

# Mediating new cities of diversity: the *Toronto Star* and Toronto's reading publics

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## Introduction

It is by now quite common and uncontroversial to say that Canada and Canadian cities are somehow special when it comes to matters of ethnic diversity. While many analyses of course present this specificity as a statistical reality, most often Canada is said to be special because of the ways in which multiculturalism has been framed in various policy and public discourses (cf. Kallen, 1982; Kobayashi, 1993). John Murray Gibbon's (1938) renowned 'Canadian mosaic' metaphor, for example, is often seen as the basis for naming a distinctively Canadian approach to cultural diversity, particularly in contrast to the American 'melting pot' metaphor. For many readers, it may go without saying that these claims to distinctiveness have tended to carry a positive inflection. They stand for an image of openness to diversity in Canadian policy, and particularly in the social life of Canadian cities; and they are typically the basis on which Canada is claimed as leading on – even inventing – the very idea of multiculturalism (Wood and Gilbert, 2005, pp. 680).

At the same time, such positive discourses and policies have been the subject of many critiques, certainly as they connect to the situation in Canadian cities<sup>1</sup>. Ethnic diversity may be celebrated in relation to cities such as Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal, but such official recognition has often been seen to obfuscate – whether intentionally or inadvertently – wider inequalities with consoling images of cosmopolitan urban harmony (e.g. Croucher, 1997; Goonewardena and Kipfer, 2005; Mitchell, 1993, 1996; Germain, this volume). A major claim underlying some of these critiques is that powerful groups and institutions have assembled a capacity to

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<sup>1</sup> One prominent critique of Canadian multiculturalism as a national policy is Bissoondath (2002).

dominate the ways in which diversity and difference become framed or constructed in relation to such cities; in policies, political speeches, staged events, aestheticized landscapes, and through ‘the media’.

Focusing on Toronto, this chapter is concerned with the latter, and in particular the relationship between news media and the framing of urban diversity. However, I will avoid telling a conventional story that theorizes the influence of elite groups or institutions on media; likewise, I am not interested here in anatomizing patterns of media representation (on this, see Fleras and Lock Kunz, 2001; Mahtani, forthcoming; Shohat and Stam, 1994). Instead, I want to take a rather different look at mediated imaginations of and claims to urban diversity by focusing on the enactment of journalism work within particular organizational settings. The setting to which I direct my focus is the *Toronto Star*, Canada’s largest newspaper by readership, and the dominant metropolitan newspaper in Toronto.

The term metropolitan newspaper is relatively peculiar to North America, but like regional newspapers elsewhere, it refers to a medium distinguished by its orientation to a particular regional geography. The North American metropolitan newspaper is an evolution of the big city newspapers of the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century America, which were distinct because they primarily defined their readers by residence in the city, rather than other features such as class, ethnicity or politics (cf. Barth, 1980; Nord, 2001; Schudson, 1978). The city-orientation of these early newspapers was to some extent taken-for-granted; a necessary aspect of addressing their unprecedented mass public and market. For contemporary metropolitan newspapers, however, it has become something of a last vestige in relation to proliferating new media and spatially

dispersed and increasingly diverse cities (Kaniss, 1991). A starting premise might be made, therefore, that because the *Toronto Star* is defined by an ensemble of journalism ethics, business rationalities and organizational histories prioritizing Toronto as common public and (media) market, as a medium it will seek to convene the city region's ethnic diversity in similar ways.

Most theories and descriptions of local media (e.g. Aldridge, 2007; Franklin and Murphy, 1998; Kaniss, 1991) would concur, more-or-less, with the above premise. But I would like to suggest that there are limitations to viewing the metropolitan newspaper (or any media) as a black-boxed 'medium' with a predictable orientation. In contrast, I would like to emphasize these media forms as organizations continuously made through heterogeneous associations; not predictable mediums, but complex mediators (cf. Latour, 2005, pp. 38-39). In speaking of associations, I mean the many activities and material objects that together make up the *Toronto Star*. A small and very eclectic selection might include such things as: reporter interviewing, digital recorders, computer networks, graphic design, advertising, printing presses, delivery trucks, highways, reading practices, and conversations about the news between friends and family. Of course, my attention here will be directed to an even smaller – but I will argue important – part of this heterogeneous organization: the work of City Department editors at the newspaper<sup>2</sup>.

