

**SATISFACTION AND JOURNALISM:  
A STUDY OF NEWSROOM HAPPINESS AND  
ITS IMPLICATIONS IN PRINT DESIGN**

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by

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The undersigned, appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School, have examined  
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SATISFACTION AND JOURNALISM:  
A STUDY OF NEWSROOM HAPPINESS AND ITS IMPLICATIONS IN PRINT  
DESIGN

presented by Rachel Schallom

a candidate for the degree of Master of Arts

and hereby certify that in their opinion it is worth of acceptance.

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## DEDICATION

This thesis would have been impossible without the love and support from family and friends. I am thankful for continued words of encouragement and shoulders to cry on through the ups and downs of this journey. I am truly blessed to be surrounded by people who believe in me and my work, and I look forward to having you as loved ones throughout the adventure that journalism will take me on.

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# SATISFACTION AND JOURNALISM: A STUDY OF NEWSROOM HAPPINESS AND ITS IMPLICATIONS IN PRINT DESIGN

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## ABSTRACT

The implementation of news design studios has sparked questions among news professionals. Little research has been done about the removal of the designers from the newsroom, and this could be some of the first academic work. This study used 10 semi-structured interviews with print designers to investigate what facets of job satisfaction designers in newsrooms and news design studios derive. Two sets of attitudes were found, but the difference was driven by whether the designer self-identified as a journalist, not necessarily from the organizational structure the designer worked in. Seven of the ten designers self-identified as journalists, and they valued the quality of the whole newspaper, content creation and how their work impacted readers. They also felt collaboration produced the highest quality. Three of the ten designers did not self-identify as journalists. They focused on creative freedom and using artistic elements to tell the story. These findings provided further evidence that designers who self-identified as journalists shared similar facets of satisfaction as other journalists. By identifying what the designers value, the designers and newspaper editors can determine if they share expectations on job responsibilities and quality.



# INTRODUCTION

The journalism industry has seen significant changes in recent history due to dramatic print readership declines. Many newspapers are closing, and journalists are losing jobs (Franklin, 2008). Contemporary journalism — sometimes known as digital journalism — has challenged journalism organizations and its leaders and employees. The Internet has threatened print advertising revenue, the financial lifeblood of traditional newsrooms. Throughout the last ten years, the economics, organizational structure, tools and technology in journalism have altered because of these changes, and the industry continues to try to adapt to the changing world. The tools available to journalists are evolving and expanding. Many newsrooms have primarily switched to an “online first” mentality (Franklin, 2008, p. 635). Mobile devices with cameras and publishing capabilities allow users to share what they see and experience with the world. Blogs and other web tools encourage non-journalists to report on their community; it no longer takes employment at a media organization in order to publish (Beckett, 2008; Franklin, 2008).

Through all of the changes, the industry is functioning in “increasingly competitive and fragmented markets” (Franklin, 2008, p. 637) and is willing to try new things in order to save costs, and, thus, save newspapers from going out of business. One of these changes is the creation of news design studios. Media companies such as Gannett, McClatchey and Cox have implemented design

studios. These studios take the news designers out of the newsroom. The design is outsourced to a news design studio, a hub somewhere across the country that houses designers for many newspapers (Channick, 2011). For example, the Gannett design studio in Des Moines designs 80 newspapers nationwide that are owned by the media company. The newsroom sends the copy and photos to the designer at the studio, who then assembles the pages. Some designers work on the same newspaper everyday; some do not. Designers communicate with the journalists back in the newsroom using instant messaging, Skype and email (Davis, 2012), but since they are removed from the newsroom, they are not able to attend news meetings or planning sessions. The disconnect also means that designers at news design studios do not have face-to-face interaction with other journalists at the same paper.

These design studios are intended to save costs and improve the design of the newspapers. Jennings (2011) explains that redesigning the layout of a newspaper is an option in efforts to decrease costs. Redesigns in Europe have shown major increases in circulation. These redesigns have been shown to improve the product and change the company and workflow (Jennings, 2011). While the news design studios give smaller papers design resources they did not have before, such as preparing beautiful, large special sections, critics of the news design studios worry that the removal of the designer from the newsroom creates an information and communication barrier, especially with local copy (Channick, 2011).

Journalists in all departments of a newspaper newsroom, including print designers, have repeatedly stated a high level of commitment to the profession (Fedler, 2004; Russo, 1998). This commitment is visible as journalists have endured negative work conditions and a highly stressful environment. Even still, journalists have a positive emotional attachment to their profession and its tasks, which are often viewed as a public good in which journalists are serving the community. Generally, work autonomy leads to higher occupational identity (the perception of belonging to a vocational group), so it makes sense that journalists have a strong commitment to their occupational identity since journalists typically have high work autonomy (Russo, 1998). There is a positive correlation between commitment and job satisfaction, so it is not surprising that journalists often report high job satisfaction even though the job is known to be highly stressful (Fedler, 2004; Russo, 1998).

As newsroom organizational structures change and more and more organizations separate their employees, specifically the removal of designers from the newsroom and the creation of news design studios, it seems plausible that news print designers will have varying degrees of occupational identification as journalists. This research study will examine if the facets — or dimensions — of satisfaction of print news designers change as organizational structure changes, primarily looking into the correlation between occupational identity of print news designers and job satisfaction. Stress is an intrinsic quality of the profession and a facet of job satisfaction that could vary depending on a print designer's role in the news organizational structure. So a designer working in a news design studio,

a different organizational structure than traditional newsrooms, might experience different facets of satisfaction. This has impact on designers attracted to a position in each organizational structure, along with maintaining satisfied employees.

The literature reported here examines stress as an intrinsic quality of the profession of journalism and the correlation between job satisfaction and job stress. This correlation within journalism is explained using Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory (Herzberg, 2005). The literature also examines how the role of a print designer in a newspaper newsroom was born from other journalist roles, making designers similar to reporters, editors and other journalists in regards to job satisfaction.

One method of data collection was used. In-depth interviews were conducted with ten news print designers, five from newspaper newsrooms and five from news design studios. These interviews investigated the facets of job satisfaction print designers derive from the profession. The constant comparative method was used to analyze the data and look for patterns (Glaser, 1965).

This research is one of the first, if not the first, to examine designers in the recently-implemented news design studios. Prior research has not determined if working in a news design studio fulfills the same facets of satisfaction that working in a newsroom would. It is also possible that the different work environments are attracting employees who seek to fulfill different facets of satisfaction. This knowledge could be practically used by both hiring managers at the different facilities and designers searching for a satisfying job.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Although the concept of stress was not developed until the 1930s and not specifically studied in journalists until the 1980s (Fedler, 2004), the notion is anything but new in the world of journalism. Many research studies (Allen et al., 1998; DeFillippi, 2009; Endres, 1988; Fedler, 2004; Reinardy, 2011) have found that newspaper journalists throughout time experience work-related stress, which is especially noted in Fedler's historical study of stress in journalists. Fedler found that more than 90 percent of journalists have experienced stress. Endres echoed this in his 1988 study of Ohio journalists where he also found that most journalists experience stress several times a week. In 2005, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention reported that journalism was the seventh most stressful job (Reinardy, 2011). Given the conditions, it's not a surprise. Journalists are vulnerable: living on deadline, intense competition within the newsroom and with competitors, long hours, unfriendly sources and a critical public. In a world where irregular days off, working holidays and 12- to 15-hour days are normal, the stress and extra demands require journalists to adjust their living patterns emotionally and physically (Felder, 2004; Endres, 1988).

Fedler (2004) found that historically newspaper journalists have blamed nine sources of stress: their reputations and the reputations' consequences, the need to sacrifice and compromise ideals, the work's physical and mental demands, long and irregular hours, the occupation's low salary, competition for

jobs and stories, job insecurity, witnessing disasters and poor treatment by editors. Because of these factors, journalism has been described as a career for the young. In 1889, Julian Ralph of the *New York Sun* said that journalism was best suited for those ages 21 to 30 years old because their bodies could handle the lack of sleep, irregular meals and lots of stress (Fedler, 2004). Fedler (2004) also found that after about six years in the business, the stress began to affect journalists' personal and professional lives. This stress can contribute to burnout and turnover. In Endres (1988) work, the stressor most listed was the desire for professional perfectionism. Perfection is an unattainable goal, and although it can also serve as a motivator, it can cause frustration. His research showed that the younger journalists were, the more likely they were to list professional perfectionism as a stressor (Endres, 1988).

