



between news and
algorithms.

how does technology shape
journalistic practice (and
viceversa)?

alice corona and stefania milan
data.j lab – tilburg university
datajlab.nl | @datajlab

a jungle of big data that **tell stories**



- a profession specialized in making information visible and accessible to large audiences is at the forefront of the 'data revolution'
- data journalism as the craft of finding stories into complex datasets
- a **new set of skills**:
advanced research methods + computational methods (data processing + mining)

the 'participative web'

web 2.0

it increasingly exploits the unprecedented level of interaction, user engagement and collaboration that digital technologies allow

user-generated content

content created by users **outside of professional practices** and publicly available online.

citizen journalism

when citizens become **part of the creation of journalistic products**, instead of being solely their audience.

social media

online services that allow for different levels of **social interactions** between their users, allowing for the exchange of UGC.

journalism is crucial for our democracies

...but so are journalists?



why could
journalists
become
redundant?

if the values and processes that are embedded
in the professional ethics and training of
journalists can be inscribed/embedded in digital
objects and processes by means of algorithms

>> then journalism can be practiced by virtually
anyone

technological artifacts?





a matter of social dynamics and technological artifacts

- what is the role of technology in shaping these new user-centered journalistic practices?
- what is the significance of these technological artifacts and practices in relation to the core values/conventions of the journalistic profession?

New fact

“ Quote the statement you want to subject to fact checking ”

Who said it? *

Source

Add a source by inserting the link here or using the appropriate sidebar panel

http://

Add

Thanks Alice, in order to have as many answers as possible describe better your news

Categories

- ☐ Italian Politics ☐ Politics ☐ Current events ☐ Economy
☐ Culture & Entertainment ☐ Internet & Technology ☐ Science & Medicine

Tag

☐ elezioni 2013

Tweet

E' stata inserita una affermazione di <Chi l'ha detta?>! *

70

Save as draft

Publish ✓

Find the source

Upload a file

Upload your source

Currently you can upload only JPG and PNG images and PDF documents

Your_file_name.pdf



< Add

When upload is completed
add it to the news

The procedure can be repeated
for all the sources you



users as documenters

from newsmaking to algorithm



what are the choices and compromises
that software developers face when
translating the key elements of the
journalistic profession into digital
elements and processes?

journalistic value	social dynamic	technological artifact
accuracy	documentation through mandatory+fixed fields	'text', 'categories', 'links'
trustworthiness	reputation of the individual narrative voice	'reputation badge'
reliability of news	collective judgment	'judgment' algorithm
accountability	transparency / visibility of documentation and news-making process	'forum thread'
independency	self-governed platform	'text', 'comments', 'flag button', 'voting arrows' algorithm
ethical commitment	agreement to follow a shared methodology	check box re: terms of service
democratic participation	debate	'comment'

... the way ahead?



- centered on the **production of commonly shared knowledge** and information flows
- promotes (hinders?) participation while **maintaining quality** of information and safeguarding the newsmaking process
- are 'civic social media' the **'killers'** of the gatekeeper?



stefania@datajlab.nl
alice@datajlab.nl



@datajlab
@alice_corona
@annliffey



<http://datajlab.nl>
<http://www.uvt.nl>

we are proud to grow
data journalists at

