1% of Danish page one

print newspaper content, these disappear online and are far from supplanted by online blogs (just 0.2% of Danish online content). Likewise, Danish newspapers followed a contrary arc from French and U.S. newspapers in opinion prominence: whereas 64.7% of Danish opinion was “highly prominent” in the print versions, no opinion appeared in the top screen online ($p < .05$).

Conversely, the prevalence of news decreases from print to online for U.S. (76.6% to 43.7% of all elements, $p < .001$) and French (50.6% to 44.2%, $p < .05$) newspapers, while holding steady for Danish newspapers (56.8% to 58.8%, difference NS). On the other hand, the news that is included online increases in prominence relative to the print versions for both U.S. (41.0% to 60.4%, $p < .001$) and French (50.4% to 61.2%, $p < .01$) newspapers, while it does in fact decline (from 73.7% to 37.8%, $p < .001$) for Danish newspapers.

In sum, while French and U.S. newspapers seem to be at least moving in the same direction, though to differing degrees, in the shift from print to online – toward more opinion, more prominently displayed at the top of their websites, and less news – Danish newspapers are moving in precisely the opposite direction.

Presence and prominence of deliberative formats

The amount of deliberative content stays the same or increases slightly from print to online for all three countries and there is a very slight convergence (from 8.8 percentage point high-low gap to 7.8 point high-low gap). In French newspapers, deliberative genres remain steady at 8.8% moving from print to online (differences with both Danish and U.S. print and online newspapers, $p < .001$). Deliberative genres increase very slightly from print to online for U.S. newspapers (from non-existent to 2.5%,

$p < .001$) and stay about the same for Danish newspapers (1.2% in print versus 1.0% online, difference NS).

Deliberation also clearly increases in prominence from print to online for French newspapers (from 13.6% to 40.9%, $p = .001$), while decreasing for Danish newspapers (100% to 33.3%, $p < .05$, but the prevalence in both print and online, as noted, is very small); since there is no deliberative content in U.S. print newspapers, the print to online increase in prominence simply reflects the increase in prevalence. Cross-nationally, there is no statistical difference in prominence of deliberative genres online. Our findings of a relatively low level of deliberative / interactive elements in Danish online newspapers confirm previous research on Scandinavian online media by Engebretsen (2006).

Non-journalistic voices

Non-journalistic voices, especially non-affiliated individuals (for the most part readers, speaking through forums or chats), are more prevalent online than in print in both France and the United States while there is no change in Denmark. Similar to the findings about deliberation, non-journalistic voices are more likely to appear in French newspapers than their U.S. or Danish counterparts, a gap that overall even increases in the shift from print to online. See Table 5.

<Insert Table 5 here>

To put these findings in context, it is important to emphasize that journalists are by far the dominant authorial voice in newspapers in all three countries. In their print and online versions, respectively, journalists are 99.2% and 95.6% of authors in U.S. newspapers, 98% and 97.6% in Danish newspapers, and 85.8% and 81.5% in French

newspapers (none of the within-country print-to-online differences are statistically significant).

In the shift from print to online, there is an increase in non-journalist institutional authors (expert, civil society, government, business, and labor) in U.S. newspapers (0.8% to 2.7%, $p < .01$) while Danish (2.0% to 2.4%, NS) and French newspapers (5.7% to 3.8% percent, slight decline but difference NS) stay about the same. Thus, French print newspapers clearly give the most page one space to non-journalist institutional authors ($p < .001$ versus U.S., $p < .05$ versus Denmark); however, the online cross-national differences are not statistically significant.

On the other hand, in France, the prevalence of non-affiliated individuals increases dramatically from print (8.5%) to online (nearly 15%), a significant increase ($p < .01$), and the cross-national differences for both print and online with the U.S. (0% in print, and 1.7% in online) and Denmark (0% for both print and online) are easily significant ($p < .001$). The prominence of these non-affiliated individuals also increases from print to online for French newspapers: while just 3% appear in the top half of the print newspapers, 25% appear in the first screen of the internet home page ($p < .01$, data not shown in tables).

A further online indicator of the range of voices is external linking practices, as measured by percentage of all links that go to an external website as opposed to a link within the newspapers' website. Using this measure, both French (6.9% linking to external websites) and Danish (5.8%) online newspapers go significantly further than U.S. newspapers (2.2%) in incorporating diverse voices ($p < .001$ for both French-U.S. and Danish-U.S. differences; data not shown in tables).

Topical focus

International and government news, for the most part, are less prevalent online than in print versions of newspapers in all three countries, while the prevalence, as well as prominence, of light news and crime and disaster news is for the most part higher online than in the print versions. See Tables 6 and 7.