In order to cope with the frequent stress, newspaper journalists have been known to develop a professional detachment from the world they cover. This is often interpreted by the public as hardness or cynicism. Some journalists find comfort in caffeine, cigarette and/or alcohol addictions (Fedler, 2004). Because of the stress, journalists often do not separate personal and professional lives and are commonly only friends with other journalists (Aldridge, 1998). This has made some journalism professors nervous about preparing students for a career that could be dissatisfying (Defluer, 1992). However, not all stress is bad. Negative stress can be balanced out by positive stress, and positive stress can push a journalist to do his or her best work (Endres, 1988). When Endres (1988) researched Ohio print journalists, 23 percent said the stress was negative because

it hindered their performance or made them feel bad about themselves, 14 percent said it was positive and 55 percent said the stress could be positive or negative depending on the circumstances.

Benz (2005) defines job satisfaction as the value people obtain from their work. Surveys are common for measuring job satisfaction. Some scales, such as the Job Diagnostic Survey, measure overall job satisfaction (Spector, 1997). Most surveys monitor different aspects of job satisfaction, also known as facets of satisfaction. Facets of satisfaction include: appreciation, communication, coworkers, fringe benefits, organization/company, policy and procedures, pay, personal growth, promotion opportunities, recognition, security and supervision (Spector, 1997). For example, the Job Descriptive Index is one of the most popular job satisfaction surveys, and it investigates five facets. Other job satisfaction surveys include the Job Satisfaction Survey, the Job Diagnostic Survey and the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Spector, 1997).

Job satisfaction is one of the most studied variables in organizational behavior, and job satisfaction among newspaper journalists has been researched regularly since 1971 (Beam, 2006). Job stress and job satisfaction are closely related (Endres, 1988). It could be inferred that because of the immense amount of stress in the journalism industry, journalists would report low job satisfaction. In fact, few journalists leave the industry solely because of the stress and frustration (Felder, 2004). Only two percent of journalists reported they could not handle the stress, and many people who said they've experienced burnout said it was temporary and usually went away as the stressors decreased (Endres,

1988). Those who said they would leave the industry cited poor journalism quality as the main reason. So journalists will not leave the industry because of the workload, deadlines and low salary, but if those things lead to a decrease in the quality of journalism, they will (Reinardy, 2009).

The unexpected connection between journalists' stress and job satisfaction can be explained. Frederick Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory, also known as the two-factor theory, concludes that there are two factors in determining job satisfaction. Satisfaction and dissatisfaction are independent of each other and caused by different factors (Herzberg, 2005). Motivators are job characteristics that are related to what the individual does in the work, such as achievement, recognition, the tasks of the job and responsibility. These factors are intrinsic to the occupation, and they lead to satisfaction (Herzberg, 2005). Hygiene factors are job-related factors that are extrinsic to the work itself, such as company policies, relationships with bosses and coworkers and technical problems. Hygiene factors can lead to dissatisfaction. Increasing satisfaction and decreasing dissatisfaction will be caused by two different factors (Herzberg, 2005). The opposite of satisfaction is not dissatisfaction, but rather it is no satisfaction. The same is true for dissatisfaction: the opposite of dissatisfaction is not satisfaction, but rather it is no dissatisfaction (Herzberg, 2005).

Reinardy's 2009 research confirms the motivation-hygiene theory within journalism in that the lack of motivators does not lead to dissatisfaction, just no satisfaction. The biggest tie to job satisfaction for newspaper journalists is the professionalism of the newspaper — the quality of the journalism produced



(Reinardy, 2009). This makes sense because the quality journalism is linked directly to the work task at hand, an intrinsic factor to job satisfaction. Beam (2006) also found this in the connection between journalists' perceptions of their news organization's business and professional goals. Journalists who felt their news organization placed high importance on profits felt that the quality of journalism suffered, leading to decreased satisfaction. The most satisfied journalists are those with high autonomy in their work, those with influence within the newsroom and those who feel they are doing a good job at informing the public — all intrinsic values (Beam, 2006). Stamm and Underwood (1993) expected policy changes within a newsroom to play a larger role in journalists' satisfaction, but the results found that unless the policy changes affected the journalism produced, the impact was not as great.

Spector (1997) agrees with Reinardy's (2009) findings on a more general model. Core characteristics of jobs influence job performance, job satisfaction, motivation and turnover. People are attracted to jobs that fulfill the characteristics that satisfy them. In other industries, job stress might be viewed as an organizational constraint, a condition of the environment that impacts how well an employee can do his or her job (Spector, 1997). For journalists, job stress is a core characteristic of the profession, an intrinsic quality so people who enjoy adrenaline rushes, deadlines and averting crises are attracted to the journalism industry.

Benz (2005) compared job satisfaction between employees at non-profit organizations and for-profit companies. His definition of non-profit employees is

broader than the definition provided by the government for what organizations qualify as non-profit. According to Benz, non-profit employees are people who find their work valuable. They are motivated by the intrinsic qualities of the job, and they believe they are helping people. Job satisfaction in non-profit situations is not due to a higher salary or working better hours (Benz, 2005). Newspaper journalism could be placed in this non-profit category — even though media companies are most commonly for-profit ventures — because the work is a service provided to the community. The conditions are not always great, but journalists find high utility in the work (Benz, 2005). Journalists have a passionate attachment to the profession (Aldridge, 1998).

Not only do journalists share passion for the industry, but they also share the career fulfillment they feel because the satisfaction typically stems from similar attributes. Women who work at newspapers found their satisfaction and dissatisfaction were shared across the country (Barrett, 1984). Journalists are a closely-knit group, and the community often extends beyond geographical location (Aldridge, 1998). The top five criteria for women in looking for a job were opportunity to advance, independence in work, personal fulfillment and interest in the job task, a good salary and competent management. The first three are intrinsic factors, and the second two are extrinsic factors. Barrett (1984) concludes that it can be inferred that intrinsic factors are bit more important than extrinsic factors. Women journalists who had high job satisfaction also scored high on intrinsic satisfaction, and when asked why they would leave the industry they responded “personal fulfillment” (p.597). Although more than half had

experienced sex-differentiated treatment within the last two years, it was not a top concern, and more than 92 percent of women said their job met or exceeded their expectations (Barrett, 1984). Newspaper size was not a factor in job satisfaction, but ownership structure was. Job satisfaction was higher at family-owned newspapers than at newspapers owned by a chain (Stamm & Underwood, 1993). This is most likely attributed to the fact that Stamm and Underwood (1993, p. 529) found that chain-operated newspapers had “more difficulty retaining journalistic policies,” and, as discussed earlier, professionalism has been determined as an important factor for journalists’ job satisfaction.

There is a significant link between job satisfaction and occupational identity throughout many industries, including journalism. Jobs that provide an opportunity for an employee’s self-identified skill set to be utilized are more likely to be satisfying to the employee. These skills may or may not be formally recognized, but they are considered part of the job that the employee most closely identifies with (Feather & Rauter, 2004). For example, a journalist’s self-identified skill set might include news judgment, fact checking, editing and research, among others. This is corroborated by Van Dick (2004) who found that identification with the task itself is considered to have a high impact on the quality of work produced.

Individuals who reported the highest level of satisfaction with work assignments also reported high commitment to the organization (Witt, 1993). However, occupational identity varies from commitment to the organization in that occupational identity reflects a personal identification, while commitment

reflects a relationship between separate entities (Knippenberg & Sleebos, 2006). This personal identification may or may not be the same as the job description, but, instead, how the employee views him or herself and the work he or she does. It is common for the different aspects of organizational identification (personal identification versus job title) to be differently associated with work-related attitudes and behaviors (Christ, et al., 2004).

Occupational identity is important to monitor to maintain satisfied employees, and this is especially true when there is organizational change. The organizational change may or may not be threatening to the occupational identification of the employees. It is highly dependent on context, such as if the employees agreed that the change was necessary or if the job tasks or roles changed (Van Dick, 2004). Occupational identification can have positive or negative outcomes in an organization, so it is critical for organizations to be aware. Job satisfaction and positive outcomes are more likely when an employee is in a work environment that fulfills occupational identification (Rotondi, 1975).

