Article

Journalism Education in New Zealand: Its History, Current Challenges and Possible Futures

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Grant Hannis[1]

Abstract

Vocational journalism education in New Zealand is facing the twin challenges of declining student numbers and increasing industry expectations that graduates should have strong multimedia skills. The main reason for both is the digital revolution, which has created a public perception that there are no longer jobs for new journalists and increased demand from industry for recruits proficient in convergent journalism. Some journalism schools, unable to meet these challenges, have closed. This article considers what the remaining schools are doing to meet the challenges. The article also reports the results of a survey of graduates of the oldest continuously operating journalism school in the country. The results reveal how the nature of journalism education in New Zealand has changed over the past 50 years, the experience of the graduates since leaving the school and the advice they offer today's aspiring journalists.

Keywords

Journalism education, graduate survey, New Zealand, multimedia

Introduction

Last year marked the 50th anniversary of the Massey University Journalism School, the oldest continuously operating journalism school in New Zealand. That milestone makes this an opportune time to consider journalism education in New Zealand, its historical development, current state and future prospects.

[1] Massey University, Wellington, New Zealand.

Corresponding author:
Grant Hannis, Massey University, Wellington, New Zealand.
E-mail: g.d.hannis@massey.ac.nz

This article considers vocational journalism education–that is, the journalism programmes that teach their students the skills needed to enter the industry. As we shall see, this is a challenging time for such education, with student numbers declining and schools closing. The article includes comments from the heads of all the country's remaining journalism schools, revealing how they are seeking to reinvent their schools in response to the challenges.

As Massey is the oldest continuously operating journalism school in the country, it will receive special attention. The article includes the results of a recent survey of Massey graduates from the past 50 years, allowing us to chart the evolution of journalism education in the country, and the experience and views of those who attended the school. It is the first time the results of such a major survey on New Zealand journalism graduates' experiences has been published.

The article begins with a history of journalism education in New Zealand and then considers the challenges facing the sector. The experience of Massey's graduates over the past 50 years is then discussed. The article concludes with some comments on the future for journalism education in New Zealand.

Historical Overview

In the first half of the twentieth century, there was little formal journalism education in New Zealand. Instead, journalists learnt on the job, often beginning their careers as teenage cadets at the newspapers. Various attempts to establish university-based journalism schools were piecemeal or poorly regarded by the industry. As a result, none survived (Elsaka, 2005; Newth, 1997; Thomas, 2008).

Industry dissatisfaction with university courses eventually led a technical institute to step into the breach. The Wellington Polytechnic launched its course for journalism students in 1966, an event which marks the beginnings of the modern era of journalism education in New Zealand. Soon after, the Auckland Technical Institute and the University of Canterbury launched courses.

The Wellington Polytechnic course eventually became the course run by Massey University and the Auckland Technical Institute course eventually became the course run by Auckland University of Technology. For ease of exposition, they will be referred to as the Massey and AUT courses for the remainder of this article. All three remain in operation and today represent the three university journalism courses in New Zealand: AUT (based in Auckland), Massey (Wellington) and Canterbury (Christchurch).

The relatively high numbers of students studying journalism at these courses eventually induced a raft of smaller technical institutes to offer journalism training. At its height in the early 2000s, the sector boasted 10 journalism schools.

Today there are seven. As well as the three university courses, there are four at technical institutes: Waikato Institute of Technology–known as Wintec (Hamilton), Whitireia (Wellington), the New Zealand Broadcasting School at Ara, which specializes in broadcast and online media (Christchurch) and Otago Polytechnic (Dunedin).

All three university courses have one-year postgraduate vocational journalism programmes. Massey also has a vocational Master of Journalism programme (18 months study, with the first 12 months being the diploma programme). All three universities also offer undergraduate communications degrees, with AUT offering a vocational journalism major in its undergraduate qualification.

