

*Thesis for the Master's Programme in Global Journalism at NLA
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Worldviews in the Norwegian Newsroom

**A study on Norwegian journalists' worldviews and to what extent, and how, they believe
their worldviews influence the journalistic work.**

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ABSTRACT

Worldviews in the Norwegian Newsroom

This master thesis examines worldviews among Norwegian journalists in the mainstream media, and to what extent, and how, they believe worldviews influence their work. I use a broader understanding of the word *worldview*, meaning faith, religious and secular worldviews, and values. This is discussed in the thesis. To examine this topic more deeply, I used a quantitative approach. The survey was sent by email to a certain number of journalists in chosen media houses. 136 journalists responded to the survey. The findings show that the group of journalists examined is relatively homogenous when it comes to worldviews. The majority possesses a secular, meaning atheistic or agnostic, belief. A majority of journalists see some, or quite much need, for more religious literacy in their profession. When it comes to values and attitudes on chosen topics, there are several questions which tend to provide a clear majority at one end or the other. A few examples of questions with a high level of agreement on one side are the following: 88% agree on the rights for same gender couples in the Marriage Law. Another clear agreement or disagreement is found in the question of when a fetus is ascribed with human dignity. Of the options given, 4% believe this happens at the conception. Almost 70% of journalists believe singles should have the right to assisted fertilization, and the findings show a majority with a restrictive attitude towards polygamy. When it comes to questions of influence and transparency, the indications in this survey show a clear majority who have awareness of the element of personal influence on the journalistic work. The majority of journalists who believe their own worldview influence the journalistic work, some or quite much, say this is expressed through what topic/stories which is considered important. Based on the findings and the theories discussed, it is quite possible that some stories, topics and perspectives never make it to the front pages or the headlines. This, because of the lack of diversity on worldviews and homogeneity on value questions among journalists' in the Norwegian newsroom. When it comes to transparency, 24% believes that this might bring more trust and credibility to journalism. The openness towards transparency raises an interesting question if these are small signals for a future change as compared to the way journalism is currently practiced.

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ACRONYMS

Worldviews in the Norwegian Newsroom

Dnk: The Norwegian Church.

WJS: Worlds of Journalism.

NRK: The Norwegian Public Broadcaster.

RQ1: Research Question one.

RQ2: Research Question two.

BBC: British Broadcasting Corporation.

MBL: Norwegian Media Businesses' Association.

NTB: Norwegian News Agency.

NJ: Norwegian Journalist Union.

NSD: The Data Protection Official for Research.

SINTEF: Norwegian Research Company.

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Worldviews in the Norwegian Newsroom

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Worldviews in the Norwegian Newsroom

In this chapter I will introduce the topic of the thesis, how I have chosen to narrow it and specify the research objective. I will also write a personal note and give a brief presentation of the theory and the structure of the thesis. But first, to the background for my study.

1.1 Background of the Topic.

The yearly Norwegian media survey, *medieundersøkelsen*, shows that a vast majority of journalists in Norway tend to vote to the left and has done so for some years (Hagen, 2016). There has also been criticism and claims of a biased and leftist-leaning media (Rossavik, 2007). Criticism towards media is not only seen in a Norwegian context, but in many countries, included countries with a high level of press freedom. Egeland, commentator in *Dagbladet*, says the criticism has come from both the left and from the right, but with differences in the reasoning. The criticism from the left was aimed towards ownership and commercial dependency, while the criticism from the right is about political correctness and the hegemony of the elite (Egeland, 2017). The latter type of criticism has been very visible internationally during and after the American Presidential Election campaign and is seen both in Europe and in the United States (Egeland, 2017). Almost 20 % of the complains against the Norwegian Public Broadcaster (NRK) in 2016 was about the American Presidential Election campaign (Fordal, 2016), (Brække & Vollan, 2017).

The Assistant Secretary General of the Editors' Union, Reidun Kjelling Nybø (2016), said after the American Presidential Election campaign that journalists need to ask themselves critical questions and look at their use of sources, what their standpoints are and whom they talk to, among other things. The media needs to critically examine their own profession, Nybø says, which is also enshrined in the Codes of Ethics (Presse, 2016). Criticism also came from the press itself. Sneve, commentator from the newspaper *Nordland*, says that today's journalists have different friends than they used to and asks if they have become so integrated with the ruling elite, that they only see the world through their glasses (Sneve, 2016).

The fact that journalists tend to vote towards the left in the political landscape is not something typical Norwegian. Many countries have political preferences tending to the left according to Weaver & Willnat (2012). But does this mean that journalism is biased, or will professional values, roles and ethics trump personal beliefs and standpoints? If we broaden the personal aspect of standpoints to include worldviews and values, would we find more diversity or would it reflect the findings of political preferences? And, does it really matter? Among Norwegian media researchers there are different opinions on whether or not political and personal values influence the journalistic work (Johansen, 2015).

This backdrop provided me with the idea of doing my Master's thesis on the topic of worldviews, objectivity and influence. I wanted to explore the personal aspect of worldviews and diversity in the newsrooms. What worldviews do we find in the Norwegian newsroom; what values or attitudes on certain debated topics in the Norwegian society today do we find, and do journalists themselves believe that their worldviews and values influence their work? If so, how is this expressed? Another point which also makes the topic interesting is that the media has received criticism on possessing too little religious literacy (Sørheim, 2009), this in a season where Norway is becoming a more multicultural society because of immigration and refugees (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2016b), (Taule, 2014). This development might challenge the media on the way it deals with topics of religious literacy and worldviews in a broader sense.

The whole idea of examining worldviews among journalists is not about the worldview itself, but on *if* it influences the journalistic work in any way and what important role this factor plays among the other influential elements operative in the news process. If this is a factor of relevance, then it's interesting to see if the newsrooms have diversity when it comes to worldviews.

1.2 The Importance and Relevance of this Study.

In this section I will present some thoughts of why this study is relevant, both according to the Norwegian context and in this time of season, but also in regard of diversity in the research field.

1.2.1 Power, Role and Trust.

The media is often called, the *fourth state power* (Orgeret, 2012), an unofficial term, but still it

says something about the power of the media and the press. Walter Lippmann (1922) made a direct link between journalism, democracy and objectivity, and said in 1920 that «the crisis of Western democracy is a crisis in journalism» (Lippmann, 2012, p. 2). If objectivity is challenged, which was what Lippmann criticized in the aftermath of World War 1, journalism and democracy is challenged. Is this relevant today, in 2017? The critique of bias, the role and the power of the media, and terms as *balance* and *objectivity* seem like an ongoing topic of debate. In addition different surveys conducted on trust show an increase of distrust towards certain media houses and towards journalists in general, not only in Norway (Tillitsundersøkelsen, 2016), but in many Western countries (Egeland, 2017). This might indicate that Lippmann's word is relevant, also today.

Though there are many reasons for the lack of trust, which is not the topic of this thesis, nevertheless a diversity of worldviews and perspectives in the newsroom is one element which might influence positive on trust, according to Kjersti Thorbjørnsrud. She was just recently interviewed on the topic of «*fake news*» and *trust* in the program, *Debatten* on NRK. On the question of how the press might gain more trust, she suggested more diversity in the newsrooms on how one sees the world (NRK, March 9, 2017).

According to the studies of Worlds of Journalism, Norwegian journalists say that their most important roles are that of educators, reporting things as they are and being a detached observer (Worlds of Journalism, 2016a). They have set a high standard on their own profession and have an important role in presenting its audience with important news. The Codes of Ethics demand that the Norwegian press informs, debates and critical comments on current affairs and allows for different views to be heard. Also, they shall be independent and free in their journalistic work (Presse, 2016). According to Eide, Skogerbø & Syvertsen (1999), the news media itself often presents their stories as a reflection of reality, but in the field of science of media, there is a common understanding that the media cannot give a complete picture of reality. A central theme of this academic field is the question of what parts of reality are chosen and which are not. This is a topic and field which has no simple answers (Eide et al., 1999). Nevertheless, the power and the role of the media and its need for gaining trust is what I will argue makes this topic important and relevant.

1.2.2 The Research Field.

The research field of journalism has gone through many stages and has naturally changed focus throughout the decades. In this section, I will argue that the topic and study of this thesis also is relevant in a research context.

International Context.

In the early years of journalism research, there was mainly the focus on the media effects. Journalism was seen as given and there was little interest on the message itself, according to Weaver&Löffelholz (2008). But in the 1950s there was more consciousness on the personal and social influence with Manning White´s term, the «*gatekeeper*» and Breed´s *social control* in the newsroom. In the 1970s and 1980s there were some critique towards the research field which resulted in more focus on the journalist, journalism and the production of news. One of the explanations for the lack of focus on the journalist, according to Weaver & Löffelholz (2008), is because of the limited access to newsrooms. It is easier to study the audience and the media message, they say. Today there is an increase, on a global scale, of studies conducted on journalism and journalists, says Weaver & Löffelholz (2008).

Norwegian Context.

According to Morlandstø (2011) there has been an increase of journalism research from 1995 to 2009. The bulk of research done is on the content of journalism. Research about how journalism is practiced is only 20 % and has been so for some years. Within these numbers there is only 6% studies on the topic of reflection from the journalist and its role. In addition there has been a majority of qualitative research in the field of journalism (Morlandstø, 2011). This indicates that the topic of this thesis and the method is important. Still there are some arguments against the value of this descriptive type of research, according to Weaver & Löffelholz, and that is that it isn´t able to predict or explain (2008). At the same time they say that there is an importance regarding personal influence, when studied on an organizational level. This will be discussed in the paper, but the point of this thesis is to look at the diversity of personal beliefs and worldviews and what the findings might mean in the light of the role of the press in a Norwegian context, as described in the Codes of Ethics (Presse, 2016).

1.3 Objective and Research Questions.

The objective of this thesis will examine worldviews, meaning values, faith and religious beliefs among mainstream Norwegian journalists, and to what extent, and how, they believe their worldviews influence their journalistic work. This, in itself, does not say anything on

whether or not the media is biased, generally or concerning certain topics. However, this might be a starting point for further research on the topic of how important worldviews are among other influential factors in the process of creating news in a Norwegian context. Also if diversity in the newsroom is of any importance at all.

The Research Questions are as Follow:

RQ1. What worldviews exists among mainstream Norwegian journalists?

RQ2. To what extent, and how, do Norwegian journalists believe their worldviews influences their journalistic work?

I will approach the topic with a quantitative survey and ask journalists in the mainstream media houses questions related to worldviews, values and influence.

1.4 Narrowing of the Topic.

The value of this topic would have been increased with some qualitative interviews. This would have given additional information and maybe explained more. Also content analyses combined with the same topic of this thesis might have provided more of what Weaver & Löffelholz (2008) inquire, the contribution of explaining and predicting. The time available and the scope of a master thesis made it necessary to limit it. Thus, doing a qualitative survey and mapping worldviews became my starting point.

1.5 Theoretical Framework.

The main theories which I will base this thesis, is on what influences the news process and the topic of *objectivity* in the media. Theories within Intercultural Communication and Media Representation such as otherness, will also be discussed. This is because worldviews and the meeting between worldviews is not only something happening between cultures but also occurring in the same cultural context (Dahl, 2001). How we perceive the *other* and the *other's message*, what we find important and why, are all questions relevant for this thesis. In addition, I have briefly touched into sociology of religion and sociology.

The main terms which will be discussed in this thesis are *worldview* and *objectivity*. Within worldviews I will also use theories within Ethics. Values and ethics are all part of a worldview and will be presented and discussed.

1.6 Structure of the Thesis.

After the introduction, the thesis will be organized in the following chapters:

The literature review will be presented in Chapter Two. In the first part I will discuss the terms *worldview*, *values* and *ethics*. What worldviews we find among journalists is a relevant topic in this section. I will look at some selected countries, which again will be compared with my own findings and discussed in Chapter Four. I will also present and briefly discuss the Norwegian context in which the study is conducted. In the second part I will discuss the term *objectivity*, both in a historical context and in a Norwegian context. I will discuss main objections to the term and its importance. Influential factors of the news process are given space in this part, and the last point to discuss is what happens when worldviews meet.

The methodology will be presented and discussed in Chapter Three. The choice of methodology, the research questions and how I chose the different value questions will be discussed there. I will also go deeper into some questions in the questionnaire which has either methodological weaknesses or need further explanation. In the chapter on methodology, there is also an in-depth discussion of several aspects of doing a questionnaire and its challenges.

The findings and discussion will be presented in Chapter Four. I chose to combine the two in the same chapter as explained more detailed in that section. The findings are discussed together with relevant theory and will be presented in a way which clearly identifies the findings related to the research questions.

The summary and conclusion will be presented in Chapter Five. I will sum up the main findings and make some closing remarks.

1.6.1 Definitions.

The three main terms in this thesis are *worldviews*, *journalism* and *objectivity*. Objectivity and worldviews are the major part of the discussion and will therefore be presented in the literature review. Journalism will briefly be defined in this section.

Journalism: According to cross cultural studies as *Worlds of Journalism* and *The Global Journalist*, Weaver & Willnat (2012), it is not possible to make one, global definition of journalism. This, because of the pluralism of journalism around the world. Different cultural contexts, lack of democracy or pressure on press freedom and freedom of speech, and different historical contexts with very different press history, all influences the concept, definition and understanding of journalism. Nevertheless, there are some common values among journalists around the world, like *truth* and protecting the sources. But even though journalistic values like *truth* and *balance* might be quite similar in Western democratic countries, the definition of what role is most important in the journalistic work might differ (Hanitzsch et al., 2011).

In this study, I am referring to Journalism as understood in the Norwegian context, and terms such as *values*, *roles* and *ethics* are therefore presented to this context. At this point of time, the Norwegian media model is placed in the democratic, corporatist model, which has a strong level of professionalization, among other common features (Hallin & Mancini, 2004).

1.7 Personal Note.

Our worldview and the spectacles we look through colour what we see, or maybe choose to focus on certain elements of society. I am no exception. I probably recognize the critique of an unbalanced media and research which speaks about the challenges with trust in the media because of my own worldview. Our beliefs and values awaken awareness when they are challenged. As a practicing journalist, I have also experienced the tension in the newsroom when worldviews and values meet.

When deciding upon the topic of this thesis, it started with an interest in doing a survey on religious beliefs in the newsroom. This resulted from a curiosity of why there had been done a political survey among journalists for many years, but not on religious views as far as I could see. I also wondered whether the critique about a lack of religious literacy in the media had to do with a lack of religious beliefs among journalists. After exploring the topic, I found

it even more interesting to widen the word belief to worldviews, and to examine the diversity or lack of diversity in the newsroom, and ask journalists about their opinions on whether or not personal worldviews had any influence on their work.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Worldviews in the Norwegian Newsroom

The literature review is divided into two main sections, one for each major topic, *worldviews and journalists, objectivity and influence*. Each topic is divided into three sub-headlines, which will cover the main issues of this thesis as presented in the introduction.

2.1. Worldviews and Journalists.

In this section I will explore what a worldview is and what elements it might contain. I will not discuss different concepts of worldviews or ideology, but define the term and phenomena. I will only briefly discuss theories on how we form our worldviews, as my starting point will mainly be that we all have a worldview and operate from it.

I could have chosen to examine just religious and nonreligious views among journalists and to what extent they believe their faith or worldview influences their work, but I found it more interesting to look at our standpoints and views in a broader sense. By adding topics and questions in the questionnaire which bring forth a selection of attitudes and values among journalists, this might bring more to the discussion than merely looking at faith alone. Therefore, I will look at the complex and important terms like *values and ethics*, as they are important aspects of a worldview. I argue that it is important to go more deeply into these terms as I am asking journalists about their values and ethical aspects in the survey.

I will also look at how one measures religious worldviews, as this is an important question in the survey. Finally, in this section, I will present and discuss what worldviews we might find in the newsroom in some selected countries. I will compare findings from an American context to the Norwegian one, and some European findings, where it is available. The main reason for using an American context is that there is a lot of research available on this chosen topic and that they have a longer history on a non-partisan press. In addition, it is interesting to make comparisons with other countries and put the findings into a global context.

2.1.1 What is a Worldview?

What is a worldview? How is it constructed and what are its core elements? These questions will be the content of this section of the literature review.

First of all, there are some challenges connected to writing a thesis on this topic in one language and doing the survey in another. The English term *worldview* needs an equivalent term in Norwegian and the meaning of these words might not be exactly the same. Also, we have the challenges of defining and measuring words like worldviews and values.

The Norwegian term which I will use in the survey is *livssyn*. In a Norwegian context, Per Magne Aadnanes is the leading researcher in the field of *livssyn* (Dahle, 2015). He connects the term to the most foundational questions humans have about life (Aadnanes, 2012). This is also close to the understanding of the content of the English word *worldview*, but still these terms are not completely the same according to Aadnanes (2012). The term *livssyn* didn't exist in the Norwegian and Nordic language until the late 19 century (Aadnanes, 2012), and the reason, according to Dahle (2015), is that the basic questions about life until then was rooted in religion. Since then the term has been a part of the debated topic of moral and religion, but without a clear definition of the word (Dahle, 2015). To be able to measure and also identify different worldviews/«livssyn», one need to be able to say something about the content and elements of it (Aadnanes, 2012). A point worth mentioning is that there might be a difference between the academic terms and categorization of a worldview/«livssyn» and the personal experience of it in the life of an individual (Aadnanes, 2012). This makes it even more difficult to measure.

In daily language the word *livssyn* sometimes seem to include religion, and sometimes not. In the report «Det livssynsåpne samfunn» (A worldview open society) about Norwegian official policy on the topic, the understanding of the word worldview includes both non-religious and religious views, values and faith, both on a personal and collective level (NOU 2013:1, 2013). According to Aadnanes, religion would be defined as a worldview, but religion is more than a worldview, he says. There are aspects in a religion which is not found in a non-religious worldview (Aadnanes, 2012). Aadnanes suggests three main elements to describe the Norwegian term *livssyn*.