It is often confusing to newspaper journalism veterans why newcomers are so eager to jump on to what they see as a “sinking ship” (Macy, 2009, p. 43). Journalism is often seen as a seductive career because of the exciting pace, opportunity to try new things and visit new places, meet famous people and two days are never alike (Fedler, 2004). The most satisfying dimension of working in media is the prestige, closely followed by the creativity (Defluer, 1992). Because of the intense competition and effort to meet deadline on a daily basis, the stress related to journalism is an intrinsic factor of the occupation. It hits at the heart of

the task of the work, and without the adrenaline rush and positive work-related stress, the satisfaction of journalists could be expected to decrease. This is similar in other crisis-oriented organizations. Nurses who voluntarily worked in the stressful emergency room culture reported high job satisfaction (Chung-Kuang, Cecilia, Shu-Hui, & Tung-Hsu, 2009). Beginners who understand the stress as part of the job are less likely to be surprised by it (Fedler, 2004). Those who studied journalism or mass communications in college found more satisfaction working in media than working outside of media, (Defluer, 1992) and a reporter for the Tampa Tribune reports that most of her friends who took buyouts or left the industry wish they had stayed in journalism because it provides more satisfaction (Macy, 2009).

While high job satisfaction among journalists has been a constant throughout history, the roles and tasks that newspaper journalists take on have changed. Journalists in the 19<sup>th</sup> century could do all the tasks needed to produce the daily newspaper. They were, for the most part, generalists: reporters, editors, plate makers and everything in between (Barwis, 1981). That is not the case in modern newsrooms. There has been a movement to role specialization. Newspaper journalists now focus on one major task. Examples of role specialization include reporting, editing, designing, managing or web producing, to name a few. In Demer's (1998) research on corporate newsrooms, he found role specialization was a factor in increasing product quality. The traditional newsroom structure is similar to an assembly line as content moves from

reporters to editors to production with little communication in between (Reinardy, 2011).

The introduction of design desks in the early 1990s, primarily in 1991 and 1992, represented one kind of specialization in journalism. In the early adoption of design desks, the designers were copy editors who had visual skills. The role of the designer was more than just improving the look of the newspaper. Because there are multiple parts of a news package — article, photos, graphics and more — the designer was also utilized to be a journalist who could integrate all of the parts to make the package look harmonious. Design desks vary in size, organization set up and title names, but as time evolved and journalists were hired to focus solely on design instead of copy editing and design, one thing remained constant: news managers preferred designers who were journalists first, designers second. The best designer was one with strong news judgment with a flair for visual presentation (Auman, 1994).

Role theory explains that job satisfaction will not be the same for all news workers (Beam, 2006). Those who worked in newspaper production, above all other departments, reported that conflict between or among departments within the newsroom was a barrier in getting work done. Production also stood out as wanting the most information from other departments and was the least satisfied with the quality of the information received (Allen, Seibert, Haas & Zimmerman, 1998). This makes sense since the designer's role is to compile the work done by various departments within the newsroom, and conflict among groups is higher

for those who must coordinate interdependent tasks, as newsrooms must do to produce the news everyday (Allen et al., 1998).

Allen et al. (1998) found that newspaper journalists described themselves as a “mix of different people” who are highly motivated and under a lot of pressure (p. 676). Those working in creative media, such as newspaper designers, must handle multiple identities. The most common identity conflict for designers is creativity versus forces beyond their control (DeFillippi, 2009). Designers are more likely to want to plan the visual presentation than journalists in other departments. This combination of skills and attitudes can be a strength if the newsroom implements the maestro approach. The maestro approach in newsrooms blends writing, editing and visual journalism into one team (Nelson, 2003). The approach is designed to create the best package, and serving the reader in the best way possible is the underlying current that drives the team’s actions (Borden & Harvey, 1997). The maestro approach creates — and demands — active communication between word and visual people as the reporting and editing journalists work with the production desk to best tell the story. For example, early in the process an editor familiar with the story would work with the production desk to reserve space and color in the print product to tell the story best. Borden and Harvey (1997) state the ideal newsroom structure is one that collaborates writing, editing and design in a manner similar to the maestro approach.

The maestro approach has been implemented in some traditional newspaper newsrooms (Borden & Harvey, 1997), but the process does not always

run smoothly for designers. Designers commonly complained of “just having to make it work” if the production planning had been left to the last second (Allen et al., 1998, p. 674). Because the designers are the last members of the team to work on the package since print design is often the last step in getting the package to the reader, sometimes the design might suffer or the process can be stressful for the designer. The designer is responsible for making deadline even if a lack of planning or collaboration makes this stressful for the designer. This is true for design departments in newsrooms that have not implemented the maestro approach as well. In these newsrooms, the designers are at the end of the assembly line. They are content finishers, and even though they have not had a role in the planning of the package, they must make deadline (Allen et al., 1998). In addition, frustration can mount for creative individuality in creative work while working in a design department at a newspaper (DeFillippi, 2009).

Even throughout the conflict and frustration, designers are choosing to bring their creative talents to newspaper journalism. They are included in the job stress and satisfaction studies involving journalists because, as Auman (1994) discussed, designers are more than artists: they are journalists. As journalists, designers experience similar intrinsic and extrinsic factors for job satisfaction, and through the stress, they find value and fulfillment in their work in journalism.

Since the media has been successful in maintaining its role as a powerful force in society, routinization and departmentalization is more than just a necessary evil in newspaper newsroom bureaucracy (Epstein, 1979). However,



some newspapers are moving designers out of the newsroom and into a news design studio. A growing number of organizations are separating employees (Russo, 1998). This was practically implemented in journalism as a method to cut costs and improve the design of the newspaper — which has been shown to increase circulation and thus profits — during a time when readership was declining, journalists were being laid off and newspapers were closing (Franklin, 2008; Jennings, 2011). The Tribune Co. has said that by implementing design studios, the company is saving \$8 million to \$9 million annually (Channick, 2011). The most well known of the design studios are operated by the largest media company in the country, Gannett Co. Inc., but the McClatchey, Tribune, Sun-Times, Swift Communications, E.W. Scripps and Cox companies have also implemented news design studios (McMeekin, 2012). Gannett’s design studios are located in several places around the country, and the studios are composed of designers only. Gannett newspaper newsrooms took the designers out of the newsroom, and now designers work on pages surrounded by other designers who are designing pages for a different newspaper owned by the same company. Gannett Co. Inc. introduced six design studios in 2011 that handle the design of 80 newspapers (Channick, 2011). The design studios face the challenge of “balancing the need for newspapers’ individuality and the need for efficiency at the studios” (Berlin, 2010, p. 1).

Since these design studios are so new, there is little research about their positive and negative qualities. However, an overview suggests that outsourcing production such as the use of design studios is more likely to intensify the

disconnection between creative identity and the designer's commitment to the media organization (DeFillippi, 2009). Because the organizational structure is so different from a typical newspaper newsroom, where a designer works with other journalists, it can be expected that the job stress and satisfaction would differ in a design studio.

This study answers the following questions:

RQ1: What facets of satisfaction do print designers find in working at a newspaper newsroom?

RQ2: What facets of satisfaction do print designers find in working at a news design studio?

RQ3: How do the facets of satisfaction of print designers working in a newspaper newsroom differ from print designers working at a news design studio?

RQ4: What facets of dissatisfaction do print designers find in working at a newspaper newsroom?

RQ5: What facets of dissatisfaction do print designers find in working at a news design studio?

RQ6: How do the facets of dissatisfaction of print designers working in a newspaper newsroom differ from print designers working at a news design studio?

RQ7: Do print designers working in a newspaper newsroom identify with the role of journalist more than print designers working in a news design studio, thus having similar facets of satisfaction to traditional journalists?

## METHODS

It is important to define some of the key terms and concepts in this study. Job satisfaction is the degree to which people like their jobs or aspects of their jobs. “It is the extent to which people like (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their jobs” (Spector, 1997, p. 4). Facets of satisfaction are categories that embrace an aspect of a job that an employee might find satisfying or dissatisfying. The facets of satisfaction in the Job Satisfaction Survey are pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, operating conditions, coworkers, nature of work and communication (Spector, 1997). This study will examine print designers in both newspaper newsrooms and news design studios. Print designers are designers whose primary job is to produce news layouts for a daily newspaper. Lowrey (2002) defines print designers as workers whose primary task is “constructing the visual context for newspaper information” (p. 4). A newspaper newsroom is defined in this study as a traditional newsroom that produces a print newspaper for the community in which it exists. A news design studio is an office primarily for designers. The office produces designs for multiple newspapers owned by the same media company in “the move to consolidate editing and design” (Channick, 2011, p. 1).