For the sake of clarity, I will examine city editing (as I will call it) through the lens of Theodore Schatzki's site ontology. For Schatzki (2002), all social life occurs through

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<sup>2</sup> The empirical base for this analysis emerges from a wider ethnographic case study of city-focused political journalism at the *Toronto Star* in the first six months of 2005. This research entailed six weeks of participant observations, 58 interviews, an analysis of secondary documentation, and the tracking of news content over six months. Participant observations were recorded by the author in daily observation diaries, some of which are drawn upon in the analyses that follow.

‘sites’, which he defines as nexuses of practices and material arrangements. I do not intend to elaborate any further on this concept within this introduction .By considering city editing as a site, however, I hope to move in a different direction than analyses – such as studies on the political economy or representations of news media – that tend to close the door on the black box of journalism and media organization. I do this not only do this to argue for different conceptual imaginaries when studying media in urban studies, but to at least indicate methodological alternatives also. What is more, I seek to turn conventional assumptions – that media socially construct urban diversity in one hegemonic direction – on their head, by suggesting that, in important ways, those involved in media production are also constructed, through their multiple associations with the diverse city to which they orient.

In order to illustrate the above, I will move through three progressively linked analyses: first, I will consider how city editing practices expressed certain geographical imaginations; second, I will discuss how such practices were orientated to and ordered by the processes of assembling the newspaper as material artifact; and finally, I will underline the importance of practical reference to organizational histories connecting the *Toronto Star* to the unfolding public life of Toronto over the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. These analyses will be characterized by highly situated descriptions, and in acknowledgement of this, I conclude the chapter by reconnecting to broader debates around the politics of diversity, difference and multiculturalism in large Canadian cities. Before entering into any of this, however, I will briefly set out the context surrounding the particular example – a special news feature – on which I will draw herein.

## **Media change, urban social change**

The transforming social life of cities and regions has ruptured the time-space constellation of work, family and leisure on which most metropolitan newspapers have long depended. At least, many *Toronto Star* editors said as much in interviews, if phrasing it differently. Editors faced a city region of 5.8 million people (in 2005), projected to grow much more over coming decades. This was a spatially dispersed region, with possible readers often living in far-flung suburban and exurban areas; pressed for time, working longer hours, often commuting long car journeys. Many families relied on two-incomes, while many others were single-parent families, and in general, family formation was taking place at much later stages in the lifecycle. Youth, the crucial subscribers of the future, seemed apparently uninterested in newspaper reading. And the ethnic diversity of the city-region had increased dramatically year-on-year, posing sticky questions about regional attachment as well as language. This multifaceted, shifting montage of urban life in Toronto was increasingly being addressed by a range of newer-news media tailored to the differentiated lives, time and interests of urban audiences: drive-to-work and drive home radio, 24-hour news, cable television, free commuter newspapers, magazines, news websites and web blogs. At the *Toronto Star*, editors saw themselves as confronting a differentiated and mobile ‘instant news’ environment for a city region of increasing diversity and variable mobilities.

As will be further discussed later, the *Toronto Star*’s corporate and editorial management had a strong sense of the newspaper’s historical entanglement in the politics and public life of Toronto. So, on the one hand, they sought to maintain a

strong content focus on Toronto while addressing readers primarily in terms of their shared residence in the urban region. On the other hand, doing so in relation to a rapidly changing city also required special attention to particular groups of potential readers. A mantra for editors was the need to better engage three such groups: new populations in the growing suburban and exurban areas of the city region; young people; and – a group editors sometimes had difficulty describing – new, ‘ethnically diverse’ populations. In focusing here on how editors’ orientation towards Toronto’s reading publics intersected with a concern for this last group, I will consider a special feature (see Figure 1) developed and published during my period of participant observation in the *Toronto Star* newsroom. This feature was led by a Statistics Canada study commissioned by the Department of Canadian Heritage, which projected the growth of so-called ‘visible minorities’<sup>3</sup> by 2017, the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Canadian confederation (for more details on the report and its possible implications, see Hiebert, this volume). The textual and graphical arrangements of the front page shown in Figure 1 pointed readers toward a five-page report in the GTA section<sup>4</sup> on a range of issues arising from one of the study’s key forecasts: that visible minorities would comprise the majority population of the Toronto urban region in 2017. This special report included a wide range of stories and other content on such matters as Toronto’s demographics, schooling, immigration, social services, entertainment, culture and the arts.