<Insert Table 6 here>

International news declines from print to online in the U.S. (22.6% to 15.8%, $p<.001$), France (31.0% to 21.7%, $p=.001$), and Denmark (41.5% to 21.8%, $p<.001$), while government news drops slightly or is steady in the three countries. Light news (defined here as leisure, sports, weather, health and medicine, and arts and culture) increases print to online from 27.3% to 32.6% in U.S. newspapers ($p<.05$) and from 18.5% to 34.1% in Danish newspapers ($p<.001$), while staying virtually the same in French newspapers (25.9% print, and 26.8% online). Crime and disaster news are not major types of news for any of the newspapers, either print or online, but they increase slightly from print to online for French newspapers (0.5% vs. 2.6%, $p<.05$), remain about the same for Danish newspapers (4.4% vs. 7.2%, but difference NS), and decrease for U.S. newspapers (5.5% vs. 2.7%, $p<.01$).

<Insert Table 7 here>

Crime and disaster news increase in prominence from print to online in the United States (32.5% to 75%, $p<.001$) and perhaps in Denmark (11.1% to 42%, $p=.073$), as does light news in the U.S. (from 20.6% to 55.1%, $p<.001$) and perhaps in France (from 34.7% to 45.0%, $p=.088$). While declining in overall prevalence from print to online, the

prominence of international and government news remains relatively high in the U.S. and French online editions. In the U.S. sample, government news increases in prominence from print to online, with 63.4% of all such elements located in a position of high prominence, a 8.5 percentage point increase from the print edition ($p < .05$). In the French sample, international news increases in high prominence from print to online, from 50.4% to 68.6% ($p < .01$). Denmark, by contrast, shows significant print-to-online decreases in the prominence of international and government news (down 39.7 and 29.5 percentage points, respectively, both $p < .001$), as well as light news (down 47.8 percentage points, $p < .001$, though the overall prevalence of light news is up, as noted, considerably).

Conclusion

The findings are rather surprising in a number of ways. Comparing online versus print versions of newspapers in our representatives of three distinct media systems, there are a number of areas of convergence, at least in the direction of change. Prominence of advertising is higher online than in print for newspapers in all three countries, thus indicating a shift toward a more commercialized model of journalism. At the same time, moving from print to online, there is a decline in the proportion of “news” (though not in Denmark), a steady amount or slight rise in the amount of deliberative content (interview transcripts, forums, chats) in all three countries, and an increase in the amount and prominence of opinion in the U.S. and perhaps in France (though, again, not in Denmark). Despite the global reach of online newspapers, international news is less prevalent online than in print. And news in general tends to be “lighter” (more sports, weather, leisure, etc.) and slightly more “sensationalistic” (more crime and disaster news

in France and perhaps in Denmark, though not in the U.S.). Finally, non-journalistic authored content is higher online than in print in France and the U.S., while remaining steady in Denmark, though again, journalists are by far the dominant authorial voice both in print and online in all three countries.

In general, these findings paint a picture of online news, across media systems, simultaneously becoming more commercialized and more localized and lighter in its orientation toward news, while at the same time opening up (if only slightly) toward a more deliberative, opinion-oriented, and non-journalist controlled approach to news. Thus, there is evidence to provide partial support for both hypotheses 2 and 3.

Another surprise is that while French print newspapers are more likely to include opinion articles on their front pages than their U.S. counterparts, online one finds exactly the opposite pattern. In other words, online, it is the U.S. newspapers that put opinion front and center more than the French newspapers. However, unlike the Danish newspapers, French and U.S. newspapers are clearly moving in the same direction in placing a greater emphasis on opinion than news online.

At the same time, French online newspapers are more likely than U.S. newspapers (and Danish newspapers) to feature deliberative formats and more likely to make room for non-journalistic authorial voices. This finding forces us to qualify any strong affirmation of Hypothesis #3's claim that internet technology facilitates interactive debate and access to non-journalist produced content: how the internet is deployed evidently depends crucially on social, political, and cultural factors linked to distinct media systems, thus supporting Hypothesis 1.

Our findings concerning the Danish case may be the most surprising. Whereas French and U.S. newspapers have more opinion and less news online than in print, Danish newspapers have less opinion and the same amount of news online as in print. In general, our findings do not support the hypothesis that Danish newspapers – in print or online – will be a hybrid of the U.S. and French models. Rather, the emphasis on news and information (including crime and disaster and light news) seems to be stronger in Denmark than in either France or the United States. More research is required to understand this Danish particularity and to give it a larger theoretical form within the existing literature, which has tended rather to portray the U.S. media as exceptional in their emphasis on information and news. At the same time, differences should not be overstated. News is dominant in the online newspapers in all three countries. Likewise, while opinion and deliberation are relatively less prevalent in the first few “screens” of the Danish newspaper websites, a thorough analysis of all website content might produce different findings. Contingent business strategies may also be at work, as for example in the recent announcements from both *Berlingske Tidende* and *Politiken* that they will make their print versions “harder” with more political news, analysis, commentary, and interviews (thus perhaps further differentiating Danish print newspapers from U.S. print newspapers) and their online versions “softer” with more light news and entertainment.