Wintec offers degree and one-year diploma courses in journalism. The New Zealand Broadcasting School at Ara offers a degree programme. Whitireia and Otago Polytechnic both offer diploma programmes. Whitireia's course starts in the middle of the calendar year so the school can recruit students and have its graduates enter the job market when competition is less.

Current Challenges

Figure 1 shows the annual number of journalism students in New Zealand from 2009. Numbers peaked at 300 in 2012 but since then have fallen away steadily. By 2017, numbers had dropped by more than half. The technical institutes experienced most of the decline: between 2012 and 2017, the number of students enrolled at technical institutes declined by two-thirds, whereas at the universities the decline was 41 per cent.

Declining student numbers played a role in the closure of three technical institute journalism schools in 2014 and 2015: those at Waiariki, the Western Institute

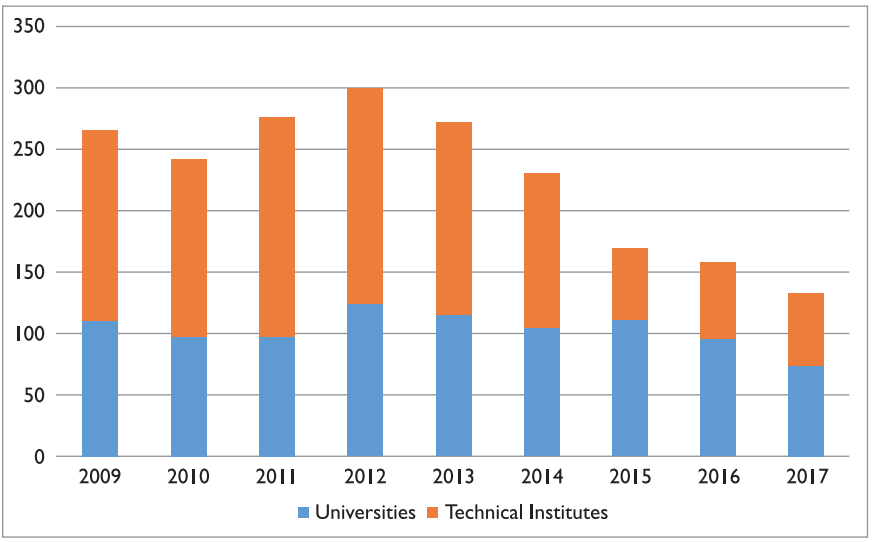

Figure 1. Number of Students Enrolled at NZ Journalism Schools, 2009–2017

Source: JTO and author surveys.

of Technology and the Southland Institute of Technology. These three tended to have the least resources available to them and so were most vulnerable.

A likely major reason for the decline in student numbers is the sinking fortunes of the traditional journalism industry. As with overseas, the industry in New Zealand is contracting in the wake of the digital revolution. In particular, newspapers are experiencing major drops in circulation and there have been waves of redundancies (Du Fresne, 2017). The two major newspaper owners in New Zealand, Fairfax and NZME, recently sought to merge as a way of shoring up their position, but the country's competition regulator rejected the proposal, deeming it anti-competitive (Commerce Commission, 2017).

There is therefore likely a perception among would-be students that the industry is no longer a good career prospect. Such publicity only exacerbates the long-held perception of journalism being a poorly paid, difficult job that the public holds in low regard. Frustratingly for the journalism schools, the reality is that there are still plenty of jobs for new recruits. The average employment rate of the graduates of journalism schools in 2016 was about 80 per cent (based on an author survey of the journalism heads, discussed ahead). Such high employment rates are no surprise: recent journalism graduates are inexpensive to hire and often replace young reporters who move on.

Another factor is that, since 2012, the New Zealand government has reduced its financial support to many students undertaking postgraduate study (StudyLink, 2012). This has significantly increased the cost to students of undertaking postgraduate journalism study, which would affect the universities' numbers.

The Views of the Journalism School Heads

The author contacted the heads of the seven journalism schools to obtain their perspectives on journalism education in New Zealand. All responded.