**>> FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE <<**

**Caption:**

Figure 1: ‘The way we’ll be’. *Toronto Star*, Page A1, 23 March 2005.

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<sup>3</sup> A term that is largely a Canadian invention, defined through the Canada *Employment Equity Act* as: ‘Persons other than Aboriginal peoples who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour’.

<sup>4</sup> During this research, ‘GTA’ (an abbreviation of Greater Toronto Area) was the regional news section of the *Toronto Star*, which much like similar sections in many North American newspapers was usually inserted as the second (‘B’) section immediately after the main news section.

With such an evocative range of news content, it is easy to imagine how many studies might briskly move from this point into an extended discursive and semiotic analysis, unpacking particular framings of Toronto as diverse city. As I have already indicated, however, my intentions are otherwise; my aim here is to avoid, indeed argue against, the black-boxing of media in urban studies that so often bypasses the practical work and material settings of journalism. So, as an alternative first move, I would like to consider some practical dimensions of city editing that partook in the production of this particular special feature.

### **Editing practices: apprehending diverse city publics**

So far, I have mentioned but not unpacked ‘practices’, and in so doing have potentially left the concept open to its widest (or common-sense) interpretation. The conception of practices I would like to rehearse here, however, is narrower, being broadly informed by Wittgenstein, whereby practices are composed by performances and routines, and language is examined on the basis of pragmatic use. In line with my use of a site ontology here, I will follow in particular Schatzki’s (1996; 2002) fourfold definition of practices<sup>5</sup> as: (1) understandings of how to do things (or ‘doings’); (2) rules (or ‘sayings’), meaning explicit statements setting out how to do something or that a state of affairs is the case; (3) a ‘teleoaffective structuring’, implying normative ends as well as emotions that are customary or recognized amongst members of a practice; and (4) general understandings about the nature, conduct and common situation of a practice.

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<sup>5</sup> Specifically, his discussion of ‘integrative practices’ or organized activities, which are distinguished from (yet dependent upon) ‘dispersed practices’ (e.g. walking, handwriting), made up by more open-ended actions and often based on understandings alone.

Using this lens of practices, I would like to consider the geographical imaginations of city editing at the *Toronto Star*. The concept of geographical imagination has a long and well-known pedigree in human geography<sup>6</sup>. I use it here to indicate the spatialized imaginaries – of urban spaces, audiences, markets, publics – expressed through both the implicit and explicit dimensions of editing practices, rather than substantive representations of Toronto. Such imaginations were important for both tacit understandings of *doing* editing work, and overt *sayings* of what constituted such work and its good or proper conduct. These practical doings and sayings were the basis for a *teleoaffective structuring* that oriented to Toronto-as-diverse in particular ways.

Returning to the example of the last section (Figure 1), let us move directly, via the accounts of my observation diaries, to the *Toronto Star* newsroom, on the day before the publication of that special feature:

3.15pm. I join a small coterie of four or five editors crammed into the small office of Wilson Omstead<sup>7</sup>, the Deputy City Editor. The editors discuss the possibilities and status of the city-related content underway for the next day's newspaper. Wilson listens, he asks questions, and makes copious annotations in the margins of his City sked<sup>8</sup>. As I look over my own copy, it strikes me that the list of stories is much shorter than usual. What gives?

3.30pm. Wilson and I arrive at the Editorial Conference Room for the afternoon news meeting. Editors from various departments sit around a large table, about to discuss the range of developing stories and content for the next day's newspaper. It soon becomes apparent why the City sked was so short; after briefing the editors on other City offerings for the main news section, Wilson turns to a special sked that outlines a major feature on the implications

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<sup>6</sup> For some uses and discussion on the concept, see Prince (1962), Harvey (1990), Gregory (1994), and Massey (2005)

<sup>7</sup> The names used herein – both for actors mentioned in observation passages and attributions of interview quotes – are pseudonyms.