1. An understanding of reality or the world, i.e. what is real, if there is a God, etc.

2. Humanity, i.e. what a human being is, if there is a special purpose for the human being, if there is life after death.
3. Value and moral aspects, i.e. what is good, correct and beautiful.

(Aadnanes, 2012, p. 22)¹

Dahle (2015) has in her work added a fourth element to the content of worldview, in addition to the three introduced by Aadnanes', which is faith. She defines faith in this context as *the place where one puts one's confidence and find meaning*. Understood in this way, it is just as legitimate to say that an atheistic belief is just as much a belief as a Hindu belief, for example. The differences is where you put your confidence, in something religious or something secular (Dahle, 2015).

Øyvind Dahl (2001) describes some of the same functions and elements as Dahle and Aadnanes when he speaks about «verdensbilde». The term «verdensbilde» has a slightly difference in the meaning than «livssyn», but still indicates a way of seeing the world. Dahl also includes religion/faith, values, norms and time when it comes to how humans see the world, and mentions four important functions (Dahl, 2001).

1. They explain and answer important questions such as; Who am I? Where do I come from?
2. They legitimize, give value and meaning. And Dahl also confirms Dahle's (2015) view on nonreligious worldviews filling the same function as religious beliefs. Also, non-religious worldviews have this power to create norms, Dahl says; what is right and wrong is often based on fundamental values and often reasoned and argued for based on the worldview or belief system one has.
3. The worldviews give hope and strength in crisis, an explanation on why things happen.
4. Worldviews also integrate and give a sense of wholeness.

(Dahl, 2001, pp. 134-135).²

Another aspect which is important to mention in this section is the weight a worldview puts on the value and role of a human being, this because I also ask questions about values and ethics in the survey. Aadnanes (2012) has a systematic overview of which worldviews put humanity over nature or humanity as part of nature. Further these worldviews are divided

¹ Translated from the book «Livssyn» (Worldviews).

² Translated from the Norwegian book «Møter mellom mennesker» (Meetings between people).

into religious and secular categories. Out of this, one sees lines of agreement, but also conflicts. As Aadnanes' (2012) overview shows, a person with a monotheistic religious worldview and a secular humanist both place man over nature. Nevertheless, the reasoning behind the two views will be different (Aadnanes, 2012, p.73)

If we look at some international research and definitions of the term *worldview*, we find James Sire and Norman Geisler both saying what Aadnanes says about *livssyn*; it answers foundational questions in life. They also have an opinion about whether or not we are conscious of our worldviews. As Sire states:

A worldview is a commitment, a fundamental orientation of the heart, that can be expressed as a story or in a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic constitution of reality, and that provides the foundation on which we live and move and have our being (All about worldview, 2016)³.

In the Foreword to *Making Sense of Your World* Geisler declares something similar as Sire, that most people don't have a conscious relationship to their worldview, but in addition he says that people often don't know how they got it nor how important it is in their lives (All about worldview, 2016)⁴.

Aadnanes says that if there is a requirement that a person should be conscious of his or her worldview/ «livssyn», not all would be defined as having one. But, he argues, even though one needs to have a conscious worldview to be able to discuss the topic, a person's worldview, conscious or not, still might be expressed through his or her actions.

Meyers and Noebel add another perspective. They say: «Our worldview does not merely reflect what we think the world is like; it directs what we think the world should be like» (Meyers & Noebel, 2016, p. 6). This is quite similar to what Walter Lippmann has stated, that our worldviews is very much a product of what we already have defined, and we usually define before we see others (Lippmann, 1922).

The diversity of worldview definitions indicates that even though it gives meaning and explanation, it also influences us, consciously and unconsciously.

³ James Sire, *The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalog* (4th edition) (InterVarsity Press, 2004)

⁴ W. Gary Phillips, William E. Brown, and John Stonestreet, *Making Sense of Your World: A Biblical Worldview*(second edition) (Sheffield Publishing Company, 2008), vii.

However, one thing is what a worldview is, another is how we measure it. Just asking what a category of faith a person identifies with, is not enough to measure it, according to the sociology of religion. Some questions within certain categories are needed to explore and measure religiousness among people. These categories are 1. Belonging, 2. Believing, 3. Behaving (Furseth, 2015). The questions in these categories will be looked at closer in the chapter on methodology.

As mentioned, the starting point for this thesis is that we all have a worldview, with all that is entailed. But it's relevant to have a certain understanding of the complexity of how we construct our realities. In discussing this topic, I will briefly touch upon it.

The social theorists, Luckmann & Berger, who made a turning point in the sociological field in the 60s with their theories on how we construct and create our realities and how we get knowledge, say that our realities are constructed and influenced by the framework we live in, and that there is a direct relationship between us and our society (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). They also say that two people who live in the same culture and speak the same language, might have completely different knowledge, experiences and worldviews. Dahl says something similar, that it is not necessarily about geographical borders when we speak about different cultures. He illustrates this by saying that an engineer from Scotland and one from Norway, working in the same company, might have more in common than a fisherman from the north of Norway and a lawyer from the east of Norway (Dahl, 2001). The point is that we find different worldviews everywhere, also in the same social environment. An important term in this context is what is called *habitus* within the field of sociology. Theorists like Bourdieu says the *habitus* is the dispositions we have as people to think, act and orient ourselves in the social realm. It is the inherited social background we have, or the social capital (Bourdieu, 1985). Hovden (2008), says that journalists' inherited habitus is important, both when it comes to which media house he or she works, but also in what events which they find interesting in a journalistic perspective, and their ideals as a journalist. But it's also important Hovden says, that these factors need to be looked at in relation to other influential factors in the process of creating news, even when one believes the functions of the habitus is very important. This will be discussed more in the section on influential factors in the news process.

We see that worldviews are something very foundational in peoples' lives, and have many

different levels and elements. As values and ethics are important building blocks in a worldview, and important in this thesis, I will look more thoroughly into these terms.

2.1.2. Values and Ethical Foundations.

Values and ethics are closely linked and as Louis A. Day (2006) states, values and attitudes are connected and lead us to an ethical behaviour. They are also an important part of the professional life of a journalist and will be discussed in this section.

Values.

We all have values operating on different levels. We have values on a personal level, in our workplace, and values might say something about what is important in a society. There are some values which are important for most people, for example the dignity of life. For many journalists, trust, integrity and truthfulness is highly valued (Day, 2006). However, as Audgunn Oltedal (2012) says, when we start to concretize values about democracy, freedom of faith and equality among others, and also how one, as a journalist, should solve a story, one might see that there are quite different views and opinions on several topics about life and society. A person who is a Christian believer might look very differently on the field of faith and religion than a person who wishes there was no religion at all. Two journalists with different views on immigration politics might also have different views on being critical to power and what it means to support the weakest part (Oltedal, 2012). An important note is that within a Christian worldview there also might be different views on certain topics, to mention the same-sex marriage debate in the Norwegian church, for example.

Value can be defined as the *quality of something* and value might be given to all things (people, objects, actions, etc.), (Sagdahl, 2015). Because we can say that something has more value or less value, it is obvious that the term value is something which is possible to grade, but in philosophy, it is disputed whether value is something which can be measured. When one speaks about value there is an important distinction in the theory between *intrinsic value*, typically the value one places on a human being, and *instrumental value*, where money would be a typical example (Sagdahl, 2015).

Susann Gjerde gives a more practical definition of what values are. She says that values are something which is profoundly valuable to us and they motivate us and are the power

engine behind our behaviour. They tell us something about what we are convinced of, and might guide us in our decisions. This guidance or influence might happen both unconsciously and consciously (Gjerde, 2010).

Ethics.

Ethics has its origin from the Greek word *ethos*, which means «character or personal disposition» (Ward, 2010, p. 11). It guides us in what is defined as right or wrong, and is connected to the word *moral* which more often is connected to the customs of a group. Ethics influence individual life, groups, institutions, professions and countries (Ward, 2010). It might be challenged when meeting other worldviews with different values and ethical preferences. So, in some ways, the worldview one has influences not only what one places value on, as discussed, but also defines the correct thing to do in certain situations.

As we have seen, according to Aadnanes (2012), a worldview includes, among other elements, values and moral perceptions. And values will certainly create consequences for ethics, for example on the value, or dignity of a human being, he says (Aadnanes, 2012). In this way, we see that ethics is an important part of a worldview.

Ethical levels and Approaches.

According to Day (2006) there are three levels or branches with which theoretical ethics are studied. *Meta ethics*, which is the level one discusses the nature of ethics and the meaning of abstract terms such as *good and right*, for example. *Normative ethics*, deals with our behaviour, what you do or don't do. *Applied ethics* is where the insight from the other levels are applied in specific cases as applied ethics (Day, 2006). Normative ethics is the vital link between theory and practice. And this is where the press might meet some challenging situations which sometimes might lead a journalist to violate a norm (Day, 2006).

Within normative ethics there are three different approaches toward ethics (Hursthouse & Petigrove, 2016).

1. Virtue ethics, which mainly speaks about our moral character.
2. Deontology, which is the duty or rule perspective, often exemplified with the Ten Commandments.
3. Consequentialism, also called utilitarianism, emphasizes the consequences of an action.

It's the consequence of an act, more than the act itself, which should define what is wrong or right (Hursthouse & Petigrove, 2016).

Deontology is very visible in the codes of ethics, especially in the First Section where it speaks about the duties of journalism in society, and in the third Section the utilitarian perspective is prevalent, the right of protection of the individual based on the consequences. Sometimes they challenge each other in applied ethics in the field of journalism (presse.no, 2016). Also worth mentioning as a branch of consequence ethics is *proximity ethics* which focuses on the one to one relationship. It is the relationship between you and I which are fundamental, and the idea of the responsibility never lies on the other. This ethical perspective is influenced by the philosopher Emanuel Levinas and he speaks about what happens when we meet the face of «The Other» (Brurås, 2009). Audgunn Oltedal speaks warmly about the proximity perspective in journalism (Oltedal, 2001) which we will discuss more in a later section.

Journalism Ethics.

In this thesis, it is the *personal worldview*, like personal values and ethics which are interesting and discussed, but on a daily basis a journalist needs to relate this to the ethical codes of journalism, as ethics is an important aspect in journalistic work. In 2004, there were registered 242 codes of ethics in 94 countries. Findings in several studies done from the early 70s up until early 2000 conclude that there are some common keywords which seems important to journalists around the world. *Accuracy, integrity, truthfulness and objectivity* are repeated in many codes of ethics (Himmelboim & Limor, 2008), but complex terms as *truth* and *objectivity* and cultural differences might influence the content of these terms. This will be discussed in the last section of this chapter.

In Norway, we have had the codes of ethics since 1936 (presse.no, 2016). In addition, some media houses have their own in-house ethical codes (Dahlstrøm, 2007). This means that there are several ethical perspectives which are operative in a journalist's workday, as it is in many occupations. Day (2006) says that these different perspectives which meet doesn't necessarily need to be a challenge. They do not need to exclude each other, but when they do, it forces the journalist to decide whether it's the professional principles or the personal principles which should take first priority.

An interesting aspect of journalism ethics in the Norwegian context is that there is no tradition to connect professional ethics in journalism with moral philosophical theory

(Brurås, 2009). The professional ethics has been developed and changed as a response to critiques and dissatisfaction with the press, but also from the need of journalists to professionalize. A clear and conscious theoretical reasoning behind the development of professional ethics in journalism is hard to find. This is also something the press organizations themselves acknowledge (Brurås, 2009). The codes of ethics are therefore not absolute, but changing with changes in society. This is interesting in a perspective of objectivity, worldviews and influence. If nothing is absolute in journalistic ethics, one might discuss where the future will take journalism ethics. Røssland (2007) also addresses the lack of ethical foundations in media and journalism. He says we need a foundation and argues for a new media ethics, and for a moral philosophical departure point to create a foundation. He believes the journalist needs to have him or herself as a starting point when defining his or her professional role.

As we have seen, worldviews and how we get our understanding of the world seems quite complex. And the challenge is being made aware of our worldviews and how they might influence us and our work. It also contains several complex terms as values and ethics, which has its foundation in philosophy. In the further discussion, I will use worldview in a broader sense, as described by Aadnanes (2012), Dahle (2015) and Dahl (2001). This broader concept includes values, ethics and faith, both secular and religious.

2.1.3 Worldviews Among Journalists.

Though we have seen that worldviews might not be something everyone is conscious about, it can likely be inferred that journalists are among those one would expect to be especially aware of their own standpoints and worldviews. This is also because of the history of their profession, with its special focus on non-partisan press, objectivity and the idea of being detached, which we also find in the codes of ethics under the paragraphs of role and integrity (Presse, 2016). In Norway, there seems to be little research on worldviews among journalist, which is part of the reason for the topic of this master thesis. There are studies on religious faith among journalists in the United States and the journey of Catholics and Evangelical Christians in the American media. We also find the global study *Worlds of journalism* (WJS) where religious faith is asked for in some of the countries. When it comes to personal values on debated topics in the media it is very hard to find any. Political preferences and influence are more discussed and this is mentioned in the introduction of this study. I will use the mentioned literature and also look at variety in a cultural

background, as this might show how diverse religious views play out in the Norwegian context.

A Global Journalist?

Just as it is difficult to speak about a global definition of journalism, as discussed in the introduction, it is difficult to speak about a global journalist. Still, there are some demographic similarities. Weaver & Willnat (2012) concludes that a demographic profile of the American journalist, in many ways, looks like the global journalist. This indicates a somewhat homogenous profile when it comes to certain demographic aspects, but in other areas there are important differences and those are more than the similarities. The study doesn't say anything specific on worldviews but does comment on political preferences in some countries (Willnat & Weaver, 2012). The main focus is on the comparison between countries in their professional values and working conditions. The study of *Worlds of Journalism* has included worldviews on some countries that will be discussed in this section. But a typical American and global journalist is white, male, married and has a university or college degree. He is less likely to be Protestant and has become a little older than previous studies indicate. It is important to mention that their study doesn't include countries in Africa, but does include Asia, Southern and Northern America and Europe (Willnat & Weaver, 2012).

The Social Context.

The Norwegian journalist belongs and works within a society which by many has been characterized as more and more secularized (Taule, 2014). This idea is weakened as an argument alone (Botvar, 2010), (Taule, 2014). Schmidt (2010) confirms this view and says Norway is becoming a more religious and pluralized society when you look into the different criteria for defining pluralism or secularization in a society. At the same time, most people in Norway are satisfied with and desire a society with a secular character. This is also confirmed among those who have a positive relationship to religion. So Norway keeps its place as one of the most secularized countries in the world (Henriksen & Schmidt, 2010). So even though The Norwegian Church has had a decline in membership (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2016a) and there is an increase in members of non-religious worldviews societies (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2016b), Norway is still quite religious measured in numbers of members of

religious communities. Some of the explanation we find in immigration and refugees (Eikje, 2016), which has a domination of Muslims and Roman Catholics.

A Religious Journalist?

In the American context, religion has been tied strongly to the press, according to Schmalzbauer (2003). American Protestantism had an important role in building up journalism and social science. The study of Schmalzbauer shows that the media in the United States began its secularization at the arise of the penny press and the mass circulation of the news in the 1820s. But in the 1980s and 1990s the religious groups in the United States challenged the idea of the exclusion of religion in the public sphere (Schmalzbauer, 2003). The Catholic and Evangelical Christians in the United States moved from being marginal in the 1940s-50s to mainstream in the media around the year 2000. It was both a class journey and a consciousness on building a subcultural institution from within. By so doing, they have contributed to new research and debate in a positive way and today the religious Christian groups have made important contributions to American public life (Schmalzbauer, 2003).

The study of *Worlds of journalism* shows the relevance of religion for journalists in different countries. The reference is done to the pilot study from 2007 – 2011 as the second wave of the survey is not completed yet. There are no Nordic countries which have been asked those questions, so the closest geographically will be countries like Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Germany has almost 51 % journalists which define themselves as belonging to a religion or denomination in a Christian tradition. Austria has 68% and in Switzerland, there are almost the same numbers as in Germany, 54%. In these specific countries, there is a high number of journalists who are connected to the Christian faith. Only Buddhism are represented in addition to Christianity, and this is only in one of the countries. See table 1.

Table 1. Pilot study WJS 2007-2011. Religion and denomination. (Red marking is done for the comparison with this study.)

Country * Religion: denomination Crosstabulation

% within Country

Country	Religion: denomination	Religion: denomination								Total		
		No religion or denomination	Buddhist	Hindu	Jewish	Muslim	Protestant	Orthodox (Russian/Greek/etc.)	Roman Catholic		Other	
Australia		66,0%			2,0%		2,0%			19,0%	11,0%	100,0%
Austria		30,3%	1,0%				4,0%			63,6%	1,0%	100,0%
Brazil		55,0%	1,0%				4,0%			32,0%	8,0%	100,0%
Bulgaria		20,2%						78,7%			1,1%	100,0%
Chile		46,9%					6,1%			46,9%		100,0%
China		96,8%	1,1%					1,1%			1,1%	100,0%
Egypt						96,0%		3,0%		1,0%		100,0%
Germany		48,5%					27,3%			23,2%	1,0%	100,0%
Indonesia				9,1%		78,8%	10,1%			2,0%		100,0%
Israel		28,9%			64,9%	3,1%					3,1%	100,0%
Mexico		54,0%					2,0%			39,0%	5,0%	100,0%
Romania		5,1%					3,1%	88,8%		3,1%		100,0%
Russia		21,4%	3,6%	1,2%		10,7%	1,2%	58,3%		3,6%		100,0%
Spain		85,9%								14,1%		100,0%
Switzerland		45,9%					21,4%	1,0%		31,6%		100,0%
Turkey		27,7%			2,1%	69,1%					1,1%	100,0%
Uganda		4,0%				7,1%	58,6%			27,3%	3,0%	100,0%
United States		35,7%	1,0%		13,3%		24,5%	1,0%		22,4%	2,0%	100,0%
Greece		15,3%	1,2%					83,5%				100,0%
Pakistan		6,1%				93,9%						100,0%
Portugal		65,3%								34,7%		100,0%
Total		36,3%	0,4%	0,5%	3,9%	17,3%	8,0%	14,1%	17,7%	1,8%	100,0%	

The numbers of WJS show that 18 % of German journalists believe their faith is very or extremely important (table 2.). In Austria, 17 % and in Switzerland 15%. The numbers which indicate a high level of importance are much lower than the numbers of those who belong to a denomination. American journalists indicate a significant higher percentage of importance than the European countries in this survey. 34% of American journalists find their religion to be very or extremely important (Worlds of Journalism, 2016c), which confirms the studies of Schmalzbauer (2003). There is no measure of behaviour in the study of WJS.