The heads were asked what the main challenges facing the journalism schools were. Unsurprisingly, a common theme in the replies was declining student numbers. 'Falling application numbers', said one. 'A clear pattern of lower numbers', said another.

The state of the industry was cited as the reason for this. One head said the reasons for the decline were 'public perceptions of the employability of journalism graduates and the remuneration they might expect as well as the stability of the industry'. Another said the industry was seen as 'unstable'. Another summed it up as: 'Ironically, numbers are down because of the industry's bad press'.

Another challenge identified by the journalism heads was the rising cost of delivering a modern journalism curriculum, particularly multimedia. There were 'challenges around curriculum (trying to fit everything in) in response to industry demand for multifunctional graduates', one said.

In response, one journalism school has radically overhauled how it delivers its entire journalism programme. The head said the course now:

> 'concentrates on cross-over convergence skills and ensures that photographers, moving image makers, graphic designers, and journalists work together in teams to achieve projects. We have removed all silos of academic practice that prevented students moving between specialities and introduced an elevator model which means third-year students will actively lead first-year students in projects'. Some of the schools now have their own news websites, to give their students more opportunities to publish multimedia material.

But changing what is taught is not always easy. One journalism head complained it was difficult to make speedy changes to curriculum within a dense educational bureaucracy: 'There is a lot of institutional resistance to curriculum change—for example, a number of committees that have to sign off each small change and large volumes of paperwork'.

But at least one inflexible element of the system has been removed. As discussed ahead, until recently there used to be an industry body that oversaw the training of journalists and required the technical institutes in particular to deliver highly complex and lengthy curricula. But in 2017 that body went out of existence. Freed from these constraints, one head at a technical institute said: 'I am rewriting the course…. There'll be less paper assessments and more practical projects. I'll have more multimedia, more project-based work. We'll collaborate with other courses—comms, design, video, website, etc.'

On the broader front, one head reported their school was seeking more funding from the government 'on the grounds that the resources needed to give the students the technology skills they now require far exceed Arts and Humanities funding'.

Another said more needs to be done to improve the public's awareness of the many opportunities available to journalism graduates:

> The disruption of legacy media does not mean that there are not journalistic roles available, it's just that they are not gathered together in large newsrooms. We cannot keep harking back to a journalistic ideal from last century, and journalism education should be part of moving that conversation forward.

Several of the journalism heads said the schools need to work collegially to address the challenges, including lobbying for more funding and encouraging more students to study journalism. As to whether industry has a role to play, one head commented ruefully: 'Industry make helpful noises, but their involvement in resourcing and training is very modest'.

Relationship with Industry

Journalism education in New Zealand has long followed the British model, with journalism schools being accredited by an industry organization. In Great Britain that is the National Council for the Training of Journalists, which accredits a large

number of schools and oversees their curricula (National Council for the Training of Journalists, 2017). In New Zealand, the equivalent organization was for many years the New Zealand Journalists Training Organisation (JTO).

Established in 1971 as the New Zealand Journalists Training Committee, the JTO was primarily funded by the newspapers. It helped the schools establish and develop curricula. It also set other minimum requirements, including that each school had to have an advisory committee comprising industry representatives, that tutors had to have appropriate industry experience and that each year a selection of marked assignments be reviewed by industry representatives to ensure the tutors were grading the students' work in accordance with industry standards—a process called moderation.

There have been occasional disagreements between the JTO and the journalism schools, especially the universities (Hannis, 2012), but in general the relationship worked well. The universities complied with the spirit of the JTO's often lengthy and complex requirements, the technical institutes were expected to comply with them to the letter. JTO accreditation helped the schools maintain a good working relationship with industry and helped ensure the courses' relevance to industry practice and standards. The schools could use the danger of losing JTO support to argue within their institutions for ongoing appropriate resourcing and staffing.