<sup>8</sup> 'Sked' is short for schedule, and denotes printouts listing the stories being pursued over a specific time period, usually ordered by importance. There tended to be a daily sked for each department.

of recent Statistics Canada report, projecting the 2017 proportion of visible minorities across Canada. He outlines plans for the front page, and several planned stories and features to make up a special report in the GTA section. He points out the various visual elements and graphics under development. Here and there, he mentions reporters and other staff assigned to or working on various elements, and their progress. Throughout, the other editors ask questions and make suggestions; a back and forth around the feature, its components, and the way it will be presented. Wilson notes that the Canada-wide report will be ‘localized’ to focus on the Toronto CMA. A news editor asks: ‘How will we be describing this Toronto CMA? Will it be ‘Toronto’, or what?’ Wilson: ‘We will say Greater Toronto, noting that we mean the CMA<sup>9</sup>, and then explain briefly how it differs from the GTA.’

(Observation Diary, 22 March 2005)

Obviously, these short passages open just a small aperture into the complex, daily work of city editing (further passages are drawn upon below). They nevertheless point towards two facets of city editing and its geographical imaginations. First, let us consider the way city editing practices *implicitly* anticipated particular urban audiences. In the above meetings, editors undertook the practical work of formulating ‘angles’, by which I mean narratives or elements (not just discursive but visual) emphasized in news content or groupings thereof, in ways understood as making it more appealing, interesting, or engaging. Formulating angles was something editors accomplished together, in meetings and in other interactions around the newsroom. They understood that such activities led to forms of *consensus*, which, in turn, acted as a proxy for tapping into the anticipated consensual perspective of reading publics. Consensus-making proceeded, in other words, with implicit geographical imaginations of what might unify readers with truths acceptable to all<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> Some definitions for the benefit of the reader: CMA – Census Metropolitan Area – is a Statistics Canada definition denoting areas of one or more adjacent settlements situated around a major urban core; the Toronto CMA partially overlaps what editors took to be the more widely recognized GTA – Greater Toronto Area – denoting the City of Toronto and four adjacent regional municipalities.

<sup>10</sup> As Muhlmann (2008) argues, unifying audiences around truths is a paradigmatic tendency of modern journalism; the other, opposing tendency is to decentre truths.

Editing also involved an implicit anticipation of the need for adequate *explanation*. In the meetings, we saw more explicit calculations about audience knowledge of specialized statistical geographies. These took place amongst a range of implicit considerations. For example, around the variable language abilities of diverse audiences:

It's a really ... an added complication now for us if English is a second language for so many people ... how do we appeal to those people, who, kind of, have a shaky grasp of English, who may only have a thousand, two thousand words of English in their vocabulary? We use words all the time, we had a headline yesterday about somebody being in jeopardy ... you worry about the language that you can use, you don't want to be offensive ... It's very difficult to write to a English professor at the U of T [University of Toronto] and that immigrant. (Lloyd Dover, Deputy Managing Editor, *Toronto Star*)

Although recognized in an interview setting, Lloyd Dover refers here to audience considerations only rarely vocalized or explicitly set out in practical doing, even if informed by prior practical experience.

Such implicit anticipations were, secondly, the inferential basis upon which editors explicitly expressed particular geographical imaginations (cf. Brandom, 1994, 2000). For example, and although not necessarily captured well by the above passages, editorial meetings often involved making explicit, affirmative connections between particular angles and readers. Questions would be asked such as 'what does this mean for our [X] readers?' or 'why should the public care about this?' Responses might be justificatory or explanatory talk implicitly and explicitly referring to the particular lifestyles, institutions, or places understood as emblematic (or not) of the newspaper's audience. There is also a much deeper analysis of the implicit-explicit practical relation, which cannot be addressed here, on the interplay of implicit practical

anticipations with things made explicit through the semantic and symbolic content of the newspaper. What I would like to turn to now, however, is a slightly different aspect of the newspaper as material artifact: its agency or constitutive nature in relation to editor practices.