Table 2. Pilot study WJS 2007-2011. Religion and importance. Red marking is done for the comparison with this study.

Country * Religion: importance Crosstabulation

% within Country

Country	Religion: importance	Religion: importance					999	Total
		extremely important	very important	somewhat important	little important	not important		
Australia		1,0%	9,0%	26,0%	21,0%	43,0%		100,0%
Austria		4,0%	13,0%	27,0%	21,0%	34,0%	1,0%	100,0%
Brazil		10,0%	17,0%	30,0%	18,0%	25,0%		100,0%
Bulgaria		3,1%	8,2%	36,7%	27,6%	24,5%		100,0%
Chile		3,1%	28,6%	29,6%	23,5%	15,3%		100,0%
China		3,1%	1,0%	10,4%	22,9%	62,5%		100,0%
Egypt		52,0%	39,0%	7,0%	2,0%			100,0%
Germany		3,0%	15,2%	36,4%	17,2%	28,3%		100,0%
Indonesia		47,5%	41,4%	9,1%	2,0%			100,0%
Israel		9,3%	16,5%	24,7%	20,6%	28,9%		100,0%
Mexico		7,0%	21,0%	32,0%	24,0%	16,0%		100,0%
Romania		13,1%	17,2%	35,4%	25,3%	9,1%		100,0%
Russia		6,7%	25,8%	39,3%	15,7%	12,4%		100,0%
Spain			11,1%	29,3%	22,2%	37,4%		100,0%
Switzerland		1,0%	14,0%	23,0%	33,0%	28,0%	1,0%	100,0%
Turkey		9,5%	33,7%	18,9%	12,6%	25,3%		100,0%
Uganda		41,0%	31,0%	19,0%	8,0%	1,0%		100,0%
United States		14,1%	20,2%	33,3%	12,1%	20,2%		100,0%
Greece		5,1%	7,1%	38,4%	28,3%	21,2%		100,0%
Pakistan		29,9%	37,1%	18,6%	6,2%	8,2%		100,0%
Portugal		3,1%	11,2%	28,6%	30,6%	26,5%		100,0%
Total		12,8%	19,9%	26,3%	18,8%	22,2%	0,1%	100,0%

Multicultural Backgrounds.

As there is little information on worldviews and values among Norwegian journalists, one approach is to look at the number of journalists with multicultural backgrounds.

Multicultural in this context, as defined by Mikkelsen (2009) is a person with a cultural identity from both a majority and minority culture. This person can be born in Norway or in a foreign country. Mikkelsen also points to the challenge with this constructed dichotomy, of majority and minority, as the group of minorities might be more diverse than the majority. But as for this thesis it is necessary to define who to explain why it's interesting to look at multicultural backgrounds in the aspect of worldviews among journalists.

A multicultural background might indicate a higher possibility of a diversity of worldviews in the newsrooms. This because we have seen that Norway, despite its secularity and decline in members of The Norwegian Church (Dnk) (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2016a), Norway is still quite religious, measured in members of religious communities. Part of the explanation, as discussed, is immigration and refugees (Eikje, 2016). It seems that there are little statistics on the numbers of journalists with a multicultural background in the Norwegian media houses and hard to find updated numbers, also in the Norwegian Media Businesses' Association (MBL). But what we do know is that in 2004, 2% of the journalists in Oslo had immigrant background (Ansari, 2004). According to Mikkelsen (2009) there are several reasons for the low number of journalists with this background. Both fewer students applying for journalism education, but also there is an observed discrimination in the job market, not only in Norway, but also in other Scandinavian countries. It is important to remember that there might have been a change since these numbers were presented, but not necessarily.

According to the research of Weaver & Willnat (2012), many countries throughout the world have a low representation of journalists with a multicultural background or another ethnical origin than the cultural majority in the country. That is, in those countries that presented numbers on this, and those countries are few in their study (Willnat & Weaver, 2012). The point for this thesis is that low numbers might indicate a low representation of other worldviews, both when it comes to religious ways of seeing the world, but also in the aspect of values.

As we have seen in this section quite a high percentage of journalists in Europe belongs to a religious denomination, but a considerably less percentage says it's important for them. In Norway, there are few journalists with immigrant background which might indicate a lack

of diversity in the newsrooms. The numbers of WJS pilot study indicate that religion is much more important to American journalists. This is in line with the history of Christian journalists in the American media, where the Catholic and Evangelical Christians have moved from being marginal in media in the 1940-50s to being mainstream around the year 2000.

2.2 Objectivity and Influence.

Objectivity is the term which includes several of the concepts that journalism often is measured up against, like *accuracy, truthfulness, factual* and *balanced* as some examples. And some of these are concepts that is found in many codes of ethics around the world as we saw in the section on ethics (Himmelboim & Limor, 2008) . The term and its content is in many ways what makes it valid and important to talk about influence in the news process. But it is a complex and challenging term which will be discussed in this section.

I will put the term *objectivity*, as related to journalism, into a historical context and a Norwegian context. Through this I will try to illuminate its challenges. I will discuss what role worldviews and personal standpoints have as one of several influential factors in the process of making news. The last point in this section is the challenges that might occur when different worldviews meet, not only when interviewing people from other cultures, but also at a closer level. This section will be put into a frame of intercultural communication theory and the concept of otherness and measured with the idea of objectivity.

2.2.1 What is Objectivity?

Richard Sambrook, Professor of Journalism at Cardiff University and with 30 years of experience in the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) claims that the word *objectivity* is often misused. *Impartiality* and *objectivity* is often used interchangeably, he says. *Objectivity* is about identifying facts and evidence. *Impartiality* is more related to the word bias, and the absence of it. In the UK, they more often use the word impartiality, and in the US objectivity (Sambrook, 2012). In the Cambridge dictionary definition, the word objectivity is a noun that means «a lack of bias, judgment, or prejudice» or it can be defined as «judgment based on observable phenomena and uninfluenced by emotions or personal prejudices» (Vocabulary,

2017)⁵. It can also be connected to the word fair, or fairness (Dictionary Cambridge, 2017). This is more in line with what Sambrook would define as impartiality and not objectivity (Sambrook, 2012).

A more philosophical approach, from Almaas (2017) says: «It is possible to perceive objectively, but we cannot take in the totality of reality and say anything about it; we can only *point* to some of its characteristics» (Almaas, 2017)⁶. In contrast to this, Raeijmaekers and Maesele, say that the objectivity idea is that a person can rationalize their work and line up with the concept of objectivity, which ends up with an unbiased and better representation of society (Raeijmaekers & Maesele, 2015). Steven Maras (2013) perspectives question the view of Raeijmaekers and Maesele. Maras sums up, both Sambrook's definition of objectivity and the challenge of the philosophical foundations in the term, as pointed out by Almaas and says that the core of objectivity is the idea of reporting the facts (Maras, 2013). But he also says that the term crosses into philosophy and that is where the core of the dispute is. Some of his discussion reflects the idea if it is at all possible to find facts that exist independently of mind and which is accessible through observation, or the perspective that reality exists objectively, but it is not possible to record it without doing a selection (Maras, 2013).

David Mindich (Mindich, 1998) says the definition seems to depend on who you ask. He says that objectivity is more a question, than an answer, a debate topic, more than a dogma. But against himself, he argues that it is difficult to steer towards something which you don't really know looks like. Because of this it is also difficult to update or adjust it, he says. An interesting approach from Mindich is that he says objectivity defines itself by defining others. Therefore, it lies between competing truths. It serves the status quo, and is sometimes dangerous he argues, because journalists should not assume that being objective means you reflect a correct picture of reality. We are all coloured by our culture, he says. He himself finds the objectivity difficult to achieve and refers to it as the curious quality (Mindich, 1998).

Richard Kaplan believes objectivity is the answer to making journalism better, and with a methodological approach it might be possible, he claims. He writes that the ethics of objectivity has long been seen, at least within the United States, as the best ideal to work towards in the media in a modern democracy. Objectivity today stands as the unchallenged common sense of journalists, he says. Walter Lippmann also became an advocate for more scientific methods of journalism to counterbalance subjective reporting (Lippmann, 1922).

⁵ Website, therefore no page reference.

⁶ Website, therefore no page reference.

Lippmann thought it was necessary to find a way out of this. Years later, this was labelled «precision journalism» by the researchers Meyers and Mc. Combs (Willis, 2009). According to Richard Kaplan's definition of objectivity in the American press, it is the idea of the journalist adopting «the pose of scientist and how to eliminate their own beliefs and values as guides in ascertaining what was said and done» (Kaplan, 2009, p. 26). Sociologist Gans confirms the idea that research methodology, especially on social sciences are superior to the journalistic methods, but he believes it is not possible for journalists to adopt this, primarily because of lack of time (Gans, 2004).

Jim Willis means it is possible to present a story factually and in the same way, even with differing worldviews (Willis, 2009). If we use Sambrooks's (2012) definition of objectivity on this perspective, it would indicate that it is possible to be objective.

If we put the definitions of worldview and objectivity together, it might look like a math equation with zero as a result. What the journalist puts away, as Richard Kaplan says, when he or she goes to work, is quite similar to the definition of worldview. So journalists need to put away something which James Sire says is very integrated in man, though it might not be conscious (All about worldview, 2016). This is in line with the discussion of values and ethics, which are important elements within worldviews.

As we can see, the definition of the term objectivity is discussed, maybe because of its philosophical roots. But where did objectivity come from? In the next section, I will look into its historical background.

A Historical Context.

Mindich (1998) says that the idea of objectivity comes from the American history of journalism and dates back to the 1830s, but there are examples of the use of the term in publications back to 1690. If one read the New York Herald from 1835 one can see that their goal was to reflect the world as it was, and it seems like the editors had a genuine belief in that it was possible (Mindich, 1998).

Even though Mindich (1998) finds objectivity difficult as a term, he describes how it came to be. He does so by breaking it down into different parts as: *detachment*, *non-partisanship*, *the inverted pyramid*, *facticity*, and *balance*. Each term, he says, came about in different eras and reflected challenges in its own time. In this perspective, objectivity in journalism is something which evolved through decades. The very first step towards what we today call

an *objective press* was the rise of the penny press in the United States from 1828-1836. The mass circulation which was connected to the detachment from the party press became more and more focused on empirical facts. One could see the same thing happening in the academic institutions, where secular positivists redefined the term objectivity. They said objectivity was the exclusion of moral values. We are now in the 1920s in America. A conciseness emerged from the journalists about the newspapers being detached and not controlled by any political party. According to Mindich, being non-partisan doesn't mean you are balanced or objective, it only says your political standpoint doesn't shine through (Mindich, 1998). Together with the paradigm shift in the 19th century, where there was a displacement from religion and philosophy towards science, one also saw a change in journalism. This was connected to the great advancements done in medicine and science, which also influenced literature, art and social science. Journalism shifted towards a more empirical and fact-based paradigm.

Steven Maras is in line with this historical analysis when he says that the one thing which one can agree on about objectivity is that: «It is a product of history, linked to particular cultural formations, as well as the professional aspirations of journalists themselves» (Maras, 2013, p. 2). But in addition, he argues that it also was influenced by different conditions such as technology, commercialism, politics and organizational conditions and that it became a more fully-articulated concept in the 1920s America.

The Norwegian Context.

Martin Eide says the idea of objectivity and neutrality in Norway also grew from the detachment of partisanship in the press and the party press, but it happened much later than in the United States. In the mid and late 19 Century, there was a huge increase of newspapers in Norway, 42 between 1838 – 1851(Eide, 1999). The tight connections to the press were in many ways how the growing public managed to communicate their message. The newspapers became more and more attached to the political parties. It was the same situation in the other Scandinavian countries, but in the United States and Great Britain, the opposite happened. The newspapers there became more and more detached from the political parties. In Norway, this didn't take fully place until the 1970s. As the party press loosened, the market forces became more connected to the press (Eide, 1999). Interestingly enough, the codes of ethics existed long before the bonds between the political parties and

the press loosened as mentioned in the section on ethics. The first codes, from 1936⁷, mainly focused on ethics connected to the reporting of crime, while in 1975⁸, the era of detachment from the party press, we see much more focus on the media's responsibility on exercising social criticism and creating debate. Awareness of which sources that are used and the presentation of differing perspectives are also considered. Objectivity is not mentioned, but words such as integrity and factual are used, and they specifically mention the importance of clarify for the reader what are facts and what are commentaries.

Trine Syvertsen says that the rise of theories around objectivity and the interest for this topic came in the 60s and 70s, coinciding with the beginning of the detachment of the party press. At the same time the research field became more interested in the sender than the receiver of the message. Critical researchers wanted to point at or prove that the media actually was a part of the social and political power apparatus (Syvertsen, 1999). According to Syvertsen, the new critical view on the media and journalism came because of the lack of trust towards the media being a truth-seeker (Syvertsen, 1999). This shows that lack of trust is not a new phenomenon. To understand if objectivity is important in the Norwegian context, it might be interesting to look closely on the perception of roles among journalists and how the codes of ethics reflects that. What journalists define as their most important role differs quite a lot around the world, both seen between the different journalistic models of Hallin and Manchini (2004) and between different national cultures which is seen in the research of WJS (Worlds of Journalism, 2016a).

In the Norwegian codes of ethics, the words *objectivity*, *balance* and *biased* are not mentioned, neither is the word *truth*. The words which are used and might lead to the understanding of objectivity are words like *factual*, representation of different views and the rule about *simultaneous refutation* (Presse, 2016). The global study of WJS gives some answers to what roles Norwegian journalists find most important. 83% says it's extremely or very important to educate the public, 88 % says it's extremely or very important to report things as they are, and 63 % says that being a detached observer is extremely or very important (Worlds of Journalism, 2016a). As a detached observer, or as a reporter who wants to report things as they are, it's likely that objectivity is important.

Genres and Objectivity.

⁷ See attached codes of ethics from 1936. Appendix nr.2.

⁸ See attached codes of ethics from 1975. Appendix nr.1.

The term objectivity is also attached to genre. Traditionally, news journalism is the genre which is supposed to have the most balanced and neutral perspective, while a commentary usually has a level of interpretation or meaning (Salgado & Strömbäck, 2012). It's therefore interesting to mention that there has been an increase of *interpretive journalism*, also called *meaning journalism*, which means a shift from news (descriptive) to views (meanings).

Typical interpretive journalism are commentaries, but there is also an increase of mixing the two genres of news journalism and commentaries, says Salgado & Strömbäck. This might also challenge the concept of objectivity. In the New York Times, there has been an increase of interpretive journalism on the front page from 8 percent to 80 percent between 1960 to 1992. Some of the explanation is given to the increase of negative stories and more focus on political strategies (Salgado & Strömbäck, 2012). In a Norwegian and Scandinavian context one sees the same pattern, according to Mathisen, Morlandstø & Sneve (2016). In the Norwegian newspaper, *Aftenposten*, there has been a four time increase of meaning journalism between the 1950s to 2008. The trend is seen in several countries in Europe and the United States. Mathisen, Morlandstø & Sneve have some more complex explanations. Technology, speed, economy, political changes are some of their reasons (Mathisen et al., 2016). In this perspective, it's not necessarily a less objective journalism which is the challenge of keeping the news balanced, but the change in emphases on genres and roles. But for the media audience, the impression might be a less objective journalism.

Main Objections.

Through the different definitions and perspectives on objectivity, it is clear that it is an idea with weaknesses. This is something Steven Maras confirms, and he says that some might think that the concept has no value, but it is a topic worth discussing and which needs to be taken seriously, he says. One needs to take the criticism and also look at new and alternative philosophical perspectives. «Hopefully a debate leads to new ways of thinking about matters of importance» (Maras, 2013, p. 81). Some would argue that objectivity is not always desirable, for example, when facing brutality and inhumanity (Ethical journalism network, 2017).

An objection towards objectivity is the concept of truth. Richard Sambrook in the BBC says: «These days it is quite fashionable to question whether there is any such thing as truth at all. Whether facts actually prove anything, whether objectivity is worth striving for» (Sambrook,

2004)⁹, and that there only exists perspectives. But he argues, without going into a philosophical discussion, that perspectives and comments are not much worth without a foundation of evidence and fact (Sambrook, 2004). Audgunn Oltedal also addresses the truth aspect. She believes that if journalism still wants to have a critical function, it needs to focus on facts and have some requirements for truth (Oltedal, 2012). Traces of a demand for truth or objectivity in the Norwegian codes of ethics is mostly about *saklighet* (factuality) and *facts* (Presse, 2016). Tom Goldstein (2007) refers to Judith Miller in the New York Times when she apologised for her coverage from the Iraq War and stated that she got it all wrong. She claimed that all other journalists and experts commenting on the reasons for the war were all wrong. The reason she gave was that it all begins with the sources, and when they are wrong, you get it all wrong. But she said she did the best she could. Tom Goldstein asks the questions if one should accept the postmodernist idea of the impossibility of determining the truth. His rhetoric question asks, «Should we expect more than stenographical accuracy?», «Of course we should», he says (Goldstein, 2007, p. 9).