But there were problems brewing at the JTO. As part of an effort to secure wider funding, including from the government, the JTO merged with similar bodies operating in other industries, eventually becoming part of an organization called Competenz. This strategy ultimately proved suicidal. In 2017, Competenz closed its journalism section down because it was not generating sufficient revenue (Competenz, 2017).

The journalism schools must now decide how to maintain formal links with the industry. Presumably they will continue to have industry liaison committees. As to moderation, the journalism schools look set to rely on their own institutions' systems of quality maintenance and enhancement, including regular independent reviews of programmes. Other options are available too. For instance, in 2016, Massey was accredited by US agency—the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications. This accreditation requires Massey to undertake moderation using external moderators with industry experience.

We now turn to an in-depth discussion of New Zealand's oldest continuously operating journalism school.

Massey Journalism School

The total number of students who attended the Massey course over its first 50 years was about 2000.

The course began on a small scale. In 1966, the class comprised 14 students, although numbers soon grew. Figure 2 shows the average class size for each

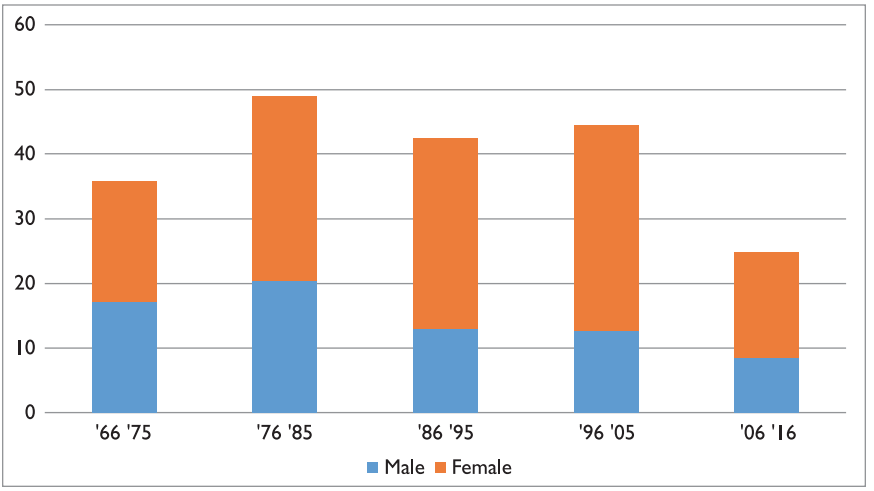

Figure 2. Average Class Size of Massey Journalism Course, 1966–2016

Source: Massey Journalism School.

decade (note that, as the data covers the period 1966–2016 inclusive, a period that is actually 51 years, for all data categorized by decade in this article, the final decade is in fact 11 years in duration). In its first decade, the average class size was 36. This rose to nearly 50 students in the second decade and remained over 40 until the most recent decade, when the average class size dropped to 25. In part, this reflected a strategic decision taken by the university in 2005 to reduce the class size in order to free up faculty's time for research and other teaching (in particular, the university's then recently launched undergraduate communications degree). However, another major cause for declining class sizes has been the declining number of journalism students discussed earlier. The fall would have been greater, but Massey mitigated the worst effects by expanding its suite of postgraduate journalism qualifications to include a Master of Journalism, the only such degree offered in New Zealand. This has expanded the market for Massey's postgraduate journalism progammes.

Figure 2 also shows that females have long been the majority in the class. Indeed, Noel Harrison, who founded the course, made a conscious effort to ensure half of the first class was female and appointed a woman as the course's first head tutor (Harrison, 2017). The proportion of females has been around 70 per cent of the average class size in the three most recent decades.

Survey of Massey Graduates

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Massey course, in December 2016, a major reunion dinner was held in Wellington. All graduates of the course were

invited, and 91 attended (plus other guests). At the start of the evening, the author asked the graduates to complete an anonymous hard-copy questionnaire. This convenience sample produced 74 useable responses.