### **The material arrangements of news form**

The site of city editing, as noted earlier, is not composed of human practices alone, but in Schatzki's (2002) idiom, is a nexus of practices and 'material arrangements', the latter meaning material entities – humans, nonhuman life forms, artifacts, and things – that affect, are enrolled through and are the embodied constituents of practices. Such materialities have had at least a spectral appearance in my discussion thus far. For example, the editorial meetings discussed earlier were intrinsically constituted by the arrangement of bodies, offices and conference rooms, in which such practices became enclosed in time-space, enabling and responding to aspects of the world beyond that setting (cf. Boden, 1994, pp. 83). I could list a multitude of other instances. Here, I would like to narrow my attention to one important material referent – the newspaper as material artifact – and its ordering and orientating of editing practices, in particular towards a geographically-delineated audience.

To conceptualize the newspaper as a material artifact affecting and effecting editing practices, it is helpful to adapt the notion of news *form*, originally deployed in the extensive historical research of John Nerone and Kevin Barnhurst (see Barnhurst, 1994; Barnhurst and Nerone, 2002; Nerone and Barnhurst, 2003a, 2003b). In their wide-ranging study of newspapers over the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Nerone and Barnhurst use

news form to indicate not only layout, design and typography, but the historically- and geographically-specific manifestation of, for example, illustration conventions, reporting genres, and departmentalization of content. Newspaper form is not only a complex daily “diorama” intended to convey ritualistic familiarity in spite of the unfamiliarity of news events; it is a series of represented relationships corresponding to the material relationships assembled through the newspaper (Nerone and Barnhurst, 2003a, pp. 112). The relatively durable nature of news form effects and affects, for example, the division of responsibilities in the newsroom, and the organization and conduct of content-gathering. For its own part, the site of editing is distinctive because it is placed at the very moment this dioramic material environment of news form comes together.

The most apparent instance of this coming together for *Toronto Star* City Department editors was the daily assembly of the GTA section. The GTA section was a dioramic environment setting out relatively durable page space dedicated to the Toronto region, presented through iterative relationships between forms of content. It arranged regular columnists, scheduled features, news from established local beats, and allocated space for things like regional weather, television listings, and obituaries. Moreover, assembling the GTA section involved one important practical rule: its content had to relate to, or concern, events within the Greater Toronto Area. Broader, crosscutting issues placed in this page space were reformulated or re-edited to emphasize a Toronto connection: as editors would say, they ‘localized’ the story. Much of the content related to the feature (on the 2017 census projections) was formulated precisely through this process of assembly:

7.25pm. Innes Witcar, an Assistant City Editor, sits at the City Desk<sup>11</sup> in front of his desktop computer. A digital proof of the developing front page for the next day is on the screen. Six babies, of apparently different ethnic appearance, extend across the page. Less than an hour ago, black text above this photo read ‘Toronto, 2017’; now it pronounces ‘The way we’ll be’. Next to Innes is Ryan Dennis, serving tonight as City Assignment Editor. He and Innes discuss, back and forth, the planned content making up the special report in the GTA section. Ryan calls across the newsroom to Orlagh Keene, a newer city reporter working general assignment tonight. She briskly walks over from her desk. Innes tells Orlagh that they would like her to put together a profile of the South Asian and Chinese communities, the two largest ‘visible minority’ groups in the Toronto CMA. Innes: ‘We have the numbers, all the stats, but we want a bit about the *people* making up these groups, like their historical immigration to Canada, famous people in the community, that kind of thing’. Orlagh takes notes, and heads off. Ryan calls after her – humourously but seriously – ‘half hour would be great...’

A number of things are at play here. What is interesting for the moment is that despite a common (if largely accurate) image of newspapers being of limited page space, constantly demanding that content be reduced, distilled and selected, the assembly and rearranging work around the dioramic environment of news form also entails filling in and fitting in:

9.10pm. Work continues on the feature. 80 minutes remain until the formal deadline for the paper to be sent to the newspaper’s printing press facility in the Toronto suburb of Vaughan. Assistant city editors ferry back and forth to the Graphics Department; Wilson Omstead and City Editor Lee Bourrier circulate periodically to see how things are progressing. More and more, a visually diverse arrangement is filling out the special section: charts, quick facts, voices, stats, tables, text boxes, photos and maps. Under the photo of the babies are eight, large red numbers that signify key facts related to the 2017 study. The final number – ‘8’ – represents the gap in median age between immigrants and non-immigrants. At the News Desk, editors deliberate on whether they should replace it with something less technical.