Incorporating more parts of the day into the existing research framework would strengthen the data we present here. Our data was collected at 8 a.m. (all times local); additional data collections at afternoon and evening points would flush out the ways in which the forms of news change throughout the day. Additionally, our project captured important data from the front pages of both print and online editions; here again, a larger

scope of content presentation “behind” and “beyond” the front pages and home pages might lead to the discovery of further similarities and differences. Lastly, we call attention to the potential for linking studies of news forms with ongoing research of their content (e.g., rational/critical and inclusive properties of texts and images), in order to make sense of the relationship between the two.

In concluding, it should be noted that the form of online news itself continues to be at least partially in formation, especially in relation to the more established forms of its print counterpart. Since the research was completed in the summer and early autumn of 2008, many of the online editions in this study have continued experimenting with new forms of presentation. For example, the *New York Times*, which was found in this study to have very external links has since the time of our data collection unveiled a new “Extra” home page feature, which provides a wide variety of external links, including to the *Washington Post* and *Los Angeles Times*, as well as diverse alternative media and civil society websites. We thus hope that our findings will serve both as a historical snapshot of print and online agenda-setting newspapers in three different media systems and as a template and encouragement for continued empirical research, in order to track the development of online news’ various forms.

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Tables

Table 1

Prevalence of advertising elements by country: print vs. online

| Country | Print | | Online | | Difference (Percentage Points) |
|---------------|-------|-----|--------|------|-----------------------------------|
| | % | N | % | N | |
| United States | 1.0% | 781 | 7.9% | 1281 | +6.9*** |
| Denmark | 12.9% | 241 | 5.2% | 1203 | -7.7*** |
| France | 2.4% | 498 | 3.6% | 1056 | +1.2 |

Percentages account for amount of advertising elements in relation to total number of elements in the print or online editions; Pearson's chi square test: $p < .05^$, $p < .01^{**}$, $p < .001^{***}$*

Table 2

High prominence of advertising elements by country, print and online

| Country | Print | | Online | | Difference (Percentage Points) |
|---------------|-------|----|--------|-----|-----------------------------------|
| | % | N | % | N | |
| United States | 0% | 8 | 58.4% | 101 | +58.4*** |
| Denmark | 12.9% | 31 | 69.8% | 63 | +56.9*** |
| France | 25.0% | 12 | 57.9% | 38 | +32.9* |

Pearson's chi square test: $p < .05^$, $p < .01^{**}$, $p < .001^{***}$*

Table 3

Prevalence of genres by country, print and online

| Country | Genre | Print | | Online | | Difference (Percentage Points) |
|---------------|--------------|-------|-----|--------|------|--------------------------------------|
| | | % | N | % | N | |
| United States | News | 76.6% | 781 | 43.7% | 1281 | -32.9*** |
| | Opinion | 2.8% | -- | 12.0% | -- | +9.2*** |
| | Deliberation | 0.0% | -- | 2.5% | -- | +2.5*** |
| Denmark | News | 56.8% | 241 | 58.8% | 1203 | +2.0 |
| | Opinion | 7.1% | -- | 0.2% | -- | -6.9*** |
| | Deliberation | 1.2% | -- | 1.0% | -- | -0.2 |
| France | News | 50.6% | 498 | 44.2% | 1056 | -6.4* |
| | Opinion | 6.4% | -- | 8.3% | -- | +1.9 |
| | Deliberation | 8.8% | -- | 8.8% | -- | 0 |

News genre includes event and feature news articles and news analyses; opinion includes signed opinion essays, official newspaper editorials and blogs; deliberation includes interview transcripts, polls, online chats, and forums. Pearson's chi square test: $p < .05^$, $p < .01^{**}$, $p < .001^{***}$*

Table 4

High prominence of genres by country, print and online

| Country | Genre | Print | | Online | | Difference (Percentage Points) |
|---------------|--------------|--------|-----|--------|-----|--------------------------------------|
| | | % | N | % | N | |
| United States | News | 41.0% | 598 | 60.4% | 560 | +19.4*** |
| | Opinion | 13.6% | 22 | 65.6% | 154 | +52.0*** |
| | Deliberation | 0% | 0 | 56.3% | 32 | +56.3 |
| Denmark | News | 73.7% | 137 | 37.8% | 707 | -35.9*** |
| | Opinion | 64.7% | 17 | 0% | 3 | -64.7* |
| | Deliberation | 100% | 3 | 33.3% | 12 | -66.7* |
| France | News | 50.4% | 252 | 61.2% | 467 | +10.8** |
| | Opinion | 18.8 % | 32 | 47.7% | 88 | +28.9** |
| | Deliberation | 13.6% | 44 | 40.9% | 93 | +27.3*** |