Virtually all respondents at the dinner (98%) had attended the course during the period 1966–2003 inclusive. It is likely few recent graduates attended the reunion dinner because of its cost and the fact they more easily stay in contact with each other on social media. This means the survey produced a good spread of responses for the first four decades of the course, but not for the fifth decade. To fill this gap in the sample, using email addresses and social media, in May 2017 the author conducted an anonymous online survey of all the graduates who attended the course during the period 2004–2016 inclusive. This produced 56 useable responses, a response rate of 19 per cent. Combining these two surveys, a total of sample 130 responses was obtained. Due to the first survey being a convenience sample only, statistical tests cannot be applied to these results, which must be regarded as indicative only.

The survey asked each respondent their sex and ethnicity, the year they attended the course, their age and highest educational qualification when they started, what they found most and least useful about the course, the broad outline of their subsequent career and what advice they would give aspiring young journalists. The responses to each question are discussed ahead.

Age and Education

As Table 1 testifies, there have been profound changes in the age and educational qualifications of the students over the life of the course. Initially, the students were typically school leavers without a university education. The average age of the respondents who attended the course in its first decade were 18 and none had a university degree. The school was thus reflecting the approach to training prevalent at the time—people mostly started their journalism careers as industry cadets straight out of school.

Over time, however, the average age of the students rose, with the average age of respondents peaking at 28 in the fourth decade, when there was relatively numerous mature students on the programme. Since then, the average age has

Table 1. Average Age and Highest Qualification

	Average age	% with university qualification
'66–'75	18	0
'76–'85	19	10
'86–'95	23	57
'96–'05	28	38
'06–'16	23	100

Source: Author's survey.

dropped, sitting at 23 for the most recent decade. Those running the course did not decide to exclude older students from the course, it was simply that far fewer mature students applied for the programme. This may in part reflect the falling reputation of journalism as a viable career over time.

The main factor in the rising average age of the students is that university-educated students (often with Bachelor's degrees) began to do the course. Again, those running the course did not decide to recruit such students, it was simply a natural evolution, as journalism education became more professionalized. Indeed, the progress was not smooth, with the percentage of respondents with a degree actually falling between the third and fourth decades. The trend has been relentless, however, and the course became a fully fledged postgraduate programme in 2013. This contributed to the fact 100 per cent of respondents for the final decade had university degrees.

Ethnicity

Table 2 details the ethnicity of the respondents (the totals may sum to more than 100 per cent, as respondents could select more than one ethnicity).

Clearly, there has been a lack of ethnic diversity in the classes. The great majority of the respondents in each decade were European. In the most recent decade, the proportion of respondents of European ethnicity was 86 per cent, whereas those of European ethnicity currently comprise only 75 per cent of the New Zealand population (Statistics New Zealand, 2017).

Māori students have also been disproportionately low in numbers. Māori comprised 9 per cent of the respondents in the most recent decade, whereas Māori currently comprise 16 per cent of the New Zealand population. The only other ethnic group that figures significantly in the class, Asian, appears in the final decade. But at 6 per cent of the respondents, this represents half the current proportion of Asians in the New Zealand population (12%). Whereas Pacific people comprise 8 per cent of the New Zealand population, they do not figure in the classes in significant numbers at all.

Table 2. Ethnicity

	% European	% Maori	% Asian
'66–'75	100	4	0
'76–'85	100	5	0
'86–'95	100	0	0
'96–'05	95	11	0
'06–'16	86	9	6
Total	94	7	2

Source: Author's survey.

This lack of ethnic diversity is often experienced at other journalism schools too, particularly with regard to Asians. A regular survey of the journalism schools conducted by the JTO and latterly the author reveals that in the period 2012–2017, across all the journalism schools, the estimated average proportion of students of European ethnicity was 80 per cent, Māori 12 per cent, Asian 4 per cent, Pacific Island 3 per cent and other 2 per cent.