(Observation Diary, 22 March 2005)

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<sup>11</sup> A central hub for city editor activities, located in the centre of the newsroom, adjacent to the then-powerful News Desk.

It may be apparent that the above passages illuminate implicit and explicit geographical imaginations, expressed through the practical work of assembling news form through various objects and technologies. At the same time, it is important to emphasize how the material news form of the *Toronto Star* had its own agency in relation to editing practices. It too *did things*; in its durable spatiality, it helped constitute the arrangement, nature and geographical orientation for content making up the special feature on Toronto's future diversity.

In speaking of the durable spatiality of news form, I am also hinting at the temporal circulation of the newspaper over time, and thereby the pattern through which it entered the fray of public discourse. In this context, 'public' should not be taken-for-granted; in using this term, I rely on Michael Warner's particular definition of publics, as something constituted by "the concatenation of texts through time" (Warner, 2002, pp. 90). This definition is helpful in at least two respects. First, harking back to the previous section, it points to how the geographical imaginations expressed in editing practices responded to and were informed by a complex, previously-existing space of discourse. Secondly, for our immediate concerns, it points to the basic daily temporality through which the printed edition of the *Toronto Star* entered this discursive space. News form can be seen as interacting with this temporality because it arranges what Warner (2002, pp. 96) calls 'feedback loops': the ways that mediums stake out a self-referential place within an unfolding public discussion. Obvious examples of feedback loops include the letters page, the opinion (Op Ed) page, and the editorial page<sup>12</sup>. The news form discussed here was a looser, but no less important,

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<sup>12</sup> Relatively specific to the *Toronto Star* was space respectively dedicated to its Public Editor and its Community Editorial Board. The latter is particularly interesting in underlying an ongoing relationship between the *Toronto Star* and its diverse publics. Selected with the aim of approximating the newspaper's diverse readers (ethnic, professional, lifestyle, etc), board members meet regularly with

type of feedback loop that indexed an ongoing public discourse around Toronto and the GTA, constituting a particular public space for the presentation of topics, such as those on ethnic diversity. Pointing to this temporal dimension of public discourse, and the *Toronto Star*'s involvement therein, leads to a final dimension I would like to discuss in relation to the site of editing: references to and enactments of wider organizational histories that connected the *Toronto Star* to the unfolding public life of Toronto.

### **Narrating the *Toronto Star***

Although it may seem odd that, in this penultimate section, I only now turn to a fuller discussion of the *Toronto Star*'s histories, my aim is not to present an authoritative history of the newspaper, nor one that is linear and extending back to its founding in 1892. Rather, I want to briefly outline three organizational histories<sup>13</sup> that were central performative referents for the site of city editing, indicating as much (or more) about the present as the past. The first of these was a widespread vision of the *Toronto Star* as social advocate and newspaper institution approaching the world from a broadly 'left' standpoint, which was strongly connected with de-facto founding publisher Joseph E. Atkinson. Stories recount Atkinson aligning his newspaper with early 20<sup>th</sup> Century working-class Toronto, lodging strident crusades for new social policy and public infrastructure. Atkinson was, however, more than the figure of historical

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the Editorial Page Editor, and occasionally with other editors; during their one-year term each member may publish an opinion piece on the editorial page.

<sup>13</sup> These 'histories' were identified through their narration, reference, and enactment during both participant observations and interviews, and later elaborated through analyses of secondary materials (many suggested by organizational members) dealing with the *Toronto Star* and its history. The latter included: historical accounts partly or fully sponsored by the *Toronto Star* (e.g. Atkinson Charitable Foundation 2005; Harkness, 1963; contributions to Honderich *et al.*, 2002), autobiographies of former employees (Cranston, 1953; Templeton, 1983); and various scholarly and journalistic writing on Canadian media and the *Toronto Star* (e.g. Cobb, 2004; Hayes, 2004; Stewart, 1980).

stories, but a name haunting the contemporary *Toronto Star*. For the Editorial Board, senior editors, and above all, the trust controlling the voting shares in parent company Torstar, the ‘Atkinson principles’ – social values set out for the newspaper in Atkinson’s will – were crucial referents in the performance of editorial policy.