Because it is difficult to define objectivity, it is also difficult to say if it's transnational. Objectivity arose in America, in its own cultural and political context and therefore, the same beginning is not found in countries which it is natural to compare with (Maras, 2013). Also, it emerged through several decades, which might not be possible for a country that is more rapidly changing to a more Western kind of journalism, maybe after being democratized. Maras mentions the example from India, where objectivity is used, but defined differently. It is defined more as truth and facts, not necessary neutrality (Maras, 2013). The same can be found in a study of Chinese war correspondents, where their motivations and roles reveal a different understanding of these terms (Zhang, 2013). This is explained by the political and cultural context and shows the difficulty of talking about objectivity as something arising from an Anglo-American context rippling across the globe (Maras, 2013).

Is Objectivity Important?

It arose in another continent, developed through decades, is difficult to define, vary through cultures and have many objections to it, but it's still around. Why is that?

Steven Maras identifies several reasons for the importance and need of objectivity. One reason is media performance. The media audience wants objectivity, or at least that is what

⁹ Website, therefore no page reference.

the complaints reflect (Maras, 2013). Politics and government is another reason. Almost 100 years ago, Walter Lippmann wrote about the threat of media bias in the aftermath of World War 1. He called for a propaganda-free and honest interpretation of facts and ideas from the press. Lippmann makes a direct link between journalism, democracy and objectivity, and said in 1920, that «the crisis of Western democracy is a crisis in journalism» (Lippmann, 2012, p. 2). A third reason is media power. Maras says this has to do with the public discourse and how it is controlled and promoted. A fourth reason has to do with ethics, values and the selection of sources and if they are deemed to be inside or outside the news frame (Maras, 2013).

A word which might summarize these points of why objectivity is important might be *Trust*. This is also one of the words addressed in the introduction which frames the whole idea of why this thesis has importance. Norwegian researchers at «SINTEF», an independent research organisation in Scandinavia, also addresses the need and importance of more trust in the media. They say this is even more important with the rise of what is described as «fake news». The media itself has the responsibility and they need to be more open and transparent on how they work, the choices they make, their use of sources and how they apply the ethical codes, are their suggestions to build more trust (Brandtzæg & Følstad, 2017).

In this section, the term objectivity has been illuminated and discussed. As we have seen, the concept has developed through the decades and the history of detachment from the party press played an important role. It is a challenging and debated topic, and it might be understood differently in different cultures. This might also explain why some countries include the word in their codes of ethics, like in Hong Kong (Presscouncil Hong Kong, 2014), while others leave it out, like Norway (Presse, 2016).

2.2.2 Influential Factors in the News Process.

There are many factors which influence the news. It isn't created in a vacuum. In this section, I will look into several possible factors of influence and especially focus on the *personal worldview*, which is the focus in this thesis. To begin with, I will turn to an early American study which focused more on the sender, the journalist, the social forces and controls in the media institutions, than the receiver, the media audiences.

The «Gatekeeper».

David Manning White (1950) did a study on the gatekeepers and their role in the selection of news. The term *Gatekeeper* was first used by social scientist Kurt Lewin¹⁰. White says there are enormous number of choices that are made through a process of an idea to where it reaches the reader. There is not only one gatekeeper, but several in the process, says White. An important note to make is that this is of course another time, the 1950s, and we are speaking about the process of print media, but whether there are less or more gatekeepers today, there are gatekeepers. Manning White's point is that his studies revealed that only 1/10 of all the incoming news ideas became news. So, who decided that the other 9/10 should not become news, and what were the reason for those choices, asked White. For White it became very clear in the process of the studies, how dependent the communication of news is on the value – judgments which were «based on the gatekeepers own set of experiences, attitudes, and expectations» (White, 1950, p. 386).

A Complex Picture.

All these value-judgments which White mentions, are they only a result of personal values and worldviews or are they influenced by other elements outside of the single gatekeepers control? Sociologist Herbert J. Gans present several theories of how stories are selected. The studies have been done among American journalists in the late 70s. He concludes that even though a lot has changed in the media landscape in several areas since then, the process of deciding what's newsworthy have not changed much, he says. The same goes for values and assumptions which underlie the news judgments (Gans, 2004).

Herbert Gan's different theories of what influences and decides what stories are selected.

1. Journalist-centred: It's the journalists who shape the news. This view is also held by many politicians, he says.
2. Organisational structures: This explanation is often favoured by studies done within social sciences, Gans says. He points to the influential relationship between the organization and the journalist. The organization influences the selection of stories but the journalist also influences the shaping of the organization and therefore the news (Gans, 2004). This is somewhat in line with social theorists like Luckmann and Berger (1966). The society influence the people but the people also influence the society.

¹⁰ Manning White refers to Kurt Lewin in Channels of group life, Human relations, vol.1, nr.2, p. 145.

3. Event-centred: The mirror theory is about the media reflecting the events. This theory weakened in the 1960s when critics pointed to what the media did to make the event become news.

4. Outside forces: The last theory points to the many forces coming from outside. Technology, economy and ideology from those who holds the power. Values dominating in the national culture, the sources, especially those who have power enough to gain access to journalists. Finally, Gans mentions the audience as an external source of influence (2004).

Herbert Gans says that all these theories have some degree of truth. When it comes to what is discussed in this thesis, the level of influence from the personal level and values of the journalists, Gans' research concludes that journalists do not operate on a free level of influence. The powers structure within the organization are stronger influential power, together with the professional journalistic values, he says. The idea of objectivity is strong among American journalists, but Gans states that no one can operate in a zone free from values (Gans, 2004). One of the early research projects on social structural influence is Warren Breed's (1955) study of social control in the newsroom. Even though it is done some decades earlier, it somewhat confirms Gans' view on power structure in the newsroom. Breed says that the journalist, or the newsman, as he called it, gets his reward, status and acceptance from his colleagues, not from the reader. It seemed like the journalist «redefined his values to more pragmatic level of the news-room group» (Breed, 1955, p. 335).

In the study of WJS, there has been done a cross cultural study which shows a lot of influential factors on the news production and some of them differ a lot from country to country. Hanitzsch & Mellado (2011) says that earlier studies had more focus on conceptualization and structures of influence and that this might not fully match how these influences are perceived by journalists today. If we look at the ongoing research of WJS, we see that almost 50% of American journalists find their own values and belief influence their work very or extremely much (Worlds of Journalism, 2016b). On the other hand, perceived influence does not necessarily say anything about the real influence.

When it comes to what factor, personal or the structural, there isn't any consensus on which factor of influence is the most or least important according to Hanitzsch & Mellado (2011), but the numbers from WJS confirm what Gans says about the influence of organizational structures and that it's a more influential factor than personal values, because 66 and 65% of American journalists say editorial supervisors and editorial policy influence them (Worlds of

Journalism, 2016b). In the Nordic countries, it differs a little bit between the countries which factor influences the most and also which category in the social structure, like peers, editorial supervisors or editorial policy, that influences the most.

In Norway, 44 % of journalists consider their personal values and beliefs to be a very or extremely high influential factor. The other Scandinavian countries and the United States have a bit higher percentage. When it comes to editorial policy, 55 % of Norwegian journalists believe it influences very or extremely high, but only 29% when it comes to peers and staff. Owners and managers has very little influence (Worlds of Journalism, 2016b).

Somewhat in line with Gans's research, Paul S. Voakes has done an ethical approach towards personal influence on news creating. This survey was conducted among American journalists and was done a few decades ago. It also shows that personal influence on ethical decisions is less important than one might think. He says that values alone do not decide the actions but says something about the moral preferences. It's only through a filter of others that it leads to a decision and action. This challenges the perception that journalists are a solo player which makes choices completely on his or her own foundations of values and beliefs. In Voakes's survey the individual influence was the weakest factor in this survey. This might look different in another cultural context and also it might be different in a more updated survey, but still, it does challenge the idea of the personal view as an important influential factor, at least when it comes to the ethical level (Voakes, 1997).

Wolfgang Donsbach (2004) has a slightly different perspective and says that many of the typical approaches to how news decisions are made do not explain the underlying processes good enough. Donsbach says there are two general needs involving specific psychological processes which might explain the process of news-making. It's a need for social validation of one's perception of a story and a need to preserve one's existing predispositions (Donsbach, 2004).

The findings of both Gans and Voakes raise an interesting question about the social control of the newsroom. How easy will it be to dare to present a view which differs from the social group you work with? This is reflected both in a Norwegian context and in the American context, but the percentage of influences from social and structural elements and editor policy are far higher in the United States than in Norway. This shows that there are significant differences in perceived influences between countries, also between countries with a high level of pressfreedom.

A Norwegian Context.

In a Norwegian context, we have some similar opinions to what is found in American surveys when we go some decades back in time. Trine Syvertsen says the research from the 70s showed a complexity in news production. It's a complex interaction between external conditions of framework, the power centres and the media organizations' own aims and strategies (Syvertsen, 1999).

In 2015, three Norwegian media researchers were asked to comment on the Norwegian survey, *Medieundersøkelsen*, about political preferences among journalists and if they believe personal standpoints, when it comes to political preferences, influence the journalistic work (Johansen, 2015). Though political preferences are not the topic of this thesis, it's a part of the background for exploring more about worldviews and influence, and political choices most probably say something about personal standpoints and values. In that context, of exploring the topic of personal influence, it is relevant.

In the interview Martin Eide says he does not believe political preferences influences the work. He believes professionalism, like being critical towards the politician trumps own preferences. He also says that being critical to government and the elite is something typical for the Left side of politics, which will match the journalists' political preferences well (Johansen, 2015). He has support in different research from all the Scandinavian countries, at least when it comes to research done on the coverage of election campaigns. In Denmark (Hopmann, 2009) and Sweden (Petersson, Djerf-Pierre, Holmberg, Strömbäck, & Weibull, 2006) coverage of election campaigns show no clear bias or connection between political preferences among journalists. Preston (2008) also argues that professional values counterbalance personal beliefs and standpoints. A study done in Norway, has somewhat the same results. Svennevig, Arisland & Rognmo (2013) did their study through two election campaigns and examined the coverage of the commercial television channel TV2, and The Norwegian Public broadcaster, NRK. But, in addition, they found that the progress party, which is to the right in the Norwegian political landscape did get more critical questions than any other party. This is explained by the factor which is seen in other countries as well, according to Svennevig et al. (2013), that thoughts and ideas that are seen as radical and outside what is considered to have political consensus, experience more critical questions. But who defines what is extreme or not? This is something Kjersti Thorbjørnsrud addresses when she says she is quite convinced political preferences do influence. She is not speaking about election campaigns, but influence in general. She argues that those topics which are in

line with the values and ideologies in the society in general will give consensus; those who are not will not be given space, she says. Thorbjørnsrud believes that which is considered extreme might be influenced by what most journalists believe themselves and also what is reckoned as obvious and what is not questioned (Johansen, 2015). Willis (2009) has the same opinion on this and states that your worldview might influence what you find newsworthy, he says.

Jan Fredrik Hovden (2008) says journalists' political views says something about who they are, their background and their view of the world. But journalists at large are not a homogeneous group when it comes to social background, he says and refers to Patrick Champagne (2005). Therefore, he believes there is no point in looking at journalists as a group in the matter of political preferences and influence. Hovden's research shows that class and social background are different according to which media house you work for and especially there are differences among national and centrally-located media houses and local/regional media houses. There are, for example, differences in the inherited background of journalists working in NRK's district offices and those working in NRK's national office in Oslo, also between tabloid channels, and different newspapers (Hovden, 2008).

When discussing how personal standpoints and worldviews might influence journalism, it is easy to think that this will result in the journalist being less critical with sources he or she agrees with, or more critical to views differing from one's own perspective. These are all important factors, as already discussed, but there is also another possibility that a journalist will be extra critical in meeting with sources he or she agrees with according to qualitative interviews done by Dahlstrøm (2015).

Another point is that critique towards media being biased, does not necessary mean it is biased. Journalist Bjørn Markussen believes journalism must live with the fact that the audience often believes they know what you, as a journalist, mean about a topic. His point is that if you cover a story about the increase of members in the Humanist Association, people might think you are campaigning for the cause. That's just how it works when you touch people's feelings, he says (Dahlstrøm, 2015). The journalists interviewed by Dahlstrøm (2015) and working on topics about worldviews, have different opinions on if and how their own worldview influences their work. The majority says it will influence their work in some way or another, still they reach towards an objective ideal. One journalist says it might be an advantage to have a religious worldview oneself because it might make you more open to others having a religious worldview (Dahlstrøm, 2015).

If we look at Oltedal's interviews of 29 Norwegian journalists it seems that her findings are very much in line with Dahlstrøm's. Journalists are very aware of their personal values and that they influence them, but at the same time, it seems like there is a high level of consciousness of the detachment and dividing from the party press, especially from the veteran journalists. The interesting thing is that they don't say how it might influence and they don't discuss it in the news room (Oltedal, 2012).

Oltedal (2001) refers to two examples which might show the possibility of influence of personal values or standpoints in a news coverage. The story is within the science field of biotechnology. The content of the stories has been compared between the Christian newspaper *Vårt Land* and the tabloid newspaper *VG*. The common features in both newspapers are that both the journalists present the facts in terms of what the consequences of the new knowledge in the science field represent. But it seems like the facts are interpreted by the journalists according to his or her personal values and ethical principles. This is, for example, shown in the title and by the choices made on words and expressions. In *Vårt Land* there is a sceptical interpretation of the facts and in *VG* a supportive conclusion. Only one newspaper, *Vårt Land*, presents both perspectives from the research field in the story (Oltedal, 2001, pp. 148-149).

It seems like there are numerous factors which might influence journalism, but no consensus on what is the most important one. There also might be a difference in actual influence and perceived influence, but the numbers from the recent studies of WJS show a high level of perceived influence on editorial guidelines and personal standpoints, like values and faith, at least in some of the Western democratic countries. Among scholars there seems to be a slightly more weighing of the influence from the social structures than some other factors which seems to be in line with the numbers of WJS.

Most of the research found on the topic doesn't say much about how personal standpoints might influence, meaning in what way it might be expressed, but some points have been shown during the discussion. In chapter four, Findings, I will look at what Norwegian journalists have to say about this topic.

2.2.3 When Worldviews Meet.

How do worldviews challenge the topic of objectivity? Though there are many influential factors in the news process, we have seen that personal standpoints and values might

challenge and influence journalism. But is this factor of influence more challenging when competing worldviews meet? This will be the discussion in this section.

Two Perspectives.

The terms *ethnocentrism* and *culture relativism* are important perspectives when worldviews meet. *Ethnocentrism* is the idea that your own values or way of living is better than others. The challenge is that you most probably measure others by comparing them with your own perspective (Dahl, 2001). In the opposite side, we find *culture relativism*. It says that every culture needs to be understood according to its own preconditions. Everything is relative and one can defend actions if they are reasonable for those who put them into action (Dahl, 2001). It might be a difficult standpoint for journalism because journalists seek to be truthful. But a relativistic perspective opens up for curiosity. Dahl says culture relativism is not a very viable way of living but is necessary in research as a method (Dahl, 2001). In journalism, the idea of letting different views be heard stands quite strong (Presse, 2016).

A story which might illustrate these perspectives in a humorous and harmless way is the story about a journalist from the newspaper New York Times who went to cover the Pope's arrival in the upper country of Cameroon. The story is referred to by Schmalzbauer in his book «People of Faith». The journalist tells about this gentleman from the local information office who predicted that the sun would shine the minute the Pope came out of the plane. The journalist looked at him and asked how he could know that. He answered «The rain doctors understand these things» (Schmalzbauer, 2003, p. 1). Schmalzbauer refers to this story from his journalist friend and says it was exactly what happened. The Cameroon information officer looked at the journalist and pointed to the sky when the Pope had left and the rain started pouring down again. «I told you», he said. The journalist began the story, commenting on the rain incident, with these lines «It is not clear who had done the work, but someone was clearly on the job» (Schmalzbauer, 2003, p. 1).

Schmalzbauer says the journalist could very well have left the rain incident out of the story, but he didn't. The story shows the tension between the journalistic empiricism realities that transcend empirical description. The journalist later told some students that it could have happened by pure fluke and accident, and not with what the gentleman believed was true, but how can a journalist know that he asked the students. Schmalzbauer says that the journalist neither endorses nor denies the information in the story but was open to both

possibilities. By doing so, the journalist acknowledged the limits of pure observations, he says. Schmalzbauer (2003) says the question, «How do we know?» is relevant to ask as a journalist now and then, and especially when worldviews collide.

For many years, the Western perspective dominated the global news. But then *Al Jazeera* came to the scene in 1996, and later others have joined (Willis, 2009). Willis says that watching the same story on different channels often reveals different worldviews or ideologies. If it's on purpose or not might be difficult to say, but it's easy to discover different ethnocentricities at work, he says. The idea that foreign journalists, who are critical towards the United States, are not objective, but Western journalists are, is certainly a topic of debate (Willis, 2009).

We and the Other.

Worth mentioning in this section is the perspective of *proximity ethics*, briefly introduced in the section of ethics. Audgunn Oltedal argues that the proximity ethics is an ethical perspective to be aware of in journalism. It is based on the idea that every person has power and responsibility in the meeting with another person. It speaks about the other as *a subject, not an object* (Oltedal, 2001). Emanuel Levinas is often referred to in intercultural communications and as a supporter of proximity ethics. In the concept of «The Other» Levinas says when we meet the other, we meet ourselves (Kapuściński, 2008). With this perspective, we find the responsibility for the other within ourselves, and not to a system or an institution, says Oltedal. She says it is dangerous if we put the guilt on the institution because we get blinded for seeing the faults in the system. The media's responsibility is also to show the other, even when the other is the one we don't like or the one who has done wrong (Oltedal, 2001). Maybe we could add, «or the one who has a different view», which matches the journalist's obligation to let different voices be heard (Presse, 2016). Brurås (2009) claims that proximity ethics is a quite a radical perspective compared to the traditional ethical frames within journalism. He agrees that proximity ethics sometimes could be a very appropriate ethical approach but points to its weaknesses in the meeting with journalism. He says the challenge comes when looking at the main purpose of the media, which is not to focus on the one, or «The other», but the third, he says. Journalism and mass communication has a responsibility towards a society as a group, more than the individual's rights (Brurås, 2009).