This lack of diversity, which exists in the journalism workforce too (Hollings, Hanusch, Balasubramanian, & Lealand, 2016), has been a seemingly intractable problem. There is a lack of research on the reasons for this. Anecdotally, it is likely some Māori do not consider journalism as a career because they regard the mainstream media as being unsympathetic to Māori. The closure of the Waiariki journalism school, which focussed on recruiting Māori students, worsened the situation. Asians often do not study journalism because, it is held, the Asian community does not regard journalism as a prestigious profession.

Curriculum

The topics taught in the first year of the Wellington course have survived (Wellington Polytechnic, 1966). It reveals that the curriculum was remarkably similar to that taught today, with some–often obvious–differences.

Topics taught in 1966 that were still being taught in 2016 include shorthand, newsgathering, news writing for broadcast and print, grammar, statistics, media law, understanding how a newsroom works and history of journalism. Some topics have not survived, included typing and a sociological study of a New Zealand community. Workplace experience was also a feature of the programme from its early days (Bailey, 2017). Topics that have been introduced since include media ethics, photography, multimedia journalism and New Zealand history.

The survey respondents were asked what aspects of the programme they found most useful. Virtually all respondents (96%) said the practical elements of the course were most useful. This included the work placements. Respondents said such experience created ‘networking opportunities’ and ‘helps build a portfolio to find work at the end’. Another popular aspect of the course was the news-writing sessions. ‘Learning about the structure of a good story and how to find strong intros applied to all my jobs’, one respondent said.

Another helpful skill was interviewing, including ‘how to build a rapport’. Shorthand was also popular. ‘I often rely on handwritten notes in my work today’, one respondent explained. Likewise, media law was cited by many respondents as being useful. ‘Surprisingly interesting and vital knowledge that I still use almost daily’, one respondent said. Subbing and grammar were also seen as being of assistance: ‘The more technical training around grammar and sentence structure was also invaluable’.

Some respondents said they appreciated the fact the tutors have practical journalism experience. One respondent said newsgathering ‘was taught by a

widely-respected ex-journalist who had actually done the hard yards and had real experience of trying to find stories'.

When asked what the least useful aspects of the course were, two main topics predominated. The first was shorthand. But this was primarily respondents who had gone into communications work, or journalism that does not draw on shorthand such as broadcast or editing. 'I've barely used shorthand, although this is perhaps because I ended up in broadcast news', one respondent explained.

The other main least useful aspect of the course cited was broadcasting and multimedia, usually because of the flip side of the argument earlier. It was often those who did not pursue that form of work who found studying it unhelpful. One respondent said the least useful part of the course was 'broadcasting, because I had no intention of pursuing that direction'. Another said the least useful aspect was 'photography, because I was rubbish at it and never used it anyway'. But that respondent did add that 'videography is probably more relevant today though, due to the need to do everything'.

Interestingly, nearly half the respondents (48%) said everything on the course was useful. In part, this is probably because the course has always been focussed on teaching practical skills needed for a job in journalism. But some respondents said the course offered skills that were applicable to other career choices too. As one respondent summed up: 'I can't think of any aspects that weren't useful for somebody; there are things that may not have been useful for my particular career after journalism school, but which would be vital to somebody taking a different path'.

Jobs

Most respondents said their first job after completing the course was in journalism: an average of 90 per cent across all five decades initially went into journalism. Nearly all those jobs (95%) were in New Zealand.

Table 3 separates the data into respondents from the first four decades and from the fifth decade. This is to detect any striking recent changes in destinations.

Table 3. First Job Out of Journalism School

	% 1966–2005	% 2006–2016
Metro daily newspaper	22	6
Provincial daily newspaper	20	18
Other newspaper	16	18
Broadcast	16	8
News agency	2	6
Other journalism	14	35
Communications	6	6
Other non-journalism	4	2

Source: Author's survey.