Pearson's chi square test: $p < .05^$, $p < .01^{**}$, $p < .001^{***}$*

Table 5

Prevalence of authorial voices by country, print and online

| Country | Author | Print | | Online | | Difference (Percentage Pts.) |
|---------|-------------------------|-------|-----|--------|------|------------------------------------|
| | | % | N | % | N | |
| U.S. | Journalist | 99.2% | 722 | 95.6% | 1004 | -3.6 |
| | Non-Journalist organiz. | 0.8% | -- | 2.7% | -- | +1.9** |
| | Non-Affiliated | 0.0% | -- | 1.7% | -- | +1.7*** |
| Denmark | Journalist | 98.0% | 202 | 97.6% | 1124 | -0.4 |
| | Non-Journalist organiz. | 2.0% | -- | 2.4% | -- | +0.4 |
| | Non-Affiliated | 0.0% | -- | 0.0% | -- | 0 |
| France | Journalist | 85.8% | 422 | 81.5% | 912 | -4.3 |
| | Non-Journalist organiz. | 5.7% | -- | 3.8% | -- | -1.9 |
| | Non-Affiliated | 8.5% | -- | 14.7% | -- | +6.2** |

Percentage reflects total relevant elements. Elements not counted, due to not having an author, are omitted. Pearson's chi square test: $p < .05^$, $p < .01^{**}$, $p < .001^{***}$*

Table 6

Prevalence of topical focus by country: print vs. online

| Country | Topic | Print | | Online | | Difference (Percentage Pts.) |
|---------------|----------------|-------|-----|--------|------|---------------------------------|
| | | % | N | % | N | |
| United States | International | 22.6% | 730 | 15.8% | 1025 | -6.8*** |
| | Government | 38.9% | -- | 37.3% | -- | -1.6 |
| | Crime/Disaster | 5.5% | -- | 2.7% | -- | -2.8** |
| | Light News | 27.3% | -- | 32.6% | -- | +5.3* |
| Denmark | International | 41.5% | 205 | 21.8% | 953 | -19.7*** |
| | Government | 20.0% | -- | 15.9% | -- | -4.1 |
| | Crime/Disaster | 4.4% | -- | 7.2% | -- | +2.8 |
| | Light News | 18.5% | -- | 34.1% | -- | +15.6*** |
| France | International | 31.0% | 378 | 21.7% | 780 | -9.3*** |
| | Government | 20.6% | -- | 21.7% | -- | +1.1 |
| | Crime/Disaster | 0.5% | -- | 2.6% | -- | +2.1* |
| | Light News | 25.9% | -- | 26.8% | -- | +0.9 |

Percentage reflects total relevant elements. Elements not coded, due to not having a topic focus, are left out (e.g. advertising, accessories, etc.). Pearson's chi square test: $p < .05^$, $p < .01^{**}$, $p < .001^{***}$*

Table 7

High prominence of topical focus by country, print and online

| Country | Topic | Print | | Online | | Difference (Percentage Points) |
|---------------|----------------|-------|-----|--------|-----|--------------------------------------|
| | | % | N | % | N | |
| United States | International | 66.7% | 165 | 61.1% | 162 | -5.6 |
| | Government | 54.9% | 284 | 63.4% | 382 | +8.5* |
| | Crime/Disaster | 32.5% | 40 | 75.0% | 28 | +42.5*** |
| | Light News | 20.6% | 199 | 55.1% | 334 | +34.5*** |
| Denmark | International | 83.5% | 85 | 43.8% | 208 | -39.7*** |
| | Government | 68.3% | 41 | 38.8% | 152 | -29.5*** |
| | Crime/Disaster | 11.1% | 9 | 42.0% | 69 | +30.9 |
| | Light News | 92.1% | 38 | 44.3% | 325 | -47.8*** |
| France | International | 50.4% | 117 | 68.6% | 169 | +18.2** |
| | Government | 57.7% | 78 | 56.2% | 169 | -1.5 |
| | Crime/Disaster | 100% | 2 | 25.0% | 20 | -75.0* |
| | Light News | 34.7% | 98 | 45.0% | 209 | +10.3 |

*Pearson's chi square test: $p < .05$ *, $p < .01$ ***, $p < .001$ ****