Often it is said that it is cultural clashes, different cultures and religion which bring about conflicts. Another perspective, says Øyvind Dahl, is that it is not cultures that meet, it is people. It is the people that carry their meanings with them (Dahl, 2001). What makes it even more challenging is that our meanings are not static, they change, says Marilyn Strathern. Whether you fight for more freedom or defend traditions, the world is always on the move. She says that by comparing these different opinions, we might see them either as moving away or towards our own set of values (Strathern, 1997).

As mentioned in the discussion of defining worldviews, Lippmann (1922) speaks about that we look for what we already believe. In the media, this perspective is interesting. Do journalists and the audience look for what they already believe? After the coverage of the American Presidential Election campaign there were a lot of discussion on how the media could fail to see what was coming. The Assistant Secretary General of the Editors' Union, Reidun Kjelling Nybø (2016), says that journalists need to ask themselves critical questions and look at their use of sources, among other things. She almost says the same as what Dahl and Lippmann point to, the challenge of not being able to see it from the others' viewpoints. If we assume that our understanding is universal we might come to misinterpret our surroundings (Dahl, 2001).

Professor Terje Tvedt (2002) criticizes the Norwegian press for taking an ethnocentric perspective and not being able to see the other perspectives. His criticism very much confirms the theories and perspectives of Dahl and Lippmann. Among other examples, Tvedt criticises the press' coverage of the diplomatic break between Norway and Kenya in 1990. He says that the press covered the topic which showed a western mono-filter and gave a clear picture of who's the bad guy and who's the good guy. In the case of Kenya, Tvedt says the journalists writing about the topic was steady and not challenged and that Kenya's portrayal as the bad guy was already agreed upon before a neutral stance was represented. One could argue that this is a result of the media having to simplify, and that it's a long time ago, but Tvedt says in an article that this was also the case for the coverage of the Presidential Election in the United States, the draft catastrophes in Africa, Norwegian politics in Kenya, and the coverage of the Arab Spring, among others (Tvedt, 2016). There are also critical voices towards Tvedt's view. The Norwegian newspaper, *Klassekampen*, writes in their critique of one of his books that Tvedt generalizes too much (Fjellheim, 2016). Tom Egil Hverven says that Tvedt is also someone who tries to confirm his own worldview through the eyes of others' texts. Even a historian has a limited view of the world, he says, but he

confirms the need for Tvedt's perspectives (Hverven, 2002). This critique might show the limitation of a more relativistic perspective. By saying that others' ethnocentric perspectives are limited, we have already put our own perspective in the centre.

The aspects of challenges when worldviews meet, the influential elements of the news process, and the previous discussion of worldviews, values and diversity in the news room will be discussed in Chapter 4, together with the findings of this project. But first a presentation and discussion of the methodology chosen.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Worldviews in the Norwegian Newsroom

In this chapter I will discuss the choice of methodology, the questioner, the implementation of the survey and how I chose the topics in the value questions. I will also look at reliability and some specific challenges on asking questions about worldviews and values.

3.1 Theory of Research and Methodology.

Journalism and the field of media and communications has a short history as an individual research field, but has emerged from different disciplines that themselves have developed through a period of 200 years. A more complex society required changes in the field of science and at the time of an increase of the print and broadcast communication, in the mid-20th Century, an interdisciplinary research field emerged (Jensen, 2012c). How this will develop in the era after mass communication, with the new media technology, remains to be seen.

According to Gunter (2012) empirical studies have typically six methodological approaches. Three within quantitative and three within qualitative methods. Either speech/verbal, content or behaviour are measured (Gunter, 2012). The natural science has been a forerunner in parts of the empirical research and has its background in positivism which speaks about two ways we can receive knowledge. What we can observe and what we can rely on with our logical senses (Ulleberg, 2002).

According to Jensen (Jensen, 2012a) there are three different philosophical approaches within research methodology, three ways of inference on how one can draw conclusions in science. Depending on your point of departure, you have a deductive, inductive or abductive approach. Often all three of these approaches are required to achieve new knowledge and they are seldom found in a pure form in a study (Jensen, 2012a). A hypothetic-deductive approach, is often used when proving or disproving hypotheses according to Gunter, which again often is the primary concern in a quantitative research (Gunter, 2012). Quantitative research is often used within human and social sciences, according to Østbye et al. (2002).

The quantitative method is the method for my thesis and will be discussed in the next section.

3.2 Choice of Methodology.

The aim of this thesis is:

- 1. To find out what worldviews that exists among mainstream Norwegian journalists.*
- 2. To what extent, and how, Norwegian journalists believe their worldviews influences their journalistic work.*

The first research question has a clearly quantitative approach. My aim is therefore to generate numerical data from the answers of the survey and find out how widespread different worldviews and values are, and if there are differences between the chosen media houses. This approach sets the premises for choosing a quantitative methodology with a survey of questions which gives insight to the aim of the thesis. A survey is a basic method for this kind of research (Gunter, 2012). According to Gunter, a survey can be descriptive or analytical. This survey is basically descriptive as its aim is to document worldviews and if journalists themselves believe it influences their work. I don't need to examine relationships between the data to answer the research questions (Gunter, 2012), but I will do that as well, in order to find other information which may be relevant.

The second research question is possible to solve through triangulation, both a quantitative and qualitative approach. In the beginning of the thesis I wanted to do both because a qualitative approach would give more in-depth understanding and more space for reflection for the respondents (Jensen, 2012d), but I realized that a quantitative survey would be a big enough project within the given timeframe. A mixed method would give more information but it is not necessary to answer the research question. There are also some scholars who are sceptical to mixed methods, though it is sometimes necessary (Jensen, 2012a).

Research question Number Two, about influence and objectivity, will only bring answers to what the journalists believe, not necessarily what the actual influence is. To know the actual level of influence one would need to bring in content analysis as well.

3.3 Personal Note/Agenda.

In the methodological part, I also find it relevant to bring a short note on how I am conscious about my personal “spectacles” and how it influences the thesis and choice of topic.

3.3.1 Agenda.

As mentioned in the introduction chapter, there will always be a personal interest or an awareness of a topic because of one’s own spectacles and worldviews. Even though, my aim is to have an open mind on whether this means that journalists do colour journalistic work with their worldview or not. Just as journalists have some ethical rules they follow, research has some methodological rules, but we all have blind spots, and this is one of the reasons that I have tested the questionnaire on journalists before sending the survey out.

3.3.2 Pilot Study.

The survey was first sent to four test journalists with very different political standpoints and worldviews. I know of them, but had some distance to them. This was to expose any reactions or misunderstanding to the questions and also, if there were a sense of a personal agenda in the survey or a feeling of being provoked by the questions. The response was that this is an important topic but also difficult to answer because it was not something one thinks about a lot. One test journalist stated that the questions felt a little bit like typical Christian conservative issues, but questions about immigration and refugees, and how standpoints influence the work of a journalists, shed a different light on the survey. But even though there was this sense of conservative focus, it didn’t make the questions less important, the journalist said. After all, they are questions which many are concerned about, no matter what your religious or political standpoints are, the journalist added.

The responses from the test journalists made me adjust a few things and then I sent the survey to the first media house. From 24 responses, I received two critical comments. This made me think through the survey one more time and get a second opinion on the questions. I received approval for using the survey as it was, but also there were some possibilities of increasing the quality of the survey. I decided to look at the first sending as a pilot study and adjust a few questions about refugees and the scale questions. I also added some comment fields on the topic of refugees and explained more regarding my choices in the introduction of the survey. It made me see the importance of and sometimes the need of, a pilot study (Jensen, 2012a) (Hill, 2012) and how complex it was to make a good quantitative survey

through email sampling on such a topic. Some other reactions seemed more influenced by an irritation of the topic, but several comments conveyed positive remarks, such as; this is important and good luck.

3.4 Research Question One.

To study a person's worldview and values through a questionnaire is challenging, both because of the personal aspect and by doing it in a cultural context where faith and personal belief, more and more, are connected to the private sphere, though this impression is challenged through the immigration and refugee situation (Taule, 2014).

As discussed in the theory, there are several categories which need to be explored to be able to measure religiousness (Furseth, 2015). I have chosen to ask questions which all together should cover the categories of belonging, believing and behaving. After receiving answers from the «Pilot Study» I noticed that several respondents said that visiting a house of worship was not important even though they had chosen the Christian worldview and also said it meant a lot (to them). I thought maybe I excluded those who have fellowship in private homes with this question. So instead of asking if it was important to visit a house of worship, I asked if it was important to have fellowship with other believers, which still answers the category of belonging.

The most common types of questions in a questionnaire are knowledge questions, attitudes and behaviour questions (Østbye et al., 2002). Attitude questions, which I have several of, are the most challenging ones to ask in a survey when it comes to having valid answers. They depend very much on the questions. A good rule for having a valid answer, according to Østbye et al. (2002), is to include: 1. If the respondent has an opinion. 2. The direction of the opinion and 3. The strength of the opinion. The value questions in this survey has all these included, but mostly in one question, by adding the option «Don't Know». This is recommended because unsure respondents tend to answer yes, if there isn't a «Don't Know» alternative (Østbye et al., 2002). The optimal would be to have three questions according to Østbye et al. (2002), but this would mean three times as many questions and more work for the respondent.

To find values and attitudes through a questionnaire I had to choose some relevant topics, but also make a narrowing of the survey. I used the following criteria:

1. I used other value surveys to find relevant categories and topics, like the European Value Service (Holth, 2008) and Oltedal's Study (Oltedal, 2012), and Worlds of Journalism, questionnaire (Worlds of Journalism, 2016d).
2. I looked at the topics which either has been critiqued and/or been debated and given space in the media and the public debate.

The thesis will not discuss what values are most important or other values that the journalists have. Other possible topics for mapping values, which are also debated topics, could be climate changes, nature preservation, wildlife, more on biotechnology and the use of religious symbols in the public sphere as some examples. There was a need to narrow the questionnaire, and I ended up with three topics for mapping different values. All the topics chosen are included in the European Value Survey which has 135 questions in different categories.

Life and Death: In Norway, the abortion debate has a long history in the Norwegian public debate and in the media. Biotechnology is discussed and taken in a more liberal direction, like the possibility of abortion on a healthy twin sibling and the upcoming discussion on euthanasia as some examples. In this topic, I will ask questions which will focus on what value one puts on life itself.

Family and Marriage: A topic debated the last years because of the new Marriage Law which equates same- sex marriage and other rights for same- sex couples. The questions explore the attitudes to marriage, polygamy and if single parents should have the right to assisted fertilization.

Refugees: The huge number of refugees which arrived to Europe, especially over the last couple of years, has created debate in many European countries, also in Norway. Questions in this category try to find out if journalists see refugees as a problem or a resource, and in what way. I also find that this topic gives the survey a broader perspective.

3.5 Research Question Two.

In the Second Research Question, I want to find out the level of personal influence of one's own values and worldviews on journalistic work and how this influence is expressed. In this section I chose to have both open and closed questions with multiple choices and open text fields. In addition, they were asked if they believe transparency is a tool to more trustworthiness. These additional questions will give more understanding to the whole research question.

3.6 Implementation of the Survey.

In this section I will address issues relevant for the survey: challenges, measurements and the validity of the results.

Levels of Measurements: According to Gunter (2012) there are four types or levels of measurements in a quantitative research. In this survey, I have used both continuous and discrete variables. Within each of them there are two levels. For example, the question about worldviews, is typically a discrete variable, measured at a nominal level which means it is given a number in the choice made. Several other questions measure the answer with a scale. This is a continuous variable and I use an interval level to measure for example values and attitudes (Gunter, 2012).

Anonymous: I chose to use an anonymous solution for the survey for several reasons but the main argument is that such a sensitive and personal topic needed to be handled with care. Another important benefit of an anonymous survey is that the experiences of research says that in some cases, where the questions are of certain controversial content, the respondent might have a tendency to answer what is expected or socially acceptable, versus honestly providing their true opinion. This is especially a challenge in a qualitative approach, as Jensen says: «People do not always say what they think, or mean what they say» (Jensen, 2012d, p. 270). But this is also a possibility to be aware of in quantitative surveys (Østbye et al., 2002). What conveys truthfulness in this survey is the complete anonymous implementation and the focus on journalists, not media houses.

Media Houses: The departure point for my survey was to have focus on a broad part of the journalist population. I also wanted to have journalists from a variety of media houses and from the mainstream media, meaning the established media houses, which reach a larger group of the media audience and sets the news agenda on a national level. I therefore contacted journalists in three of the top four newspapers when it comes to paper circulation numbers from 2015, which almost includes all the newspapers with a national coverage (Mossin, 2016). The newspapers were: Dagbladet, VG and Aftenposten. In addition, I contacted journalists in NRK and TV2, to have one public broadcaster (NRK) and one commercial broadcaster (TV2). In addition, I used the Norwegian News Agency, NTB.

Population and Respondents: I decided to let the population be those who sets the agenda on news on a national, daily basis, as mentioned. The numbers of journalists working in the different media houses I received from the Norwegian Journalist Union (NJ), that have a high number of Norwegian journalist organized within their organizations. The number of respondents is very important when it comes to validity and the representativeness within the desired population. The total number of population in this survey was 2756, where NRK has the biggest number, 1711, which included journalists from the district offices. I chose to take the district offices into the population because some of the journalists that answered this survey work there. My aim was to have at least 100 complete answers from respondents so I could be within +/- 10 % sample size, per margin of error, or better (SurveyMonkey, 2017a). In this survey, 604 journalists received the questionnaire. Of those were 465 journalists and 139 editors and commentators. A total of 136 journalists and editors answered the survey completely - 108 journalists and 28 editors and commentators.

Sampling: A survey can be implemented in different ways, through an interview, face to face or telephone, or it can be sent by email. I chose to send an email with the survey to each one of the journalists. The advantages are that it is more affordable and less time-consuming. One avoids interview bias and it is easy to reach a wider geographical area (Gunter, 2012). But there are also some disadvantages which I experienced. You don't have any control over the answers or if the respondent completes or understands the question the way it was intended. You have to send to a very high number of the population to have the answers needed (Gunter, 2012).

My first solution was to send the survey through NJ. They turned it down with the reason

that there was another big survey which came before mine and they didn't want to send too much email to the journalists. I then decided to send one and one email directly to journalists, as I experienced that contacting editors took too much time; often they didn't reply and some emails to editors and editorials are not public. So, I took contact directly with journalists through emails which are open and connected to the stories published on the webpages of the different media houses. The exception was NTB, which has contact information for each journalist on their webpage. I sent all emails within a timeframe of 1-2 weeks. In addition to sending to all journalist which had stories on the front page of the websites, I also searched for stories by topic which were relevant for the questions in the survey. At NRK, I used some of the regional offices from the North to the South. Mostly I used them for stories relevant for the topics in the questionnaire. For example, the office in Finnmark County had several stories about refugees. This also helped me to get enough respondents.

In the light of this, I find that my procedure in sampling to be a non-probability sampling where respondents are available and convenient to access, but I still used purposive sampling. I had a clear aim at who I wanted to reach, news journalists in national mainstream media, and preferably those working with some of the topics in the survey. According to Gunter (2012), a non-probability sampling is a common sampling method in media research. When it came to informing editors about the survey I did not contact editors systematically because the focus was on the journalist and not the media house. But a few editors were contacted by personal email and responded. This was specifically in TV2 and a few editors in regional offices in NRK. In addition, 114 editors in NRK, TV2, Aftenposten og Dagbladet were informed and invited to contribute through the Editors' Union. One journalist in NRK said she had been restricted from answering the survey from a leader or editor. I have not been able to reach the editor to clarify this matter. I do not know if this affected the response rate from NRK.

Validity/Reliability: The population in this survey are 2756 journalists. With a number of 136 complete answers, it gives a +/- 8,2 % confidence interval within a 95% confidence level. This means that if all 2756 journalists working in the media houses in the population had answered, it is 95% sure that the answers would have been within +/- 8,2 % of the given answers (Spørreundersøkelser, 2017).

Response Frequency: The answers of 136 are the final numbers received after deleting those

responses which were too deficient and had a warning sign in SurveyMonkey. This gives a response frequency of 23, 5% which, according to SurveyMonkey, is good. Everything between 20-30% is considered very good when it comes to an online survey where there is no relation between the sender and receiver of the survey according to the surveys system used (SurveyMonkey, 2017c). I have no other references to the response frequency, but taken into consideration that the survey is quite long with 25 questions and has a level of challenging and personal questions to a profession, which according to Weaver (2008), often is critical of surveys in general, and sceptical to underlying motivations, it is also a satisfactory response. The response frequency from the different media houses varied from 20 % to 30%.

Choice of Scale: The scale choices, which is within a continuous level have many different solutions. Some has 4, some 5 and some 7 or 9 levels. Some also have a neutral midpoint. According to resources in SurveyMonkey, a unipolar system has shown to be more easy to understand and answer, and works best with 5 levels. Unipolar means to go from for example «not shy at all, to extremely shy», instead of two polar system like «extremely brave, to extremely shy» (SurveyMonkey, 2017b). I therefore chose a 5-grade unipolar scale. This type is also used on the European Value Survey and in the questions I wanted to compare with in WJS.