By looking into present phenomena, qualitative research can shed light on how people think and analyze life (Christians & Carey, 1989). Qualitative research places high importance on the socially constructed nature of reality, so interviews

make sense because the researcher is able to get closer to the participants' perspectives (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). Using interviews as a qualitative method allows the participants to discuss their feelings as well as activities (Anderson & Jack, 1994). Most research on job satisfaction is done by using surveys or questionnaires, but a researcher can obtain more extensive information from an interview (Spector, 1997). Interviews have been used for many years to provide insight into the meanings and experiences of media producers and audiences. Interviews are the proper tool for exploring how people make sense of their world and understand their actions and circumstances (Rakow, 2011).

This study interviewed 10 participants. The participants were print newspaper designers. Half of the participants (5) worked in newspaper newsrooms, and half of the participants (5) worked in a news design studio. Each works for a different newspaper. The print designers are daily deadline designers who primarily work in news. A range of ages and experience is gives an assortment of opinions (Rakow, 2011). In addition, gender, race, age and experience have been shown to have a correlation to job satisfaction, even though not all researchers can agree what the correlation is. Previous research on job satisfaction has used varied participants to avoid these possible correlations impacting results (Spector, 1997). Participants all have at least one year of experience so that they are settled into the routines, computer programs and experiences of the profession and are able to give an accurate representation (Johnson & Weller, 2002).

This research study uses purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a research technique where the researcher chooses participants to serve a purpose and ensure characteristics of different members of the population (Rakow, 2011). Researchers have often selected cases based on organizational structures in newsrooms (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009). The participants who work in newspaper newsrooms were chosen from various organizational structures. It can be inferred designers might have varying experiences and opinions based on the organizational structure they work under.

There has long been conflict in newsrooms between designers and other newsroom subgroups. “Conflict refers to the natural friction formed when the goals of two groups or individuals are different, and is inevitable stemming from the organization’s structural characteristics” (Allen et al., 1998, p. 669). Visual journalists often complain about a lack of support from the other groups, and some editors and reporters do not consider designers to be journalists (Lowrey, 2002). Designers’ authority over decision making is often challenged. The American Society of News Editors has even published pleas for more cooperation among the groups (Lowrey, 2002). However, as innovations are implemented and organizational structures change, some newsrooms are now seen as design-driven newsrooms. This change is often made for revenue purposes to increase circulation. Yet, some newsrooms could not be further from the concept of being design-driven. Designers, along with photographers, reporters, editors and copy editors, have some degree of influence over the process and content, but it varies by newsroom (Lowrey, 2002). The five participants of this research study who

work in newsrooms will be selected from newsrooms that are known to be in varying places on the design-driven spectrum.

The researcher reached out to the Society of News Design list-serv to recruit participants, along with ads placed on Facebook and Twitter by the researcher and Joy Mayer, a member of the thesis committee. Twenty-six designers responded. The call for participants included a link to a short pre-screening form, which asked for name, contact information, experience, design studio or newsroom and employer. Using a pre-screening form allowed the researcher to pick interview candidates along the spectrum mentioned above to obtain as much diversity as possible.

Semi-structured interviews with a combination of open-ended and closed-ended questions were utilized in this research study. Structured interviewing was not used in order to understand the participants' perspectives without imposing categorization that might limit their responses (Fontana & Frey, 1994). Semi-structured interviews are suited for researching participants' opinions regarding complex or sensitive issues (Barriball & Alison, 1994).

The foundational concepts incorporated into the interviews are: job stress (occupational pressures and demands), job satisfaction (how content one is with his or her profession) and occupational identity (a person's mental mode of his or her profession). A list of possible interview questions can be found in Appendix A. Some of the questions were adapted from Bunderson and Thompson's (2009) research on zoologists' describing their occupation as their calling and some were adapted from the Job Descriptive Index (Nasser, 2005).

In typical semi-structured interview format, the wording of the questions remained the same to ensure comparability. However, semi-structured interviews gave the researcher the freedom for probing — asking follow-up questions to make sure meanings are clear. During probing, the researcher explored inconsistencies among participants. Probing also helps the researcher build rapport by increasing interaction between the researcher and participant (Barriball & While, 1994).

The interviews took place over the phone, and the conversations were recorded with the participants' permission. The files were saved anonymously on a password-protected drive. The participants were compensated with \$15 Amazon gift cards. The interviews were conducted between June 22, 2012 and August 4, 2012. The interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes each. The researcher took brief notes during the interview and transcribed each interview after its conclusion.

Rakow (2011) explains that it is important for the researcher to have a vast knowledge and understanding of the topic discussed in the interviews. For this research study, the researcher received an undergraduate journalism degree from the Missouri School of Journalism with an emphasis in news design. She has attended news design conferences and held design positions at professional newspapers. There are very little misunderstandings in the context of the subjects discussed, but participant feedback was used to ensure what the interviewee meant was understood. Participant feedback is a validity technique used where



the researcher rephrases what the interview participant has said to make sure meanings are clear (Johnson, 1997).

The researcher used the constant comparative method of analysis as discussed by Glaser (1965). The constant comparative method uses a mix of coding and analysis in order to get the most complete theoretical results. It is practical for this study because it is able to produce many properties about a general phenomenon. The researcher started by coding each comment made during an interview into a category while comparing it to the previous comment. The comments coding process took place after each interview and not at the conclusion of all 10 interviews. The categories became integrated with other categories. As this happens, patterns emerged, and frameworks developed to answer the research questions.

## FINDINGS

It was expected that the facets of job satisfaction categories would create patterns by organization structure: working in a newspaper newsroom or news design studio. The findings show that the variance in facets of job satisfaction is divided not by the organizational structure of the designers' place of employment, but rather whether the designer self identifies as a journalist. The attitudes and opinions of print designers who self-identified as a journalist were consistent with others who self-identified as a journalist, whether they worked in a newsroom or news design studio.

However, designers who self-identified as a journalist were more common in newsrooms. All five designers who worked in a newsroom self-identified as a journalist. Two of the five designers who worked in a news design studio self-identified as a journalist. The three designers who did not self-identified as a journalist said they report their role as a "designer."

**TABLE ONE: PSEUDONYM, EXPERIENCE AND IDENTIFICATION**

<b>Pseudonym</b>	<b>Design Experience</b>	<b>Employment</b>	<b>Self-Identification</b>
Josie	4 years	Newsroom	Journalist
Tom	5 years	Newsroom	Journalist
Peggy	15 years	Newsroom	Journalist
Vince	7 years	Newsroom	Journalist
Brooke	2 years	Newsroom	Journalist
Jocelyn	11 years	Design Studio	Designer
Tim	8 years	Design Studio	Designer
Tony	5 years	Design Studio	Journalist
Margaret	10 years	Design Studio	Journalist
Terri	2 years	Design Studio	Designer

Before asking whether the participant identified as a journalist about one-third of the way through the interview, the designer typically gave the researcher an indication of how he or she would answer. This would stem from a complaint or accolade about a job task or role in their current work environment in a newsroom or news design studio.

The designers had no problem answering if they self-identified as a journalist. None of the participants were on the fence, and they felt strongly about their identification. The designers who self-identified as journalists were almost insulted by the question as they presumed it was known they were journalists. One of the designers, Terri, who did not self-identify as a journalist said that she used to be a journalist, but because she now works in a news design studio, she was no longer a journalist.

There are a few explanations for the self-identification. Some of the participants based their job title on the education they had received. If they had a degree in journalism, they would likely identify as a journalist. If they had a degree in art or graphic design, they would likely identify as a designer. Tom said he was a journalist since he went to the “best journalism school in the world,” and Tim said he hated the term “visual journalist” because he came from a pure-design background.