A second important narrative was the emergence of the *Toronto Star* as ‘a great metropolitan newspaper’; referring generally to the period of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, when the *Toronto Star* grew astoundingly to become Toronto’s most-read newspaper. This was a *Toronto Star* of sensational reporting, wacky promotions and contests, and a growing, emblematic presence across Toronto’s urban spaces: storefronts and delivery trucks displayed its name; in 1928 it moved its newsroom and printing presses to an iconic gothic skyscraper (since demolished); for a time, it even had its own radio station. For editors and others, this history spoke of the relationship instituted between newspaper and city, the former as institution and business, and the latter as mass reading public.

Third was a history – acting as a sort of dialectical counterpoint to the second narrative – of the *Toronto Star* becoming a modern metropolitan newspaper. This marked a commonly understood point of departure in which, throughout much of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, editor and publisher Beland Honderich steered the newspaper from near-unbridled sensationalism towards community responsibility. Henceforth the *Toronto Star* became a newspaper of credible journalism, accuracy and fairness. Moreover, Honderich was remembered for attentiveness to the changing city to which his newspaper oriented: a city becoming more middle-class, oriented to the service industries, and ethnically diverse in the wake of increasingly open federal

immigration policy. Becoming a modern newspaper, it was often said, marked a reorientation towards a larger and more diverse urban-region.

In as much as these briefly-recounted histories belie the complexity of the past events they represented for editors, so too do they admittedly fall well short of elucidating how such histories were enacted through, for example, organizational rituals and affirmative practical inferences. In any event, for this chapter's concerns what can be seen as important was the extent to which these histories were taken to be basically true, factual and official (cf. Law, 1994, pp. 52-57). For editors, referring to and enacting these histories as part of their practical work was central to making sense of the *Toronto Star* as an organization; something coherent and 'held together' (Czarniawska, 1997; M.S. Feldman and Pentland, 2005; R.M. Feldman and Feldman, 2006). This organizational sense-making, as it pertained to these three histories, partook in a common narrative that located the *Toronto Star* as a kindred institution in the unfolding public life of Toronto over the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

The implications of this is potentially wide-ranging, but consider, for example, the headline of the feature used as an example in this chapter: 'The way *we* 'll be' (emphasis added). The use of the word 'we', which invokes audiences as holding a common concern, is an oft-noted and fairly banal newspaper practice (as studies of nationalism have argued, see Anderson, 1991; Billig, 1995). In light of the above, however, the invocation of this commonality cannot be seen as a purely instrumental move to capture market share, but instead was an act imbued with an historical sense of the *Toronto Star* as passage point for a particular communicative space:

So that's why we're putting a great deal of emphasis now on new Toronto, that being, you know, the cultural communities, and certain cultural communities ... what can we do to really attract those people into the paper. So they themselves in the paper and so that other readers see them too. So it's part of the conversation. (Irwin Connelly, Editor-in-Chief, *Toronto Star*)

The site of city editing at the *Toronto Star* can be viewed as a historically and geographically constituted mediation of diversity. Moreover, the character of this mediation is not straightforward or highly teleological but, as the discussion of histories exhibits, something bound up in affective and at times even heroic senses of purpose and responsibility. In other words, a *teleoaffectivity* expressive of and intrinsic to the site of city editing<sup>14</sup>.