To minimizing the possible error of forcing the respondent to answer (Østbye et al., 2002), I chose to have a «Don't Know» or «Not Relevant» option on all questions in the worldview and value section. I chose the grade «Very» instead of «Extremely» on all the scale answers, as *extremely* is an extreme word, which might be more difficult to identify with.

Resources in SurveyMonkey say that it is best to avoid « Agree/Not Agree» on scale questions because respondents tend to agree more than disagree (SurveyMonkey, 2017b). I needed some of these in this survey, but tried to find other solutions where possible.

3.7 Comments to the Questionnaire.

In this section I will comment on some of the questions which need clarification of choice, or have the possibility of being misinterpreted, or have some weaknesses necessary to be open

about. This is especially important with questions of attitudes and values as discussed earlier (Østbye et al., 2002).

There are always possibilities for misunderstanding when communicating words and therefore, there is always a possibility that a question can be interpreted and influence the answers in a way that was not the intention. In a quantitative survey it is not possible to clarify misunderstandings in the questions as it would be in a face to face interview. One important relevance of linguistics in research is what Jensen (2012b) speaks about. He says that « Language is both an object and a tool of analysis» (Jensen, 2012b, p. 39). This shows that in the widest sense, language is the most important tool in all joints in a research project, also in quantitative methodologies but especially in the case of qualitative methodologies where the amount of linguistic data is larger (Jensen, 2012b).

Q.1. Age and Gender. I chose to only have age and gender in the question of the journalist's profile and not media house because of the anonymity of the survey. This was also recommended by the Data Protection Official for research (NSD) in Norway to be able to have the survey approved as anonymous (Norsk senter for forskningsdata, 2017). A combination of age, media house, gender and worldview might make it possible to recognise a journalist if the worldview is a minority in the media house.

Qs. 3 -6. Worldviews and Faith. The questions in this category focus on religious and non-religious worldviews. I included non-religious and secular worldviews in the questions to pinpoint that non-religious faith or worldview is also a worldview, as discussed in the literature review. This will provide some factual numbers for secular and religious worldviews. Several questions are asked on this topic to be able to measure a religious worldview as discussed earlier.

I have several more choices when it comes to Christianity. There are of course different religious directions within other world religions too, but as the majority of those who belong to a religious denomination in Norway belongs to Christianity, and also outside of The Norwegian Church, the majority belongs to a Christian assembly and there is a huge variety of them (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2016b), it is natural with categories which might identify with this. It also has to do with narrowing the question in a reasonable way. In secular worldviews, there are several possible categories and it might be possible that I should have had more than two. There are trends in the society which are shifting from time to time, like

Pantheism, Naturalism, and Postmodern life philosophy (Dahle, 2015), but these words are defined in a society context more than a personal context and would probably need to be explained. I needed to use words and terms that were recognizable for the respondents.

The same issue concerns alternative worldviews like the New Age. The reason for choosing holistic worldviews and not New Age has to do with several points. The holistic worldview has a community and are members of The Council for Religious and Life Stance Communities in Norway (Tro og livssyn, 2017). New Age is also a designation which was more common in the 80s and later it changed to the *alternative movement*. It also seems like the holistic definition gather different New Age alternatives into a more structured worldview (Winje, 2016).

Q. 7. This question asks if there is any need for more religious literacy in the media. This means that we will not get an answer of why the respondents thinks it is needed or not, just if it is needed.

Qs. 10 - 11. Questions about abortion of a healthy twin and about euthanasia might for some be difficult to answer and some might say *it depends*. One respondent said there could be situations where one would agree on abortion, for example if the mother was ill. As this is a question about abortion of one of two twins, that objection doesn't seem very relevant. Nevertheless, because of the sensitivity of the question I added in parenthesis the possibility of choosing «Somewhat Agree» or «Somewhat Important» as answer alternatives for those who believe it sometimes would be correct.

Q. 13. To what extent do you agree on the rights for same-sex couples in the new Marriage Law? A respondent made me aware of the possibility of error in the responses on this question. Someone might think the rights are not good enough and tend to disagree, but still be positive to same gender rights, while another person might cross off on «Disagree» because of an overall disagreement on same gender rights. This possible error would probably occur on the negative side of the scale. My thoughts were that the law gives same gender couples several new rights, and that those who agree, do so because they think this is good, and that they wouldn't disagree because it is not good enough.

Qs. 17 - 18. These two questions about refugees and immigration balance each other with focusing on the refugee as a problem in one question and as a resource in the other. In

addition, there are commentary fields to explain. This is necessary to explain why immigration and more refugees is a resource or a problem. The challenges can be put on society, the system or the refugee, so this is an important distinction. *If the respondent does not comment and explain, we will not get the reason for the problem or the resource. This is a possible error in these answers,* but still, it will measure an attitude towards seeing immigrations and refugees as a problem or a resource.

Q. 19. To what extent do you believe the immigration and refugees policy is too strict?

One test respondent meant this was a loaded question; that's why I added the information in the parentheses where I explain that the question was asked this way because of the critique towards the Minister of Refugees and Immigration and the government's policy on this topic at the time of doing this survey.

Q. 21 To what extent does the journalist believe personal worldviews influence the work?

This question refers to Research Question Two and the answers will be compared with WJS. I tried therefore to make the scale as similar as possible to the one in WJS. There are only small differences like the word *extremely*. This is replaced by «Very Much» as explained under the scale question.

Q. 22. If you believe your worldview influences your work in some degree to a greater extent, in what way does it influence the most? This question is also connected to Research Question Number Two. I chose to use multiple alternative choices instead of open text because of the importance of this particular question; however, there is one alternative which opens up for free text. In this way, I don't limit the possible influential alternatives.

Q. 23. The question is formed out of the intention of one of Audgunn Oltedal's surveys which explores objectivity and transparency (Oltedal, 2012). The idea is to measure credibility and trustworthiness up against transparency of one's own worldview. I wanted to compare her results with the findings of this survey. Oltedal's survey is different when it comes to methods used, but it will anyway be interesting to look at some tendencies. The question has three alternatives and one possible error is the third alternative which has two conditions in one question. This is a weakness because you need to agree on both to answer (Østbye et al., 2002). I was aware of this but had to compromise to be able to compare with Oltedal's survey. On the other hand, if you see all three options together it might give more clarity. A slightly adjustment of the text in option three, is done in agreement with Oltedal.

Some of the methodological challenges and weaknesses that are pointed to in this chapter are important to bear in mind when discussing the findings in the next chapter.

Chapter 4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Worldviews in the Norwegian Newsroom

The findings from the quantitative survey will be presented and discussed in this section. I will divide this chapter into two main sections pertaining to the two research questions. Within each section, I will structure it accordingly to the topics in the survey, to make it easy to study together with the questionnaire and the methodology chapter, as needed. I will discuss the findings where they are relevant, but also after each section. I found this to be the most effective and practical way in dealing with this kind of survey. My findings will be presented in the light of the theory and research discussed in the literature review.

The finding was conducted among 136 respondents who answered the survey. Not everyone answered all the questions, but on average, 128 answered. Some questions should only be answered under certain prerequisites. The number of answers were higher in the beginning of the survey; approximately 10% fell off on the last part dealing with influence and objectivity. The reasons might be that they didn't want to answer it, didn't find it important, or just didn't have the time. The 25 questions were quite challenging and required some amount of reflection, so it is possible that some persons found it too time-consuming to answer while they probably were at work.

As this survey was done anonymously there are few demographic parameters, only that of gender and age.

Gender:

49 % women

51% men

Age:

The average age in each media house was quite similar. They varied from 36 years to 52 years. The oldest group average was found among the editors and commentators. The overall age average was 43 years of age.

4.1 Worldviews and Values Among Norwegian Journalists (RQ 1.)

The first research question addresses worldviews and values in the Norwegian newsroom.

4.1.1 Religious and Secular Worldviews.

What worldviews do we find among Norwegian journalists and how important are they for the respondent? Do we find beliefs in the spiritual sphere among Norwegian journalists and do they believe there is a need for more religious literacy? These are questions presented and discussed under this section.

Qs. 3 – 6. Questions about Faith and Worldviews, Belonging and Believing.

134 journalists responded to the question on which worldview best describes their belief system. A total of 64% of the journalists in the mainstream media houses, located in central city areas, describe their worldview as secular humanism, either atheistic or agnostic. Only Christianity is represented among the world's religions. But it's worth noting that almost 7 % didn't want to define their worldview. So therefore, we don't know what worldviews they represent. 26 % describe their worldview as Christian, belonging mainly to The Norwegian Church (Dnk). Less than 1 % belongs to an alternative spiritual direction, a holistic belief. Another 2% didn't find their worldview described, as indicated by their choice of «Other». Out of these numbers there is little doubt that the majority represent a secular worldview. See table 3 and figure 1.

Table 3. Belonging to worldviews.

Worldview survey.		
Which one of the following categories describes your worldview best? (Secular worlviews ar included.)		
AnswerOptions	ResponsePercent	ResponseCount
I do not want to define my faith/worldview.	6,7%	9
Secular humanism - Agnostic.	21,6%	29
Secular humanism - Atheist.	42,5%	57
Holist/holism.	0,8%	1
Christian- The Norwegian Church (Dnk).	23,1%	31
Christian - Protestant churches and assemblies outside Dnk -incl. pentacostals.	2,2%	3
Christian - The Roman Catholic Church.	0,8%	1
Christian - The Orthodox Church-Russian, Greek, others.	0,0%	0
Jew.	0,0%	0
Muslim.	0,0%	0
Hindu.	0,0%	0
Buddhist.	0,0%	0
Other.	2,2%	3
	<i>AnsweredQuestion</i>	134
	<i>SkippedQuestion</i>	2

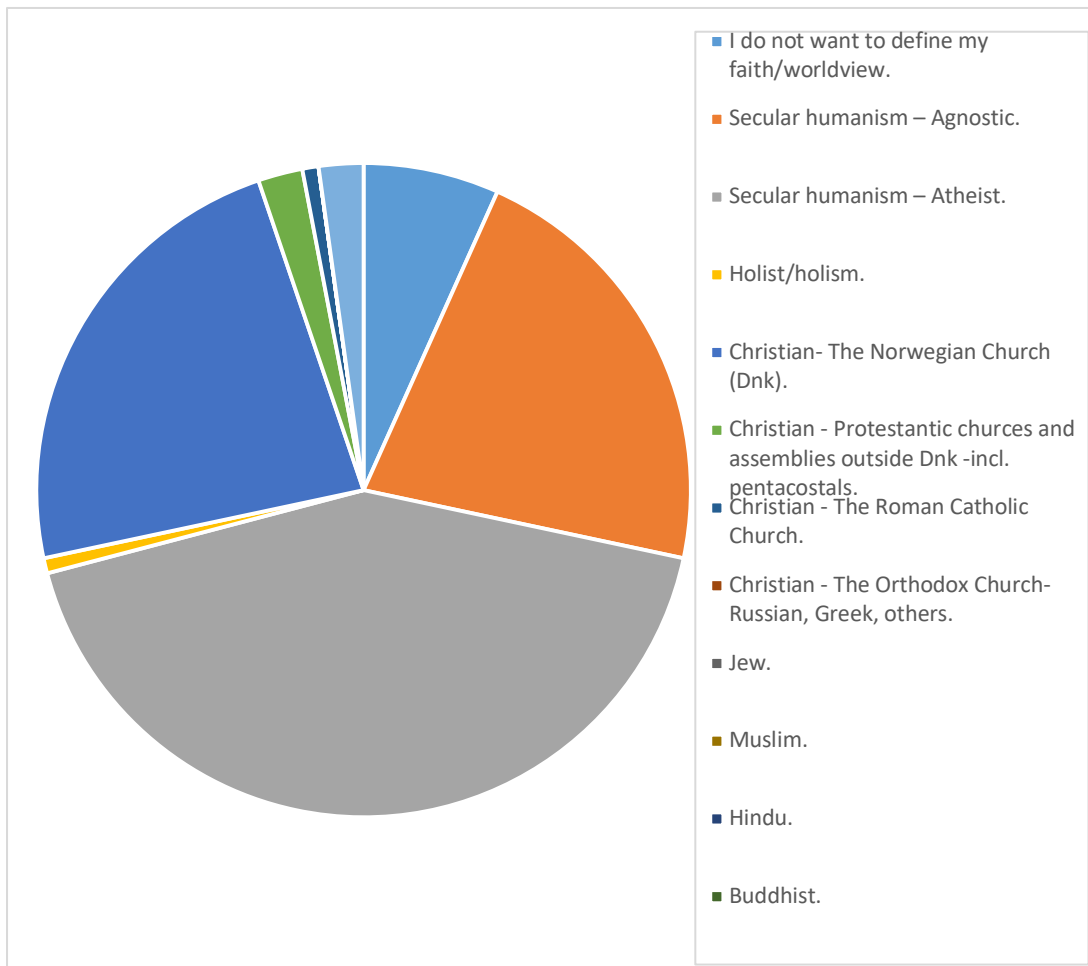


Figure 1. Worldviews of Norwegian Journalists in mainstream media.

Compared with numbers from the pilot study of WJS, conducted between 2007 – 2011 we find that there are no Nordic countries which have been asked those questions. The geographically closest countries will be Germany, Austria and Switzerland, marked with red in table 1, chapter two.

Germany has 51% journalists which define themselves connected to a religion or denomination in a Christian tradition. Austria has 68 % and Switzerland 53%. Only Buddhism is represented in addition to Christianity, in one of the countries (Worlds of Journalism, 2016c)¹¹. The study shows a higher number of journalists that are connected to the Christian faith, in these specific countries, compared to Norwegian journalists (26%). If we compare with the United States in the same survey, we see that Norway still has fewer journalists that have affinity with or as belonging to Christianity. 48% of American

¹¹ This table was received on a Html file from the Norwegian professor, Jan Erik Hovden, who works with the WJS study. Table 1 and 2 in chapter two shows the same numbers as the CSV file in this reference.

journalists say they belong to a Christian church or assembly (table 1, chapter two). In addition, they have Buddhists and Jews among the respondents (Worlds of Journalism, 2016c).

As discussed in the literature, just asking what category of religion or denomination a person identifies with, is not enough to measure faith, according to the sociology of religion. One also needs to measure *behaving* and *believing* to measure faith (Furseth, 2015). Almost all the journalists answered the question about the importance of their worldview and the importance of fellowship with others who share their worldview. We will first look at these numbers and then give more attention to the group of 26% that say their worldview is best described as belonging to Dnk or other Christian assemblies. Approximately 28% (37 out of 133) of the journalist find their faith quite important or very important (table 4). The response rate indicates that also those with a secular humanistic worldview answered this question.

Table 4. How important is your worldview?

Worldview survey.							
How important is your worldview for you?							
AnswerOptions	Not important at all	Little impotant	Somewhat important	Quite important	Very important	RatingAverage	ResponseCount
	24	44	28	21	16	2,70	133
						<i>AnsweredQuestion</i>	133
						<i>SkippedQuestion</i>	3

If we compare this with WJS' pilot study (table 2, chapter two.)¹², we see that for the two top categories, which indicate a higher level of importance, 18% of the Germans believe it is very or extremely important. In Austria, 17% finds it very or extremely important. In Switzerland, 15 % chose the same two categories. It is necessary to mention that the two top categories in WJS and in this study, have not used the exact same categorization. This is explained in the chapter of methodology, but they are both levels 4 and 5, the two topmost levels. The numbers for the importance of faith are much lower than the numbers of those belonging to a denomination (table 1, chapter two), (Worlds of Journalism, 2016c). This might have several explanations. It might be because of different headings of the top levels, or the higher number of respondents. As indicated, there are more similarities in level 3, «Somewhat

¹² This table was received on a Html file from the Norwegian professor, Jan Erik Hovden, who works with the WJS study. Table 1 and 2 in chapter two shows the same numbers as the CSV file in this reference.

important». But this also might indicate that the high level of belonging in the other European countries might have to do with tradition, more that of personal faith. The interesting thing is that the United States has 35% who responded that their faith is important. This indicates a more active or personal faith among American journalists, compared to Norway and the other European countries mentioned. This is in line with the history of Christian journalists in the American media, that went from being marginal several decades ago to becoming mainstream around the millennium (Schmalzbauer, 2003).

There are no other categories to compare with in WJS, other than the importance of religion. In this survey, among Norwegian journalists, I have used several more questions to determine the level of personal faith. Approximately 13% of the 134 Norwegian journalists say that fellowship with fellow believers is quite or very important to them (table 5). Included in this number are also some of those who define themselves with a secular worldview, but they are far less in number than those found in the group belonging to Dnk and other Christian assemblies.

Table 5. Importance of Fellowship.

Worldview survey								
How important is fellowship with others who share your worldview?								
AnswerOptions	Not important at all	Not so important	Somewhat important	Quite important	Very important	Don't know	RatingAverage	ResponseCount
	54	51	12	10	7	0	1,99	134
							AnsweredQuestion	134
							SkippedQuestion	2

If we look closer at the group of 26% (35 persons), who say Christianity describes their worldview best, and cross-tabulate those with the specific answers on the importance of their worldview and belief in a Christian definition of God, we find that 37% of those say that their worldview is important. 17% say fellowship with fellow believers is important, and 57% believe in a Christian doctrine of *God*. This means that not all of the 26% who say they feel Christianity describes their worldview best, support a Christian definition of God, find their worldview important or need fellowship with others who share their worldview. We also note that there are very few believers who adhere to traditional Christian dogmas such as hell and sin. More positive dogmas such as a life after death, heaven and prayer are supported by more believers (figure 2). Thus, it is likely that less than the 26% of those who define their belonging to the Norwegian Church or other Christian assemblies fit in with the more traditional understanding of a Christian faith according to common ways of measuring faith within the sociology of religion (Furseth, 2015). However, it should also be noted that

the numbers are relatively small and the questions meant to measure behaving and believing are too few to draw absolute conclusions.

Spirituality.