Let us look at the data for 1966–2005 respondents. More than half were hired by newspapers, with almost a quarter going to metropolitan dailies. Sixteen per cent went into broadcast and a small number into news agencies. Fourteen per cent went into other forms of journalism (including magazines, trade journals and sub-editing). Six per cent went straight into communications work and 4 per cent went elsewhere (including working in publishing and office administration).

Turning to the data for 2006–2016, there are some striking differences in respondents' first jobs. First, few respondents (6%) went straight to metropolitan dailies. Indeed, in recent years it has been customary for graduates to work first at provincial or other newspapers and then move to the metropolitans. Overall, only 42 per cent of respondents began their careers at newspapers. Likewise, few respondents began their careers in broadcast (8%, half that for those in the first four decades). Again, it is common these days for graduates to first work at newspapers before moving to broadcast. The proportion who began their careers at news agencies was relatively high compared to previously (6%). The New Zealand Press Association was a major employer of recent graduates until the agency's demise in 2011 (Hannis, 2008). Over a third began their careers in other forms of journalism, far higher than their counterparts in the earlier decades. These jobs included working at magazines, digital news organizations or the Fairfax news bureau (one of the internal news agencies that effectively replaced the New Zealand Press Association). This indicates a growing diversity of job opportunities, beyond the traditional newspapers. As with earlier decades, 6 per cent of respondents went directly into communications work. The small percentage who went into other careers (2%) included those undertaking further study.

Remaining in the Industry

Table 4 shows that only half of the respondents have remained in journalism throughout their careers. It is quite remarkable that half the respondents no longer work in the industry they trained for. A relatively high proportion of respondents from the first decade, 59 per cent, remained, but the percentages declined to being in the minority for the second, third and fourth decades. It is only among respondents from the fifth decade that we again see a majority having remained in journalism—but perhaps this is simply because those thinking of leaving have not yet had time to do so. On average, those who leave the industry did so after nine years.

Of those respondents who did leave the industry, across all five decades, 63 per cent went into communications. The rest went into a range of other work, including political party research, setting up a business, management, teaching and becoming a parent.

Respondents who left the industry were asked why they did so. The results are shown in Table 5 (percentages may sum to more than 100 as respondents could give multiple reasons). Just under a third said they left because of the poor pay—they could earn more in other industries. Twenty-seven per cent left because they

Table 4. Percentages Remained/Left Journalism

	% remained	% left	Average no. years in industry if left
'66–'75	59	41	17
'76–'85	25	75	15
'86–'95	29	71	13
'96–'05	45	55	6
'06–'16	59	41	3
Totals	50	50	9

Source: Author's survey.

Table 5. Reasons for Leaving Industry (%)

Journalism paid poorly	30
Disenchanted with journalism	27
Lack of career prospects	23
Wanted to try something new	20
Lack of jobs/made redundant	18
Travel	14
Needed time for family	5
Other	4

Source: Author's survey.

had become disenchanted with journalism, saying, for instance, that it was too commercialized or that 'the newsroom environment was a bit toxic at times'. Twenty-three per cent said they left because of a lack of career prospects in journalism. Twenty per cent said they simply wanted to try something new. About the same said they left because they had been made redundant or could not find a job in the industry. Fourteen per cent said they left to travel and 5 per cent wanted an occupation that gave them more time with their families.

Advice to Aspiring Journalists

Finally, the respondents were asked what advice they would give young people aspiring to be journalists. Overall, 62 per cent of respondents gave positive comments and a further 26 per cent gave ambivalent responses. There were no notable differences across the decades or between those who had remained in the industry versus those who left.

Among the positive comments were exhortations for young people to pursue a career in journalism. 'Go for it', one respondent said. Another said the job 'offers great opportunities and a lifelong career'. A third described it as the 'best job in the world. You get paid to interview interesting people, influence people and opinions'.

Some respondents gave specific advice. 'Do something else before you train to become a journalist', one respondent said, 'like go overseas, travel or do a variety

of other jobs. Life experience is vital'. 'Specialise', advised another. '[D]on't just think a BA beforehand will help either—get a specialty subject outside the Arts'. Another agreed: 'specialise for example, technology or business offers better long-term career opportunities'.