Another factor in self identification was job responsibilities. The designers who were responsible for fact-checking, editing, and/or creating breakout boxes or other content ideas were more likely to self-identify as a journalist. The designers who reported that their job tasks only involved design were more likely

to self-identified as a designer. Those who self-identified as a journalist were also more likely to have a past in other aspects of journalism, such as reporting or editing. Most of them entered the journalism industry in a different capacity before finding their niche in design. Several of the designers used the phrase “visual journalist,” but maintained that their identity as a journalist is just as strong as that of a reporter.

The designers who did not identify as a journalist were adamant in their role as a designer. They reported that just because they are not journalists, they are still a vital part of the newspaper organization. Tim said that the designer’s job is really to just put together the paper, and that a lot of times, the designer is really more of a paginator. He explained that putting multiple pieces of journalism on a page does not make the designer a journalist; the designer is still a designer, and newspapers need designers.

While the designers who did not self-identify as a journalist embraced the term, the word “pagination” was a point of contention for all of the designers who self-identified as a journalist. Tom said that other departments using the word “paginate” was disrespectful to the design department since design involves a plan to execute a “cohesive thought” to convey the information. To him, pagination was only putting the articles into boxes or templates.

Overall, designers who self-identified as journalists found more satisfaction working in newsrooms. Designers who did not self-identify as journalists found more satisfaction working in a news design studio, see Table 2.

TABLE TWO: SATISFACTION BY IDENTIFICATION AND ORGANIZATION

	<b>Working in a newsroom</b>	<b>Working in a news design studio</b>
<b>Designers who self-identified as journalists</b>	More satisfaction	Less satisfaction
<b>Designers who do not self-identify as journalists</b>	Less satisfaction	More satisfaction

It all boils down to the notion of determining if the employee is a journalist who is a designer or a designer who is a journalist. That is where the differences lie. Which role — designer or journalist — has the major emphasis affects the facets of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction of the designer, primarily the focus, definition of quality and relationships with coworkers.

### **Focus**

Across the board, the designers said their main role was to visually tell the story, and they all derived satisfaction from the actual task of doing so. There were several facets of satisfaction that all of the designers agreed on. They enjoyed that the work is different everyday and moves at a fast pace. They enjoyed being part of a team that was recognized for work, such as winning a Society of News Design distinction. They liked that there is a set amount of work to be done, and at the end of the night, they can turn off their responsibilities, unlike a reporter. In addition, they derived satisfaction from the immediate gratification of seeing their work in the paper the next day.

All of the designers confirmed that newspaper design is a stressful career, but that it is part in the job, and they derived satisfaction from the rush of making deadline and dealing with a crisis. They emphasized the need to be able to handle the daily stress because there will be crazy days with big, breaking news that will be even more stressful. Peggy described the business as “a very Murphy’s Law industry,” and Tory explained that the crazy days can be and are the most satisfying for a lot of the designers. Margaret called designers “nerdy daredevils” who derive pleasure in the thrill, and the high intensity is one of the reasons designers who self-identified as journalists are drawn to the industry. All of the designers who self-identified as journalists commented that if a designer did not handle the stress well, this was the wrong industry for them. The designers in a news design studio are typically designing for small to mid-size newspapers, and designers who self-identified as journalists have found a lack of big or breaking news to be dissatisfying.

While the designers said they thrived under the adrenaline rush and they produced their best work under stressful conditions, the recent cutbacks in newsrooms’ resources have added to the stress. Layoffs have been common, and the designers are worried about their job security, especially long-term. Tom had been laid off twice since graduation college, and he was only 26 years old. Jocelyn voiced concern that newspapers are devaluing the print product, and layoffs are more likely for higher paid designers. In addition, the print designers are taking on the same amount of pages with fewer employees. Josie explained that the smaller staff works for regular nights, but it is not enough when breaking news

happens. The smaller staff then is under even more stress by having fewer resources to adapt to the changes.

The designers who did not self-identify as journalists found comfort in being away from the stressful newsroom environment, while still being able to produce a product on a daily basis. Terri explained that one of the reasons she liked working in a studio was because it is not as hectic as a newsroom. Tim expanded by saying that while the studio does feel the immediacy and adrenaline of breaking news, the studio is more capable of dealing with it than a newsroom because there are more designers that can be shifted around to accommodate those needs. That ability, he said, made the environment less stressful during breaking news.

All of these facets are intrinsic with the job. But on a day-to-day basis, the designers who self-identified as a journalist and those who self-identified as a designer varied in where their focus was while carrying out the job responsibilities. The designers who self-identified as a journalist placed high importance on quality, responsibility and informing the public. These designers focused much attention on their role as the liaison between the reporter and the reader and how they believe they are providing a service to the community. They derived satisfaction from making the newspaper more approachable for the reader and contributing to the journalism by adding elements, such as breakout information boxes, and being able to see the finished product like the reader sees it. One example is that Jocelyn says she likes using her news judgment and collaborating with other people's news judgment to determine the hierarchy of

the page. Designers who self-identified as journalists always went back to how their work was affecting the reader, and they emphasized quality journalism over beautiful design, if one had to suffer. One example Josie gave was avoiding art that would be misleading even if it was the perfect shape or fit for the page design.

There was one major difference in the task facet of job satisfaction between the two groups. Designers who self-identified as journalists craved content creation along with design duties. Content creation could be accomplished through pitching content ideas, providing maps or charts or turning a story into a non-narrative read, among other things. Brooke said that when she designs the front page, she writes all of the words on the page except for the stories, and she appreciates communicating in that way and believes it makes the design stronger. Tom said that designers do not always have the time to add extra elements to the story, and it is frustrating when they cannot execute content creation. Margaret explained that as a journalist, it was hard to have a position where she was only designing, but she understood that there were few jobs that involved both content creation and content production. She decided to choose design, sometimes called content production, because she felt it was a more stable career path.

Designers in news design studios, for the most part, have been completely cut off from content creation because they do not live in the community and are not in the same room with the reporters and editors. This disassociated designing means the designers do not know what is important to the community. Most of



the designers that work in design studios have never been to the city they are designing for, and they admitted this can sometimes cause miscommunications between the designers and the newsroom editors. Tim explained that he understands what is important to the community for the big picture, but the designers rely on the newsroom editors to tell them what is important for specific things. He said he can assemble the pieces into the best package, but there is not much he can offer in gathering local content.

The designers who self-identified as journalists still wanted the content creation aspect of their job, but the designers who did not self-identified as journalists were happy with their tasks and responsibilities, focusing mostly on the art aspect of design. These designers did not mention the readers or audience while discussing the quality of their publication or what quality newspaper design should be. They focused on creative freedom. They said that design does not have to be content driven. They derived satisfaction from the challenge of putting a page together that has no art elements — the days where they would have to think outside the box. They also mentioned that the design was an important aspect in selling the newspaper, and designers should think about marketing as part of their job responsibilities. Tim said that the primary role of most front-page designs is to visually grab the attention of the reader. “It can be a Pulitzer-prize winning story, but if the reader just walks by the rack and doesn’t buy the newspaper, then what’s the point?” he commented.

All of the designers desired ownership over their work, but they defined and expressed this ownership in different ways. Designers who self-identified as

journalists referred to content production when they sought out page ownership. They wanted the ability to put their thumbprint on the page by adding charts, bullet points or other journalistic elements. For these designers who work in news design studios, this was a common complaint of what they missed about being in a newsroom. “I miss the scanner. Everything about journalism I love, and so I feel like something is missing by not being able to do it all. In the end, it still leaves the chase for more,” Margaret explained.

Designers who do not self-identified as journalists do not derive satisfaction from content production. These designers referred to art elements when they sought out page ownership. They wanted creative control over fonts, colors and styles used, among other things. They focus on creativity because that is what they define as quality work.

### **Quality**

In addition to being a cost effective venture, one of the main reasons for the implementation of news design studios was to improve the newspapers’ design quality. The designers who work in design studios widely acknowledged that this has been achieved, especially in the smaller papers. Tim explained that while the papers are still undergoing redesigns and upgrades, there are newspapers that have already benefited tremendously from the design studios. The designers in news design studios attributed this to the notion that more talented designers are more likely to want to work in bigger cities, and the design studio provides that atmosphere while still designing for a small paper.