Overall, the score on what journalists believe is seen in figure 2 which shows a high level of belief in something divine among the 63 journalists that answered this question. This is more than those who say they belong to a Christian denomination. One might expect that those with a secular humanistic worldview did not believe in any of these spiritual terms, but there were several of them that believed in something divine. This could indicate that there are far more journalists who might place value on spiritual or religious topics than those who have a personal faith connected to a religion.

The indications that there are more people believing in something divine than the definition of the Christian God, is also what is found in the huge survey on religions in 2008, among the general populace (Taule, 2014). Those findings indicate a clear decline in those who believe in a clear definition of God, but those who believe in something divine has remained quite stable through the years. This could indicate two things, either a more liberal kind of faith or that people still believe in something spiritual, but not connected to a specific religion, according to Taule (2014).

The findings in this survey might indicate both. I argue for this because there are far more journalists who believe in the Christian God, than in hell and sin, but do say their faith and fellowship is quite or very important. Traditionally, these terms have been seen as important to a conservative Christian belief. Still, the combination of the other elements indicates a Christian belief. The numbers are few and the findings not so prominent, therefore, they are only indications. The other elements indicate a high level of spirituality and belief in something divine, independent of a Christian worldview, even among some of those holding to a secular humanistic worldview.

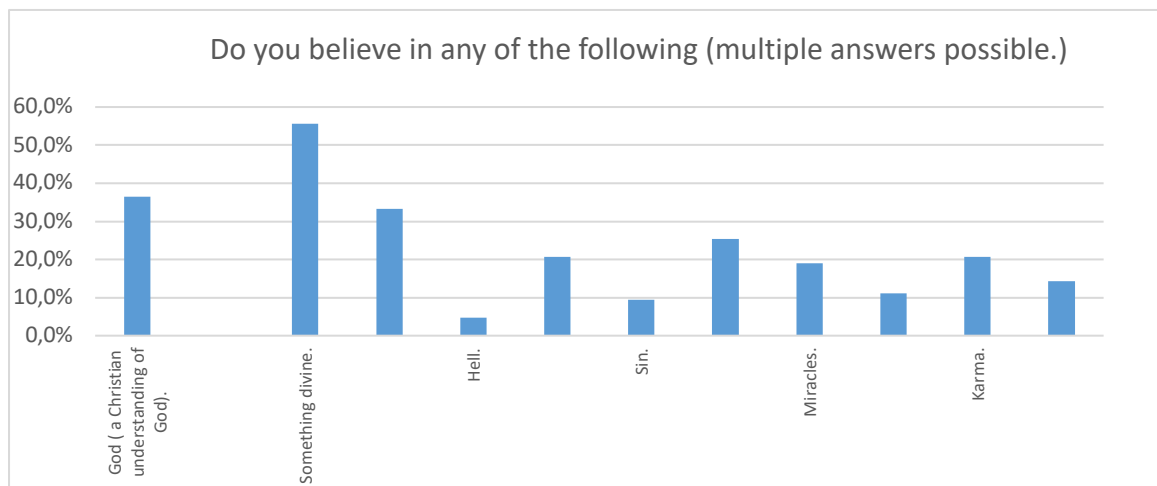


Figure 2. Do you believe in any of the following? Total answered questions 63.

Summed up, it appears that the Norwegian journalist are more secularised than several of their counterparts in the other European countries as represented in the WJS pilot study. However, does this mean that the Norwegian journalist belong to and work within a society which is secularized, and is merely a reflection of the population? The Norwegian society has, by many, been characterized as more and more secularized (Taule, 2014). But this idea is weakened as an argument alone (Botvar, 2010) and (Taule, 2014). Schmidt (2010) confirms this view and says Norway is becoming a more religious and pluralized society when you look into the different criteria for defining pluralism or secularization in a society. So even though The Norwegian Church has had a decline in members (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2016a) and there is an increase in membership for nonreligious, worldviews societies (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2016b), Norway is still quite religious measured in the number of members for religious communities. One possible explanation for this might be immigration and refugees (Eikje, 2016), which predominantly consists of Muslims and Roman Catholics. This picture is not reflected among the journalists in this survey.

A Global Profile?

If we compare worldview, age and gender with the profile of the global journalist of David Weaver and Lars Willnat (2012) it matches to a certain degree. The average global journalist is likely to be male, white and slightly older than in previous surveys, he is also less likely to be Protestant (Willnat & Weaver, 2012). The average age of Norwegian journalists in all media houses explored are 43 years, but the age average differs between 36 and 52 in the different media houses. The ratio between gender are slightly in favour of men. The majority of journalists are either atheists or agnostics. Updated statistics on the numbers of journalists

with a multicultural background in the Norwegian media houses are hard to find, also in the Norwegian Media Businesses' Association (MBL). In 2004, 2% of the journalists in Oslo had immigrant background (Ansari, 2004).

Could This Picture Change?

We have seen that Norway, despite its secularity and decline in members of The Norwegian Church (Dnk) (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2016a), is still quite religious, measured in members of religious communities. Part of this explanation, as discussed, is immigration and refugees (Eikje, 2016). It is not unlikely that the Norwegian Newsroom will reflect this in the future, but the findings in this survey do not indicate that there has been an increase of Muslims and Catholics even though there has been an increase in the wider society in general. The same tendency is found in Weaver and Willnat's (2012) studies - that the percentage of journalists from a minority ethnicity is still low in the majority of the countries that reported a figure on this question. Even in the United States where the ethnicity is quite diverse, there is a low representation of ethnical minorities in the newsroom.

It is also interesting in this perspective to look at the journey of Christian journalists in the United States. The number of Catholic and Evangelical Christians journalists went from being marginal in the 1940s-50s to being mainstream in the media around the year 2000. In the 1980s and 1990s the religious groups in the United States challenged the idea of the exclusion of religion from the public sphere (Schmalzbauer, 2003). It was both a class journey and a consciousness on building a sub-cultural institution from within according to Schmalzbauer. By so doing they have contributed to new research and debate in a positive way, says Schmalzbauer. Today, one can see that the Christian groups have made important contributions to American public life (Schmalzbauer, 2003).

Is it possible that something similar could happen in Norway? We don't know about the media, but according to Ingrid Vik (2015), there is a conservative Christian movement in the other fields of society. Vik says they used to have their main platform in the prayer houses, but are now stepping into the public square in a more visible way, as she stated in the book «Guds lobby» (God's Lobbyists). The American media history shows that there is a possibility that the diversity of worldviews in the media can change over time, but that the demographic changes in the general population has shown less probability to influence the newsrooms.

A Lack of Religious Literacy.

It is interesting to ask Norwegian journalists if they believe there is a need for more knowledge on religious literacy. This might indicate how they view the importance of the topic.

Q.7. Is there a need of more knowledge about faith and worldviews in the Norwegian media in general?

134 journalists answered this question. 31% believe there is quite a lot or very much need of more knowledge on faith and worldviews, or religious literacy. In addition, almost 43% believes some knowledge is needed. The rating average is 3.14 of 5 possible, where 5 is «Very much need». This indicates a level just over «Some need». See table 6.

Table 6. A need for more religious literacy?

Worldview survey.								
Is there a need of more religious literacy in the Norwegian media in general?								
AnswerOptions	Not at all	Not so much	Some	Quite a need	Very much need	I don't know	RatingAverage	ResponseCount
	6	23	57	29	12	7	3,14	134
							<i>AnsweredQuestion</i>	134
							<i>SkippedQuestion</i>	0

Cross-tabulation shows that here are a higher percentage among those who say they belong to Dnk or another Christian assembly that believes there is quite a lot or very much need for religious literacy (55%). Among those with a secular humanistic worldview, 28% says the same. But there are some interesting differences between media houses. One media house where almost 100% define themselves as secular humanists, there was 42% who believed there were quite a lot, or very much need, for religious literacy. So, the observation of this need is not only defined among the religious. The need for more religious literacy is also something which has been addressed and discussed in the media. Professor Trygve Wyller points to the need for knowing more about the Christian heritage, both when encountering Islam in the public debate, but also be able to understand how it is intervened with politics (Sørheim, 2009). This awareness is also in the journalism industry in general, and resulted in the book «Cross My Heart», by Hilde Kristin Dahlstrøm at Gimlekollen University College. Dahlstrøm says a textbook on the topic of worldviews was requested from the journalism

industry itself (Tronstad, 2015). This will be discussed more under the headline of *Media Coverage* at the end of this chapter.

4.1.2. Values and Attitudes.

Questions of life and death, human dignity, same gender rights, polygamy and questions on whether refugee and immigration is seen as a problem or as a resource will be addressed in this section. What values and attitudes do we find on these topics among Norwegian journalists?

Life and Death.

Q.9. In your opinion, when is the fetus ascribed with human dignity?

This question was answered by 129 journalists. Among the choices available, (see figure 3) the majority of journalists (36%) say that the fetus's dignity as a human begins when it can survive outside of the womb, with or without help. 30% responded that it begins at Week 12, the limit for abortion in Norway. 4% says it begins at conception and approximately 8% responded when the heart begins to beat, that is Week Three. 22% say they don't know, which might indicate that this is a difficult question to answer.

The result on this topic shows a majority that believe that *human dignity* can be ascribed the fetus after the abortion limit or when it results in birth. An interesting follow-up question would be if the journalist's perception of when a fetus is human would change if the abortion limit changes. Very few journalists believe that human dignity begins at conception.

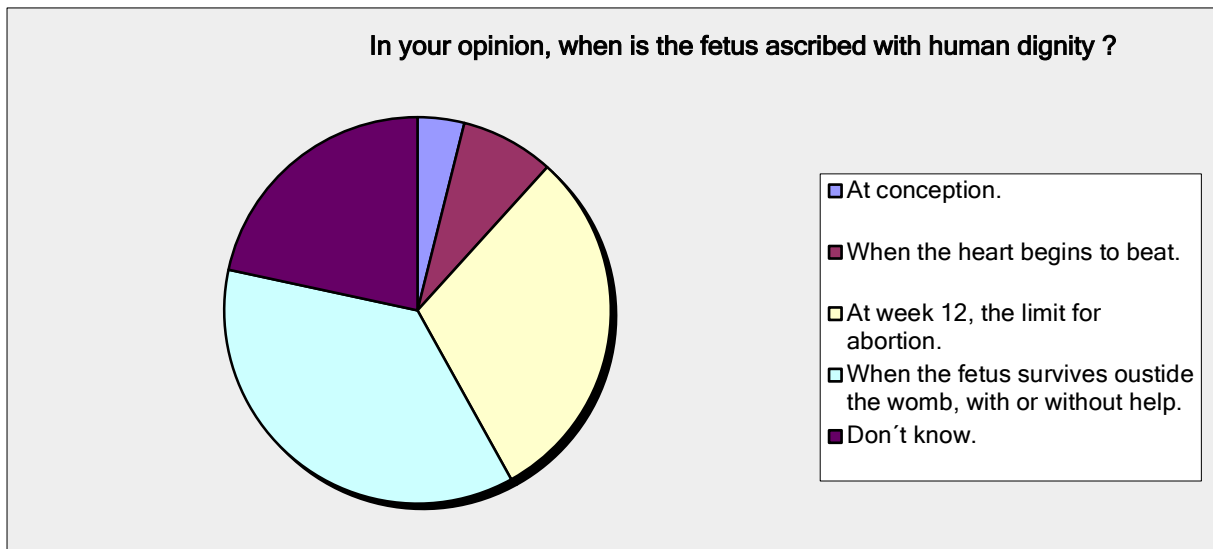


Figure 3. In your opinion, when is the fetus ascribed with human dignity?

Q.10. What is your opinion on the possibility to abort a healthy twin?

The question about abortion of a healthy twin was answered by 129 journalists.

Approximately 25% did not agree at all in this possibility. 25% said they somewhat agree, which might indicate that those who chose this option sometimes believes it could be right, as this is suggested in the questionnaire. If we add together those options from somewhat agree to very much agree, there were a total of 42% who degree to some extent. The rating average is 2.46 of 5, where 5 is « Very much agree». This indicates a level between «Not so agree» to «Somewhat gree».

The result on this topic is not so clear to one side or the other. 42 % do believe it is sometimes right, or agree quite or very much on the possibility of abortion of a healthy twin. But 49% do not so agree, or not agree at all. See table 7.

Table 7. The possibility of abortion of a healthy twin.

Worldview survey.									
What do you mean about the possibility to take abortion of one healthy twin? (If you sometimes believe its right, you might choose «Somewhat agree»)									
AnswerOptions	Do not agree at all	Do not so much agree	Do somewhat agree	Do quite much agree	Do very much agree	Don't know	RatingAverage	ResponseCount	
	32	31	32	12	10	12	2,46	129	
								AnsweredQuestion	129
								SkippedQuestion	7

Q.11. How important do you believe it is to open up for euthanasia in Norway?

This question was answered by 130 journalists and the majority (37%) answered that it is somewhat important to allow euthanasia in Norway. In addition, 34% answered quite or very much important that this should be an option in Norway. This means that 71% believes that it could be right sometimes. 25% said it is not very important or not important at all. The rating average is 3.1 of 5, where 5 is «Very much important». This indicates a level just above «Somewhat important».

The question about euthanasia shows that the majority of journalists believes that euthanasia sometimes is right and are positive to allow this in Norway. See table 8.

In the questions about life and death issues, the value of a human is a central issue. According to Aadnanes, questions like, *What is a human being?* and *Is there a life after death?* are relevant to ask within the value aspect, and is a part of our worldview. The same pertains to questions like *What is good, correct and beautiful?* (Aadnanes, 2012). It is therefore possible to assume that the result from the answers of these ethical and value-based questions reflects worldview. Other scholars also confirm that what we value is a part of our worldview (Dahl, 2001), (Day, 2006).

Table 8. How important is it to open up for euthanasia?

Worldview survey.								
How important do you believe it is to open up for euthanasia in Norway?								
AnswerOptions	Not important at all	Not so important	Somewhat important	Quite important	Very important	Don't know	RatingAverage	ResponseCount
	13	19	48	30	14	6	3,10	130
							AnsweredQuestion	13+
							SkippedQuestion	6

Gender, Marriage and Family.

Q.13. How much do you agree on the rights for same gender couples in the new Marriage Law?

This question was answered by 126 journalists. The Marriage Law gives the right for same gender couples to marry, and provide new and extended rights on topics such as adoption and assisted fertilization (Gunnarsen, 2009). This question was the one with the highest level of agreement upon. 88% of the journalists agrees quite or very much on the rights for same gender couples in the new marriage law. The rating average was 4.71 of 5, which indicates a level close to «Very much agree. See Table 9.

A clear majority of journalists are open towards change and more rights for the individual when it comes to same gender couples. See Table 9.

Table 9. Rights for same gender couples.

Worldview survey.

How much do you agree on the rights for same gender couples in the new marriage law?								
AnswerOptions	Do not agree at all	Do not so much agree	Do somewhat agree	Do quite much agree	Do very much agree	Don't know	RatingAverage	ResponseCount
	3	1	5	10	101	6	4,71	126
							AnsweredQuestion	126
							SkippedQuestion	10

Q.14. What is your opinion on opening for more than two in a marriage (polygamy)?

This question was answered by 127 journalists and is the question where most tends to disagree. More than half of the journalists (54%) do not agree at all in opening for more than two in a marriage. The rating average was 1.64 of 5, where 5 is «Very much agree». This indicates a level between «Do not agree at all» to «Do not so much agree».

It is interesting to note that the topic on polygamy is the topic where most journalists tend to be most restrictive and do not agree at all (Table 10). One explanation might be that this is a relatively new topic in the public debate and therefore considered more radical. A follow-up question could clarify this and also reveal if the journalist believes his or her opinion might change in the future. After all, several of the other topics have been debated for some time, and some for many years, and probably most of them were radical at some point. This would have been interesting to know and shows some of the limits with a quantitative survey.

Table 10. Question on polygamy.

Worldview survey.

What is your opinion on opening for more than two in a marriage (polygamy)?								
AnswerOptions	Do not agree at all	Do not so much agree	Do somewhat agree	Do quite much agree	Do very much agree	Don't know	RatingAverage	ResponseCount
	69	24	10	5	3	16	1,64	127
							AnsweredQuestion	127
							SkippedQuestion	9

Q.15. Do singles have the right to assisted fertilization?

This question was answered by 127 journalists and together with the question about human dignity, was the two questions with the highest percentage of «Don't know» (19%), which

indicates it might be a challenging question, or that the respondents haven't thought it through.

The pie shows that there is a high level of agreement on the rights for singles to have assisted fertilization (68%). See Figure 4.

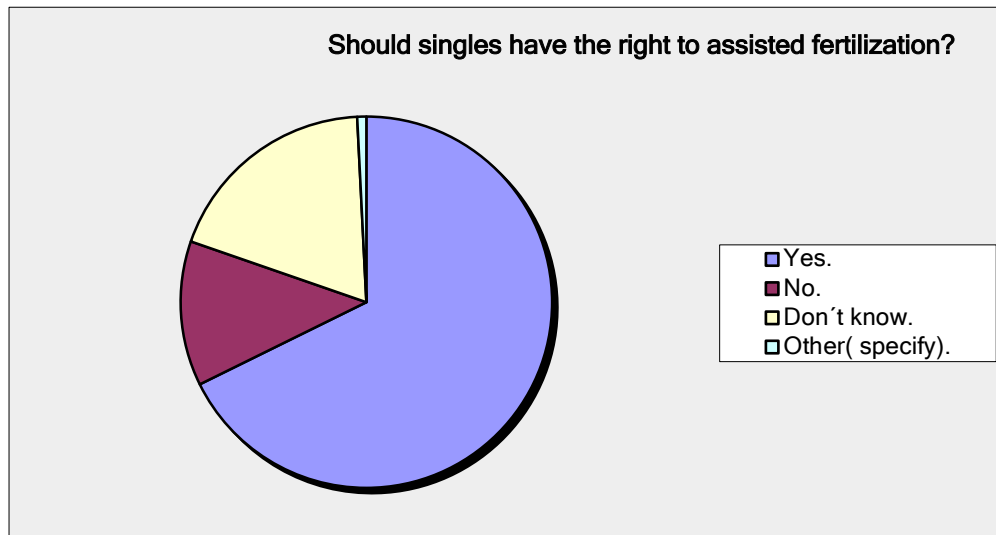


Figure 4. Should singles have the right to assisted fertilization?