### **Enacting and mediating diversity/difference: sites, power, publics**

This chapter has examined imaginations of Toronto-as-diverse by engaging only indirectly with ethnic diversity as something substantively represented. My attention has instead been directed to a relatively detailed understanding of city editing practices and their material constitution, and how this site mediated Toronto as a particular type of polity and social body. This proposed that an alternative way to examine the framing of urban ethnic diversity is via its enactment and mediation through particular sites; this pertains to not only the sites considered herein, but potentially others as well. With respect to the site of city editing at the *Toronto Star*, I explored three ways diversity was enacted and mediated: as an implicit and explicit geographical imagination expressed through practices of editing work; as something ordered and orientated through the material assembly of newspaper form; and as

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<sup>14</sup> What I have not been able to discuss is the dependence of such practices on propensities or dispositions emanating and learned from elsewhere and prior (Thrift, 2008, pp. 220); indeed, that would raise larger questions around what might be called the *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1977, 1990) of city editing.

something consumed within practical references to and enactments of the organizational histories of the newspaper. A basic conclusion to be made from this analysis is that the relationships between the *Toronto Star* and its reading publics were much more complex than conventional claims around media construction suggest. Avoided here, in particular, was an image of the *Toronto Star* constructing Toronto's diversity in a hegemonic, one-way direction; not only constructing newspaper texts, but as many accounts tend to imply, constructing audience subjectivities.

One hope therefore is that this chapter opens up new questions around the mediation of difference and diversity in Canadian cities. Media are too often tidily swept into a conceptual black box in otherwise commendable critical inquiries; victim to simplistic theorizations, or bypassed in a fixation to deconstruct representations. In a recent commentary, Wood and Gilbert (2005) argue that analyses of Canadian multiculturalism should focus less on emblematic figures like former Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, or the discourses of official state policies. They suggest that the particularity of diversity and difference in Canada is instead found in the interactive qualities of urban practices as they unfold in such public spaces as Toronto's downtown streets and transit system. They offer insightful critique and a hopeful way forward. Be that as it may, their argument suffers from two common problems. First is a vision of urban practices that is rather romantically tied to everyday city life and implicitly juxtaposed to abstracted orders like 'the media' (as well as policy, discourses, etc). The contrasting analysis in this chapter has seen media in ways that are fundamentally just as relational and practiced as any urban social setting (cf. Couldry, 2004; Thrift, 2000, pp. 235). Second is a corresponding vision of public

space as concrete and locally-bound; where differences are seen as negotiated through ‘real’ city spaces. Yet the multitude of sites making up the production, circulation and consumption of media (of which my account of editing points to but one participant) also make up *actual* – and not merely metaphorical – public spaces that are not so easily segmented off from interactions in more spatially-bounded or localized public spaces (cf. Barnett, 2004, 2007; Iveson, 2007; Warner, 2002).

Advocating this closer understanding of media spaces should not, moreover, detract in any way from an analysis of power in relation to cities. Quite the contrary, for it offers a lens for bringing media power into sharper attention and greater focus.

Understanding enables greater possibilities for change (cf. Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, pp. 195-200). As Latour (1993, pp. 125-126) puts it:

Take some small business owner hesitatingly going after a few modest shares, some conqueror trembling with fever, some poor scientist tinkering in his lab, a lowly engineer piecing together a few more or less favourable relationships or forces, some strutting politician: turn the critics loose on them, and what do you get? Capitalism, imperialism, science, technology, domination – all equally absolute, systematic, totalitarian ... The actors in the first scenario could be defeated; in the second they no longer can.

Some authors, such as Mitchell (1996), have claimed to apprehend multiculturalism ‘on the ground’ via an examination of discourses of multiculturalism ‘appropriated’ by particular interests, such as those representing capital and state. I would argue that the approach deployed here apprehends such groundedness in different and potentially more useful ways. In focusing on sites, I have tried to illustrate certain actualizations of political power in relation to Toronto, where power was a relational *effect* of the practice-materiality constituting such sites, rather than possessed by certain actors or organizations (cf. Allen, 2003; Law, 1994; Schatzki, 2005: 479). This understanding

of power cannot rely on a simple opposition of hegemony and resistance, or elites versus publics. City editing was at once performed in particular milieus inhabited by very select members, while also being oriented to, even subjugated by, a need to anticipate the dispositions and daily rhythms of subjects variably understood as readers, publics, markets, citizens and so on (cf. Bourdieu, 1984, pp. 231; Radcliffe, 1999, pp. 237-238; Scannell, 1996). If there is such a thing as a distinctly Canadian multicultural urbanism, I would suggest that one important place to explore its production is the interstices of particular media sites and wider communicative spaces.

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