Not all of the designers in a news design studio made the choice to move to a design studio. Some of them were required to transfer because of company consolidation or that is where the job opportunities were. However, Tim saw it as a career move and a way to make a bigger impact by working on multiple publications. This impact was helping designers have the creative control and artistic ownership that designers who do not self-identified as journalists derive satisfaction from. He said that designers crave creative freedom, and the studios can offer that satisfaction.

The design studios were able to accomplish this by redesigning the papers that they design. The designers in news design studios have communicated two main reasons for redesigns. First, all of the newspapers in a design studio have very similar styles. Margaret said that before the newspapers' styles were similar, she had to learn 13 different paper styles, and it was difficult to remember how each paper wanted to look. She explained that employing templates make the designers in the news design studio more versatile; the studio is able to move people around to accommodate changes.

Secondly, the designers in the design studios were able to gain more creative control through the redesigns. All of the designers in design studios reported that they often had problems with the editors of the newspapers. This was especially prevalent in the larger newspapers, which had a harder time letting go of creative control. The designers found dissatisfaction when the newspaper editors rejected design ideas under the umbrella that it was not the newspaper's style. By implementing redesigns, the designers could control what

was and was not the newspaper's style. Tim said that after the redesigns, the designers can create art-driven centerpieces, and the editors can no longer say it is not the style of the newspaper. Dictating the style gave the designers in a news design studio more control, and from that control came creative freedom.

Designers in both news design studios and newsrooms agreed that basic design principles — for example, headline hierarchy, good contrast and color, using images to strike emotional responses — defined quality design. But designers who self-identified as journalists were also more likely to talk about what the design was communicating. Peggy explained that everything that a designer should do should be some point of communication instead of decoration. She acknowledged that using fonts and colors can make it visually appealing, and the designer can use those style options to better convey the information, not just make it look prettier.

But designers who self-identified as journalists did not only judge the design when asked about quality. Designers who self-identified as journalists critiqued the paper as a whole. These designers were more likely to comment on the story ideas and quality of reporting, writing and editing. They critiqued the newspaper's ability to serve the public with facts in a compelling manner and talked about how the paper's work affected readers. Vince complained that some of the stories were not newsworthy or they were being played too prominently for their news value.

When any of these categories came up short, the blame was always placed on cutbacks — not the talent of the journalists performing the tasks. Many of the

journalists who worked in newsrooms felt unhappy with their creative freedom, but said it did not stem from not having enough control. Rather this loss of creative freedom was a result of a smaller staff, smaller news product and less resources. Peggy complained that while the reporting was still excellent, the design team was unable to do special projects planning because there are not enough designers, and the reporters do not have time. Fewer resources mean a small print product with little room for special projects, and the newsroom is unable to pay overtime.

Designers who self-identified as journalists were also more likely to critique the industry in general, not only the newspaper they worked for. They were concerned with the state of the industry. Josie called the newspaper “a horse drawn carriage that is very excellent quality,” meaning it is good, but newspapers are stuck in the past. The designers who self-identified as journalists said they believed in the news industry, but they were concerned with the methods the industry was using to accomplish its goals. They wish they had more input in big-picture meetings to provide ideas to make the newspaper as a whole more successful.

More specifically, they were concerned with where design fell in the priority list of the newspaper. All of the designers who self-identified as journalists except for Brooke, who works for a very design-driven newspaper, complained that reporting was more important than design to the editors. Jocelyn explained that she felt secondary to other things, and she was not a fan of

that culture. She desired to work together, and she wished the editors cared that the page design was crafted as well as the story.

The biggest struggles for designers who self-identified as journalists were industry-wide concerns. The struggling newspaper industry has made changes in the design department lately — the implementation of news design studios being one of them — and the changes have been difficult for the designers who self-identified as journalists. Peggy said she enjoys serving the reader, and that's why a lot of newspaper designers are leaving the industry right now. She said that the job was not about making the designer look good or producing a piece of artwork — it was about conveying information. She said that a lot of designers are leaving the industry, and it is hard to find an enjoyable design job because the corporate bottom line has made it harder for designers to perform their first priority task: conveying information.

Even though designers who self-identified as journalists have had a problem with the industry on the corporate level, they say that they can accomplish a high level of quality through collaboration with other newsroom departments.

### **Collaboration: Who Needs It?**

All of the designers derived satisfaction from their relationships with coworkers, but who the coworkers were varied between designers who self-identified as a journalist and designers who do not self-identified as a journalist.

Most of the designers in both groups mentioned that designers think about

news differently than other journalists. Designers have to think about it in a visual sense and be able to picture all the pieces together. For designers who do not self-identified as journalists, this made them feel outcast in the newsroom, and they reported that they enjoyed being solely around designers at work in the design studios. It made them feel like they were surrounded by likeminded employees. “It’s being around people who have the same thought process that I do... I’m not that weird visual person in the corner who does stuff in Photoshop and InDesign. I’m among friends,” Tim explained.

Designers who do not self-identified as journalists said the news design studios were the best place for design feedback. This is most likely true for small newspapers, in particular. For these papers, the staff is so small that they would likely only have one designer if the design department was still in the newsroom. However, for mid-size to large newspapers, Brooke explained that design feedback can and does take place in newsrooms as well. She said that all of the designers illustrate and they are eager to show you what they are doing and how they are executing it. She described her coworkers as inspired and passionate, and she said they made the work environment richer.

The biggest complaint from designers who do not self-identified as journalists was the relationship with the editors at the newspapers, which is consistent with their liking to work in a room solely of designers. They found the editors were unorganized and lacked planning. The biggest problem was the control over creative content. All of the designers who worked in a design studio said that the editors at the newspapers had a hard time letting go of control. This

might have stemmed from the relationship between the newspapers and the design studios. Terri said that as she worked with the editors more, they had an easier time letting go of control, but it was still an issue. While the designers said that the relationship between the editors at the newspaper and the designers at the design studio varied from case to case, the designers did not feel part of the newspaper's news team. Rather, the designers felt part of the design team at the design studio.

It is also noteworthy to point out the employer the designers say they work for. The newsroom designers all reported they worked for the specific paper, while the news design studio designers all reported they worked for the media company that owns the design studio. The designers shared a common frustration that much of the public did not understand what a newspaper designer did, and designers who worked in a news design studio said it confuses non-journalists even more. Terri explained that when she says she works for the studio, few people understand what that means because people outside of the industry are only familiar with their local paper, and that is not the one she works on.

The designers who did not self-identified as journalists were closer with other designers than to the reporters and editors of the newspaper they worked on. This then formed a unique relationship between the newspaper and design studio. Jocelyn said when the design studios were first implemented, corporate employees told the designers they were part of a customer service department. Tim compared it to design firms in other industries and explained that



sometimes the design studios work with the newsrooms, but mostly, they work for them as if they were hired to design the paper for them, but it's their paper and they have final say in all decision making.

For designers who do not self-identified as journalists, this relationship with the newsrooms worked out, and they derived much satisfaction from the creative atmosphere that a design-centric work environment provided. Designers who self-identified as a journalist wanted to be part of the news team, and they wanted to have input in the planning process. Tony misses the part of the newsroom where reporters and editors are yelling across the room to one another, and that provides a chance for the designers to chime in and add input.

Other designers who self-identified as journalists discussed the process that Tony talks about, and it was frustrating for those designers who work in a news design studio. They said that a good portion of the news decisions and brainstorming sessions were done informally. Since the designers in a news design studio are not in the newsroom, it is impossible for them to partake in these informal conversations, and the little input they can provide is only taken during a formal meeting, such as when the designer calls into the budget meeting. Jocelyn said this setup made it difficult on the designer because it resulted in feedback from multiple editors from the newspaper at the end of the night instead of a cohesive idea being molded throughout the night. This also tied in to the common complaint from designers that editors do not plan well, which affects the planning of the design. Tony said the lack of planning has been a common

complaint from designers for years, but the distance makes it even harder to encourage more planning from editors.

One of the compromises is a new system being implemented in Tony's design studio. The designers in this design studio design for regional newspapers, all within about one hour away from the studio. The studio is going to provide laptops for the designers so they can visit the newsrooms more regularly. He is looking forward to this upgrade and feels it will be a positive both for relationships and product quality.