Another said, 'work really hard to get an awesome portfolio, make connections with people in class and in the industry'. Other advice included: 'Be curious and seek hands-on experience' and 'Know spelling and grammar, develop fortitude, be curious and never give up'

Several advised young people to embrace multimedia. 'Acquire as many skills as you can–video, digital, etc.', said one. 'Train in social media!' said another. 'It's where all the jobs seem to be developing. Make sure you're capable of shooting and editing short-form videos, even if you're wanting to work in print. Be not just willing, but enthusiastic, about relocating to chase employment, including to regional areas'.

Some respondents highlighted that journalism teaches skills helpful for those who wish to move into other careers. 'Great job but doesn't pay very well. Have a go before going into PR'.

Some of the ambivalent comments spoke about the poor pay. 'You realise you will struggle financially for the rest of your life, don't you? But you'll have a great career, meet extraordinary people and mostly love it'. Another simply said: 'Awesome skills, awful industry'.

The negative comments often centred on low pay and the challenges facing the industry. 'It's a poorly paid cynical industry, becoming much less about the story and much more about the bottom dollar', one respondent said. Another advised young people not to enter the industry 'unless you want a career with almost no job security, rubbish pay and bad working conditions'. Another declared: 'Full-time journalism jobs are disappearing'.

Conclusions

It is heartening to hear so many respondents encouraging young people to embark on a career in journalism. But there is no doubt the industry is going through a difficult time and the journalism schools, whose fortunes are linked to those of the industry, are finding the adjustment process equally demanding.

The schools face a double challenge. On the one hand, student numbers are declining significantly as the digital revolution forces the traditional news media to contract. On the other hand, that same digital revolution means that the industry expects the journalism schools to teach students a wide range of multimedia skills, which is costly to do.

In the face of these twin challenges, it is possible more journalism schools will close, especially those with few students and resources. Indeed, it could be argued that there were too many journalism schools in New Zealand and the closures to date reflect a rebalancing of supply and demand. Against that, it is possible

demand will rise from next year following the Australian government's decision to remove subsidies for New Zealand students studying in Australia (Radio New Zealand, 2017). Faced with a tripling of their fees (albeit with the option to take out student loans), New Zealand students who may have previously planned to study journalism in Australia may decide to study in their homeland.

But the schools cannot rely on such macro factors; they need to take charge of their own destinies. One response could be to reduce costs. In particular, shorthand is expensive to teach and may be cut. Indeed, the industry is becoming less emphatic that shorthand should be taught, given new digital recording technologies. Some journalism programmes have stopped teaching it, although sometimes students have the option to study it themselves by distance.

Another response is diversification. The schools could, for instance, advertise that their programmes also suit those seeking a career in communications, a popular career choice among students. Indeed, although fully half the respondents in the Massey survey left the industry, some said the course gave them skills they could use in other occupations. Further, the schools could focus more on those parts of their operations not tied to the industry, like their undergraduate communications qualifications, perhaps using some of the revenue generated to cross-subsidize journalism.

The schools could also seek extra funding from the industry, although this seems unlikely to generate much additional income as it is the industry's declining fortunes that is the root cause of the problem. Additional government funding may also be a possibility, on the basis that a strong democracy needs well-trained journalists.

Whatever strategies the journalism schools adopt, they cannot simply persevere with the old model of journalism education. Those days are over.

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Author bio-sketch

Grant Hannis is Associate Professor of journalism at Massey University in Wellington, New Zealand. His research interests include journalism pedagogy and journalism history. He has also taught journalism in the United States as a Fulbright Senior Scholar. Prior to coming to Massey, he was a senior financial journalist of Consumer Magazine, the New Zealand, which is equivalent to Choice in Australia. E-mail: g.d.hannis@massey.ac.nz