Not only do designers who self-identified as journalists desire to be part of the process, but they find it necessary to produce a quality news product. If the designer had worked for multiple publications, they often compared newsrooms that collaborated well to newsrooms that did not, and always preferred the first. They derived satisfaction from collaborating with journalists who have other roles in the newsroom, and several of these designers described the environment as a "newsroom family." Many of these designers mentioned enjoying working with photographers to create illustrations in the studio or choose the best photograph for the story.

When these designers discussed the need for collaboration, the quality of design was not the only focus. They also focused on how collaboration was for the betterment of the paper as whole. They stated that with a smaller print product, it was vital to work together with all the departments to maximize the space to best serve the reader. Brooke explained that at the end of the night, the designers print off the page proofs, and everyone in the newsroom looks over them and

offers suggestions. She said talking to everyone and being proud of everyone's work made the paper higher quality and gave her a peace of mind that there were no errors on her pages.

Trust between the editors at the newspapers and the designers was also a crucial aspect for both designers who self-identified as journalists and designers who do not self-identified as journalists. It was important to the designers who self-identified as journalists to have the trust of the newspaper editors because trust is vital in taking risks and trying new things. They said this trust is crucial for out-of-the-box ideas because it gives the reporters and editors faith that the material will be treated well even if it's different. Jocelyn explained that good journalists are skeptical of everything, and typically journalists do not like change so this move has made many newsroom editors uncomfortable.

These designers who worked in news design studios said it was very hard to acquire the trust of the editors because they were far away, and they yearned for the personal connection with the people that they were working with. Terri suggested that the designers in design studios should meet with the editors face-to-face before starting working with them in a long-distance relationship. The lack of trust resulted in a battle over creative control of the design, a battle of who knew what was best for the newspaper. This battle only made it harder for the two teams to work together. Jocelyn explained that the studio designer primarily works with one person in the newsroom via telephone conversations. She said that it is impossible to build rapport with all of the necessary people. Since the newsrooms are supposed to be in charge, she said it was stressful to tell editors

when they were wrong, and it was common for designers to make design sacrifices to avoid the confrontation.

Margaret works in a news design studio, but she works with both copy editors and designers. She found satisfaction that the team could solve a variety of problems because the employees came from diverse backgrounds, something not typical in a design studio, she said. She said that most of the people in her studio had some sort of journalism background, but the designers with a pure-design background were harder to work with because they did not have a journalistic mindset. Even still, the designers who self-identified as journalists all enjoyed working with employees who had various roles within the newspaper. They felt that a room full of people with multiple skills was the best way to serve the newspaper's needs.

The designers who self-identified as journalists said that this collaboration worked well for reporters as well. Designers in both groups said that the designers were important to the reporters, in a sense, because they were the link to readers being interested in reading the stories. Designers who self-identified as journalists and worked in news design studios felt uncomfortable that the reporters were essentially turning their stories over to the designers and just hoping it turned out okay. The reporters have very little to no contact with the designers, and these designers felt a huge pressure to make sure it turned out the way the reporter envisioned since they did not have the opportunity to brainstorm and work with them. This was especially true for larger stories, such

as investigations, that the editors and reporters had worked on for weeks or months.

Feeling like a member of the news team was important for designers who self-identified as journalists, and this is consistent with previous research on the struggles designers have had with other newsroom departments. These designers often felt that their work was not respected as much as reporting, and reporting was given more resources and voice in the newsroom than designers. In some newsrooms, equality among departments is not a problem, but for a lot of designers in newsrooms, it is still a frustration for designers, and many of the designers felt that the implementation of news design studios moved designers away from that equality. Jocelyn explains:

The move to the design studio has inherently made people less respectful of us. We're not on the same team anymore in their eyes. The design hub minimizes our role as journalists, which we've been fighting for for years, and puts us back in the role of people who make things pretty.

There were several facets of dissatisfaction that all of the designers shared. Nine of the 10 designers worked during evenings, weekends and holidays. One of the designers had the coveted Monday through Friday day shift. Of the nine designers with an evening work schedule, eight of the nine disliked it very much. The designers who were unhappy with the hours said their dissatisfaction grew as they became older and started having families. Peggy said it was especially difficult when she had to miss family events, such as Sunday barbeques. All of the

designers were dissatisfied with the pay, and every designer mentioned the fear of layoffs. Job stability is a constant worry, and they were dissatisfied with the notion that if they wanted to move to a new opportunity in the news design industry, that would most likely mean moving to a new city. They were also unsatisfied with the technical equipment, such as design programs and content management systems. These are extrinsic from the job and are consistent with the theory. Even though there are facets of dissatisfaction, the intrinsic factors are more important than the extrinsic factors, explaining why the designers have stayed in the industry.

When asked about what they would look for in a dream design job, designers in both groups wanted more responsibility, such as being an art director or in another management position, more creative freedom or input and the opportunity to be challenged in their daily work and learn new things. A couple of the designers who self-identified as journalists mentioned they want to learn web design skills and apply them to their work at the newspaper. Many of the designers who self-identified as journalists said they already had their dream job when the print version of the newspaper was bigger and inspired more design-driven content. For example, Jocelyn described her dream job as the position she held in 2004 when she was able to spend a lot of time working on special projects and collaborate with a creative team, but she says that type of position does not exist anymore. Designers who self-identified as journalists said they would move to other positions in the newsroom if their job as a designer was no longer available or fulfilling. In addition, designers who self-identified as

journalists said if they could no longer work for the news industry, they would prefer to look for a job outside the industry, such as the retail industry, over doing design work in another industry.

Designers who did not self-identify as journalists said they would likely find design jobs in other industries, such as a private design firm or an advertising agency. These designers talked about the creative freedom they could experience in a design firm, such as the use of more fonts and styles that newspapers do not use. These designers stressed that the actual content did not matter much; it was more about the design. If an opportunity opened up at a magazine that was about something they were not interested in or did not see has high quality writing, it did not matter as much as the design opportunity.

## DISCUSSION

Research question one asked what facets of satisfaction print designers found in working in a newspaper newsroom. The answer to research question one is designers working in a newspaper newsroom derive satisfaction from visually telling the story in a high quality manner that informs the public. Designers working in a newsroom enjoy working in the fast-pace environment and the rush of making deadline, especially under the pressure of breaking news. Research question two asked what facets of satisfaction print designers found in working at a news design studio. The answer to research question two is designers working in news design studios derive different facets of satisfaction based on whether they self-identified as journalists. Designers working in news design studios who self-identified as journalists shared the same facets of satisfaction as designers working in newsrooms. Designers working in news design studios who did not self-identify as journalists derived satisfaction in creative freedom, increasing the design quality of the newspaper and using art to tell the story. Research question three compared the facets of satisfaction of print designers working in newspaper newsrooms and print designers working in news design studios. The answer to research question three is that the facets of satisfaction in designers working in newspaper newsrooms and designers working in news design studio differed only when the designer working in the news design studio did not self-identify as journalist.



Research question four asked what facets of dissatisfaction print designers found in working at a newspaper newsroom. The answer to research question four is that designers working in newspaper newsrooms derive dissatisfaction from the hours and pay of the profession. They were also dissatisfied that they felt the design of the newspaper was not as important to editors as reporting. Research question five asked what facets of dissatisfaction print designers found in working at news design studio. The answer to research question five is similar to research question two: it varied depending if the designer self-identified as a journalist. Designers working in the news design studios who self-identified as journalists were dissatisfied that they were unable to create content, such as information boxes or timelines, and they were dissatisfied that they were unable to collaborate with reporters and editors. Designers working in the news design studios who did not self-identify as journalists were dissatisfied with the stress of breaking news, and working with editors often caused frustration. Research question six compared the facets of dissatisfaction of print designers working at newspaper newsrooms and print designers working at news design studios. The answer to question six is designers working in news design studios who self-identified as journalists shared similar dissatisfactions as designers working in newsrooms, but they were dissatisfied with the parts of their job that changed because they were no longer in the newsroom.

Research question seven asked if print designers working in newspaper newsrooms identified with the role of journalist more than print designers working in a news design studio based on having similar facets to satisfaction to

traditional journalists. The answer to research question seven is the most pivotal of this study. Print designers working in a newspaper newsroom identify with the role of journalist more than print designers working in a news design studio. The designers who self-identified as journalists shared facets of satisfaction with traditional journalists.

It was surprising that one of the most important questions asked was whether the designer self-identified as a journalist, but it turned out to be the crux in the difference in opinions. Since news design studios are a recent development, it has employed many designers who are trying out a new work environment as they moved from a newsroom to the news design studio. As this study progressed, it became clear that one of the important questions the news industry must answer right now is: Are the news design studios providing the work environment that satisfies the facets of satisfactions for journalists?

It is important to note that this is not a critique of the decision to implement the news design studios. It is also not an indication of what self-identification makes the best designer. Designers who self-identified as journalists do not necessarily create higher quality design work. Rather, the findings beg both hiring managers and designers looking for a new position to take a deeper look at what specifics about their job as a designer they find the most rewarding. The newsroom and news design studio appear to cultivate cultures that emphasize different aspects of news design, and when new hires are made, it is important to find the right fit for both the design team and the prospective employee. These findings corroborate with previous research

(Feather & Rauter, 2004; Van Dick, 2004; Witt, 1993; Christ, et al., 2004) discussed earlier that found that jobs that provide the opportunity to utilize the skill set of the employee's occupational identification provided higher satisfaction.

The decision to implement the news design studio has been primarily a financially-based one for the media conglomerates. It is no secret that newspapers have struggled to create profits as news moves forward in the digital age. New experiences, systems and processes are not always greeted with open arms, and since the news design studios are new, that could play a role in the responses gathered in this study. The designers might also be influenced because the move to news design studios was made for the corporate bottom line instead of design reasons, and that often comes with negative connotations.

One circumstance where design studios seem to make the most sense is for very small newspapers. These newspapers are so small that they rarely have formal meetings since they only have about three to 10 employees. These newspapers would only hire one designer, leaving the designer to be the sole visual journalist in the room. In this instance, it appears to be a huge help to the designer to be in a room with other designers. Terri explained they are able to receive feedback and reviews on the designs from the different experience levels in the studio.

An alarming number of designers stated a desire to move into a features design position. This is mostly fueled by the coveted daytime hours. Several designers stated they would leave the industry if they could not eventually move

into a position with better hours. This is an issue that has faced the industry for years. This research does not shed light on if the problem is greater now than it used to be, but it is something for newsroom editors and design directors to keep in mind. It is important for the survival of the industry to continue to have designers interested in news design.

This study provides more evidence for two previously studied topics. First, it provides more evidence that newspaper designers are journalists. The facets of satisfaction that the designers identified are intrinsic with the job and consistent with previous research (Fedler, 2004; Russo, 1998; Reinardy, 2009; Beam, 2006; Stamm and Underwood, 1993; Barrett, 1984; Defluer, 1992) confirming Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory for journalists' facets of job satisfaction. Examples of these similar facets of satisfaction include the fast-paced, stressful environment and the desire to produce work to make the community smarter. These consistencies further support that newspaper print designers derive the same facets of satisfaction as other journalists — namely reporters — and thus should be considered journalists.

Secondly, these findings provide evidence that newspaper designers do not feel as valued as other newsroom positions, namely reporters. Designers have reported (Allen et al., 1998; DeFillippi, 2009) conflict between the design department and other departments, and designers often feel their needs and desires are neglected. Even as newsrooms have adapted over the years to place a higher emphasis on visuals, this study shows that the issues have not been resolved. The designers felt their second-place presence in the newsroom was

even more noticeable in the modern news industry because they felt more of the sparse resources were given to reporting than to design.

One of the reasons these findings are important is that the biggest tie to satisfaction for journalists is the quality of the work produced (Reinardy, 2009). These findings show that designers who self-identified as journalists had different definitions of quality from designers who did not self identify as journalists. Designers who self-identified as journalists were concerned with the quality of the entire newspaper, how they were visually telling the story and what the impact on the reader would be. Designers who did not self-identify as journalists constructed quality through artistic elements and creative freedom. This is important to note because journalists derive job satisfaction when their goals align with the goals of their employer (Beam, 2006).

By being able to define what is important to the designers, hiring managers are able to take into account if their definitions of quality and expectations align. Since the division of answers came down to whether the designer self-identified as a journalist, it would be appropriate for hiring managers to ask, “Do you see yourself as a journalist?” when interviewing a potential candidate. By using this opening question and continuing to inquire about what the candidate finds most fulfilling about the job instead of just talking about design strategies, the hiring manager will be able to see if the work environment will be providing the same facets of satisfaction that the designer values.

## CONCLUSION

The implementation of news design studios has sparked many questions among professionals in the news industry. Since the use of design studios in news is so new, little research has been done about the removal of the designers from the newsroom. This study used 10 semi-structured interviews with print news designers to investigate what facets of job satisfaction that designers in the newsrooms and designers in the news design studio derive from their careers. Two sets of values and attitudes were found, but surprisingly, the difference was driven by whether the designer self-identified as a journalist, not necessarily driven from the organizational structure the designer worked in. Seven of the 10 designers self-identified as journalists, and they valued the quality of the newspaper as a whole, content creation and how their work impacted readers. They also enjoyed collaborating with reporters and editors and felt collaboration produced the highest quality journalism possible. Three of the 10 designers did not self-identify as journalists. They focused on creative freedom and using artistic elements to complete the challenge of telling the story visually. These findings not only provide further evidence that designers who self-identified as journalists shared similar facets of satisfaction as other journalists, such as reporters or editors, but they also identify what aspects of the design job make designers satisfied and dissatisfied. By identifying what the designers value and

place emphasis on, the designers and newspaper editors can determine if they share expectations on job responsibilities and quality.

It is important to understand the limitations of this study. Since the participants were chosen based on their occupation and only 10 participants were interviewed, the study does not take into account differences in opinion that might arise from variety or lack thereof in age, experience, gender, location and other factors. Furthermore, since seven of the designers self-identified as journalists, and three do not, the responses were not even. The responses were extremely consistent, but interviewing more designers would provide a better base. In addition, since the researcher is using a call for interview participants, designers might be more likely to respond if they love or hate their job. Designers who fall in the middle might be less likely to respond. News design studios are a fairly new organizational structure for the industry. Design studios have been implemented for less than two years (Channick, 2011), so most designers are more familiar with the traditional newsroom setting. This could impact participants' responses. As role identity explains, the facets of satisfaction findings of designers in traditional newsrooms cannot be applied to other journalism roles in a traditional newsroom. A deeper look comparing various journalism roles (editor, reporter, copy editor, graphic artist, etc.) within a traditional newsroom could be beneficial for the industry. In addition, the results are limited by the researcher's interpretation. Since the researcher worked alone in coding the data, a collaborative approach with multiple researchers could prevent bias.

Further research on this topic could add much value to journalism academic knowledge. News design studios should be evaluated to show their positive or negative contribution to the news industry beyond financial savings for media conglomerates. Whether or not the designers will be happy there does not necessarily prove whether it was a wise choice for the news design studios to be implemented or what their success will be in the future. Possible research ideas include investigating design quality or value of information boxes in newspapers produced at news design studios compared to newspapers produced in newsrooms or communication techniques used between the editors in the newsrooms and the designers in the news design studios. If this is a move that will be made by many newsrooms in the future, it is important to know how it will impact the designers, readers and the industry at large.



## APPENDIX

### List of interview questions

- Walk me through a typical day at work.
- Who do you work for?
- What about your job is routine?
- What sparked your interest in news design?
- What do you like about your job?
- Why did you choose to work at a newspaper/news design studio? Why have you stayed? Do you have experience in the other? Elaborate.
- Do you find your job exciting? What makes it exciting?
- What are your typical hours? Do you enjoy working these hours? Why or why not?
- How much time do you spend on work outside of the scheduled 40 hours per week?
- What are things you would change about your job?
- What type of people do you enjoy working with?
- Do you feel satisfied with the quality of your employers' work? What makes it quality work?
- Would you say that news design is your passion? Why or why not?
- Do you agree with the following statement: I am definitely a journalist? Why or why not?

- How stressed are your coworkers?
- Do you experience stress at work?
- When does the stress become a barrier to get the job done?
- What is the most stressful aspect?
- What is the most frequently encountered stressor?
- How do you cope with the stress? Do you enjoy the stress? Why or why not?
- How well does your newsroom communicate?
- Do you think coworkers respect the design department?
- Have you considered leaving the industry? Why or why not? What would you look for in a new job?

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