Immigration and Refugees.

Q.17. *Could an increased level of immigration and refugees become a problem for Norway?*

126 journalists answered this question. 26% believes it could be quite or very much a problem. 36% believes it won't be too much of a problem, or a problem at all. The option/level for the majority of the answers (36%) indicates that it might be some problem. The rating average was 2.94 of 5, where 5 is «A very big problem». This is almost at the level of «Some problem».

The journalists placed the problem mainly on integration and the responsibility is placed both on the state and the society. But there are also some who comment on the challenge of cultural differences, and the number and timespan, was also mentioned as important factors for how successful integration would be. There were not many comments, but here are some of the typical content of the comments.

- *The number is not the problem, but how they are given opportunities to prosper.*

- *It all depends on integration. The lack of acceptance among Norwegians will be a greater problem than the number of refugees.*
- *Increasing number of people who need welfare.*
- *Huge cultural differences, segregation and lack of integration.*
- *It will demand more of Norwegian society and an open discussion is needed to make good choices.*
- *It will challenge the open, liberal society.*

Q.18. *Could an increased level of immigration and refugees become a resource for Norway?*

125 answered this question. 68% believe an increased number of immigration and refugees could be a resource for Norway. The rating average is 3.89 of 5, where 5 is « A very big resource». This indicates a level close to «Quite much» a resource.

The responses to the two questions on immigration/refugees, a problem or a resource, show that the majority sees this as a resource. The resource is mainly due to cultural richness and diversity, and some, on labour. Here are some of the comments.

- *Immigration could very well become a resource but it would take time.*
- *New impulses, more labour, more hands in the care professions.*
- *More needs to be done so that the refugees and immigrants can use their potential and also be treated properly.*
- *The question of resource or problem is irrelevant. We receive refugees because it's a good human and solidary deed.*
- *Come on in! We need more cultural diversity among narrow-minded Norwegians.*

The question invites a look at consequences. The comments also reflect this, but one comment stood out: « The question of resource or problem is irrelevant. We receive refugees because it's a good human and solidary deed». This person jumps right into a deontology perspective, which is the duty or rule perspective. As mentioned in the chapter on theory, this is where we find the proximity ethics (inspired by Levinas), where the relationship between you and I are fundamental, and the idea of the responsibility never lies on the other (Brurås, 2009). The question doesn't invite one to take stand, if it is right or wrong, so we cannot conclude on that for the other respondents.

Q.19. *Is the refugee and immigration policy too strict?*

126 answered this question. 34% believes that the refugee and immigration policy is a little too strict, and a total of 42% believes it is a great deal, or very much too strict. The rating average is 3.27 of 5, where 5 is « Very strict». This indicates a level above «A little too strict». In this case the rating average seems to show a somewhat different picture than the percentage of response count, as 76% believes that the policy is a little too strict to very strict. See Table 11.

The answers reveal that journalists see the refugee/immigration policy too strict and that those who come here as refugees or immigrants will be more a resource than a problem. But the answers also indicate an awareness of problems.

Table 11. Is the refugee and immigration policy too strict?

Worldview survey. Is the refugee and immigration policy too strict?

Is the refugee and immigration policy too strict? The question is asked this way because of the critique towards the government's refugee policy.									
AnswerOptions	Not too strict at all	Not too strict	A little too strict	Quite too strict	Very much too strict	Don't know	RatingAverage	ResponseCount	
	7	21	43	37	16	2	3,27	126	
								<i>AnsweredQuestion</i>	126
								<i>SkippedQuestion</i>	10

4.1.3 Comparing Worldviews and Media Houses.

When cross-tabulating the journalists with a secular humanistic worldview with value questions and the group that say they belong to Dnk and other Christian assemblies with the same questions, there were only minor differences. There could be several explanations to this, for example a more liberal stand among those with a Christian worldview or that less than the 26 % of those who define their belonging to the Norwegian Church or other Christian assemblies fit in with the more traditional understanding of a Christian faith according to common ways of measuring faith within the sociology of religion (Furseth, 2015). However, as discussed earlier the numbers are relatively small and the questions meant to measure behaving and believing are too few to draw absolute conclusions. To have more certain results on the differences between a Christian worldview and secular humanism for example, other approaches would be needed. Qualitative interviews or a comparative study between mainstream media and the Christian media houses could be a possible approach. This thesis focuses on how diverse or similar the journalists providing the media audience with everyday news are when it comes to their worldviews.

When studying the answers from the value questions for each media house there are very little diversity in the rating average of each value question, which means that there is a similarity in the answer of each question. The variations are on the decimals. The only question in this section with some diversity between the media houses was question 15 about assisted fertilization for singles. There was a strong agreement on yes from an overall perspective, also within each media house, but the variations were from 55% to 77%. Viewing this in the theories of Bourdieu (1985) and the research of Hovden (2008) which shows a diverse inherited background among journalists in the different national media houses, one might think there would be more diversity in worldviews and answers to value questions between the media houses, but there wasn't. It might be that a cross-tabulating between age, gender and education would reveal bigger differences. An average, as conducted in this study, might just be too wide. In this survey, such cross-tabulating on demography is not possible of several reasons, anonymity being one. But it might be that worldviews, including values, are a more complex composition within the field of social theory than just looking at the habitus. How worldviews come together are outside of this discussion, but because Hovden (2008) places the social and cultural heritage as an important influential factor on the ideas and priorities undertaken in the newsroom, it's relevant to mention. But as he says, it's not a factor operating on its own. Even though there is a diversity on social habitus among journalists in media houses, it doesn't change the picture of a majority which is quite homogenous when it comes to values and attitudes on the topics chosen.

4.1.4 When Worldviews Meet.

When it comes to religious or non-religious worldviews, we find a clear secular humanistic worldview among Norwegian journalists. Though the value questions show opinions and attitudes through the whole spectre throughout all the questions, nevertheless several answers clearly indicate a dominance to one side. It's interesting to view the findings of worldviews and values in the framework of intercultural theory and the terms *ethnocentrism* and *cultural relativism*. These terms are explained in the theory chapter.

A relativistic perspective where everything is relative and one can defend actions if they are reasonable for those who put them in action (Dahl, 2001), might be a difficult point for journalism because journalists seek to be truthful. But a relativistic perspective opens up for curiosity, according to Dahl (2001). It might be that this is even more important when there is a homogeneity in worldviews among journalists, as seen in these findings.

What is interesting in the framework of this thesis is when there are worldviews or value questions with a clear majority on some of the views and standpoints. For example: what does it mean for the diversity of topics and voices in journalism when the majority of journalists believe that the fetus is ascribed with human dignity after the abortion limit, or as late as birth? Or that 88% of the journalists surveyed agree *quite* or *very* much on the rights for same gender couples in the new marriage law, and what voices or stories might lack attention when 68% believe singles should have the right to assisted fertilization? And what about the topic of polygamy, which is a very new topic in the public debate; there was also a majority view among journalists, but for this question, the journalists were more restrictive, as we saw. These findings also raise another question; if all voices shall be heard, also those with a minority numbers of followers. This is another major topic, not to be discussed here, but one point to mention is that the codes of ethics emphasizes the responsibility of the press to let different views be expressed (Presse, 2016).

Øyvind Dahl makes a point of how easy we forget about how influenced we are by our own culture (Dahl, 2001). Having in mind the social control in the newsroom (Breed, 1955) and the «Gatekeeper» (White, 1950), could it be that journalists might forget how influenced they are of their own news culture and worldviews?

It is also worth looking at these results in light of the significant increase of *interpretive* or *meaning journalism* the last years (Salgado & Strömbäck, 2012), (Mathisen et al., 2016). If the press agrees on certain debated topics, where do we get the other perspectives? And as Walter Lippmann argues, we look for our own echo chambers. He meant that was part of the reason our opinions seldom change. He also uses his theories in the newsroom and said that if you have the editor's pattern in your mind, you will look for the facts that confirm that view and only vaguely those that contradict them (Lippmann, 1922).

The theory discussed in this section is also interesting when numbers from WJS show that more than 80% of Norwegian journalists believe one of their most important roles is to educate the audience, among the other roles such as reporting things as they are (Worlds of Journalism, 2016a). We don't know exactly what journalists mean by *educating* but nevertheless, it's an aspect worth mentioning. On the other hand, we have anthropologist Marilyn Strathern (1997), who says that our meanings are not static, they change. Whether you fight for more freedom or defend traditions, the world is always on the move, she says.

We will also see in the next section when discussing worldviews and influence that there are research and scholars who believe that professionalism trumps personal preferences, at least when it comes to political influence.

The perspective of Emanuel Levinas and the aspect of proximity ethics might serve journalism in a fruitful way when discussing the meeting between worldviews and the lack of diversity in the newsroom. In the concept of «The Other», Levinas says when we meet the other, we meet ourselves (Kapuściński, 2008). With this perspective, a journalist would find the responsibility for the other within him or herself and not be responsible towards a system or an institution. Audgunn Oltedal says that the media's responsibility is also to show the other even when the other is one we don't like or the one who has done wrong (Oltedal, 2001). Maybe one could also add, «or the one who has a different view» which matches the journalist's obligation to let different voices be heard (Presse, 2016). On the other hand, Brurås (2009) claims that proximity ethics is quite a radical perspective compared to the traditional ethical frames within journalism. He says the challenge comes when looking at the main purpose of the media, which is not to focus on the one, or «The other», but the third, he says. Journalism and mass communication has primarily a responsibility towards society as a group (Brurås, 2009).

After the coverage of the American presidential campaign the assistant secretary general of the Editors' Union, Reidun Kjelling Nybø (2016), says that journalists need to ask themselves critical questions and look at their use of sources, among other things. She says almost the same thing as what Dahl and Lippmann point to - the challenge of not being able to see it from the other's viewpoint. If we assume that our understanding is universal we might come to misinterpret our surroundings (Dahl, 2001)

The answer to several of the questions raised in this section is of course only interesting in the light of the theories on objectivity and influence. What journalists believe is not interesting in itself; it only has importance if one's worldview influences the work in some way or another. This will be discussed together with the findings in the last section, before the conclusion.

4.2. Worldviews and Influence. (RQ2.)

The second research question addresses the personal element of worldviews, when it comes to influence in the news process and how it might influence.

4.2.1 Worldviews and Journalism.

What do journalists believe themselves when it comes to the topic of influence and transparency? The answers to these questions will be presented and discussed under this section.

Q.21. To what extent do you believe your worldview (political, faith and values) influences your journalistic work?

121 answered this question and the majority (44%) said that they believe their worldview influences them to some extent. 29% said their worldview influences quite much or very much. This means that almost 73% believes it influences to some degree. The rating average was 3 of 5, where 5 is «Very much influence». This indicates an average level of «Some influence» (Table 12). Looking at the percentage, there are far more who believe it influences to some extent than not. It is also important to remember that this is perceived influence, not necessarily the actual influence.

Table 12. To what extent do worldview influence?

Wordview survey

To what extent do you believe your worldview (political, faith, values) influences your journalistic work?								
AnswerOptions	No influence at all	Not so much influence	Some influence	Quite a lot influence	Very much influence	Don't know	RatingAverage	ResponseCount
	7	26	53	29	6	0	3,00	121
							AnsweredQuestion	121
							SkippedQuestion	15

There are many elements of influence in the process of creating news as discussed in the theory. It is possible to find support in the theory for all the choices in the scale on this answer. The question is how important this factor is, compared with all the other influential factors, and is it possible of operating on its own?

Some possible influential factors are social structures, ownership, outside forces, editorial and the journalist himself, among others (Gans, 2004), (Voakes, 1997), (Worlds of Journalism, 2016b). The findings of both Gans and Voakes raise an interesting question about social control of the newsroom. When it comes to what factor, personal or the structural, there isn't any consensus on which factor of influence is the most or least important influential according to Hanitzsch & Mellado (2011), but in Voakes' survey, the individual influence was the weakest element and this challenges the idea of the personal view as an important

influential factor, at least when it comes to the ethical level (Voakes, 1997). An important note to make is that research done in another cultural media context doesn't necessarily match another culture, not even between countries with a high level of press freedom. As an example, the study of WJS shows that 57% of American journalists believe the manager of news organizations influence them very much, but only 3% Norwegian journalist believe the same (Worlds of Journalism, 2016b). This is perceived influence, but if this was confirmed as actual influence in an American context it might be completely wrong to expect the same in a Norwegian study. This shows the value of comparing studies and the need of understanding different cultural media contexts, but when it comes to the topic of this thesis the numbers of perceived influence from personal belief are quite similar between the Americans and Norwegians (Worlds of Journalism, 2016b).

When comparing the findings in this survey on perceived influence with the numbers from WJS, we see that there are 15 % more journalists in Norway who consider their personal values and beliefs to influence very or extremely high in the WJS (44%), than in this survey (29%). 47% in WJS said that personal values and faith had somewhat influence, which is almost the same as this survey. One explanation of the difference might have to do with a higher level of participants and therefore, a better marginal error. When it comes to editorial policy, 55% of Norwegian journalists believe it has very high influence (Worlds of Journalism, 2016b). These numbers indicate a high level of personal, social or structural influence, which is in line with the early studies of Manning White (1950) and Breed (1955) even though they were done 60- 70 years ago. White's studies puts the emphasis on the many «gatekeepers» in the news process, which indicates that personal values, expectations, experience and attitudes all are elements which the news process is dependent upon (White, 1950). Breed has his emphasis on the social control of the newsroom and says that the journalist, or the newsman, as he called him, gets his reward, status and acceptance from his colleagues, not from the reader. It seemed like the journalist «redefined his values to more pragmatic level of the news-room group» (Breed, 1955, p. 335). This indicates that it might be interesting to study the topic of worldviews in the light of social control of the newsroom.

As one of the points which makes the backdrop of this thesis is the homogeneity of political preferences among journalists, and, because political preference also says something about certain values or standpoints, it is interesting to see what Norwegian scholars mean about this as an influential factor. In an interview done by Journalisten (The Journalist), Martin Eide argues that political preferences do not influence the journalistic work and says that

professionalism trumps one's own preferences. He also argues that being critical to government and the elite is something typical for the left side of politics, which will resonate with the journalist's political preferences well (Johansen, 2015). He has support in the research done in Denmark (Hopmann, 2009) and Sweden (Petersson et al., 2006) that coverage of election campaigns show no clear bias or connection between political preferences among journalists. He also has support in this view from Preston (2008) who argues that professional values counterbalance personal beliefs and standpoints. Hovden (2008) argues that journalists are much more diverse than political preferences and refers to the journalist's inherited habitus. But, Hovden says that all influential factors need to be looked at in relation to each other in the process of creating news.

A point to make here is that lack of bias or influence in an election campaign does not necessarily prove lack of bias in general in the media. It might be that journalists are more aware of being non-biased in an election campaign than in general. Also, the coverage of election campaigns often has some rules and guidelines.

A study done in Norway on bias in election campaigns show somewhat the same findings as the Danish and Swedish mentioned above. Svennevig, Arisland & Rognmo (2013) did their study through two election campaigns and examined the coverage of the commercial television channel TV2, and The Norwegian Public broadcaster, NRK. But they also found that the progress party, which is to the right in the Norwegian political landscape did get more critical questions than any other party. This is explained by the factor which is seen in other countries as well, according to Svennevig et al. (2013), that thoughts and ideas that are seen as radical and outside what is considered to have political consensus, experience more critical questions. But who defines what is extreme or not? This is something Kjersti Thorbjørnsrud addresses when she says she is quite convinced political preferences do influence. She is not speaking about election campaigns, but influence in general. Kjersti Thorbjørnsrud argues that personal, political preferences do influence, and she does so from a societal perspective and says that those topics which are in line with the values and ideologies of society in general will give consensus versus those which aren't will not be given space, she says. That which is considered extreme might be influenced by what most journalists believe themselves (Johansen, 2015). This challenge is addressed by Maras as well, but from another perspective, the choices of sources. Are they deemed to be *inside* or *outside* the news frame, he asks (Maras, 2013). This is interesting, when looking at the results of this survey on values and worldviews. One might ask, what views will be seen as extreme according to these results, or what sources are found inside the news frame?

Awareness of influence does not say anything about how it influences. This is something Oltedal (2012) finds in her study of journalists (she uses the word value). The journalists believe values influence journalism but there seems to be a lack of «language» to describe how it influences and it is seldom a topic of discussion in the newsroom. Oltedal believes this might have to do with the role most journalists identify with, the idea of being detached from one's own worldview, at least as a standard worth working towards in the newsrooms. If one believes that one's own worldview should not be applied, it's likely not a much-discussed topic (Oltedal, 2012). But the specific question in this survey on how journalists believe their worldview influences, shows a clear awareness of this (Figure 5).

Q.22. How do you believe your personal worldview influences the most?

Only those who believe personal worldviews has an important element of influence were asked to answer this question. This would be approximately 88 persons, but 97 answered, which indicate a higher percentage (80%) who believes that worldview influences than in the first answer. Maybe the specific questions challenged them or made them reflect more on the topic.

Six options were provided on how personal worldviews might influence. In addition, there was a free option with a comment field. Of all the choices, there was one clear option which had almost 84% votes.

How worldviews might influence, according to the journalists perception. (See Figure 5). Multiple choices were possible.

1. What topic which is considered important, 84%.
2. The case approach/angle of the story, 46%.
3. Choice of word, 35%.

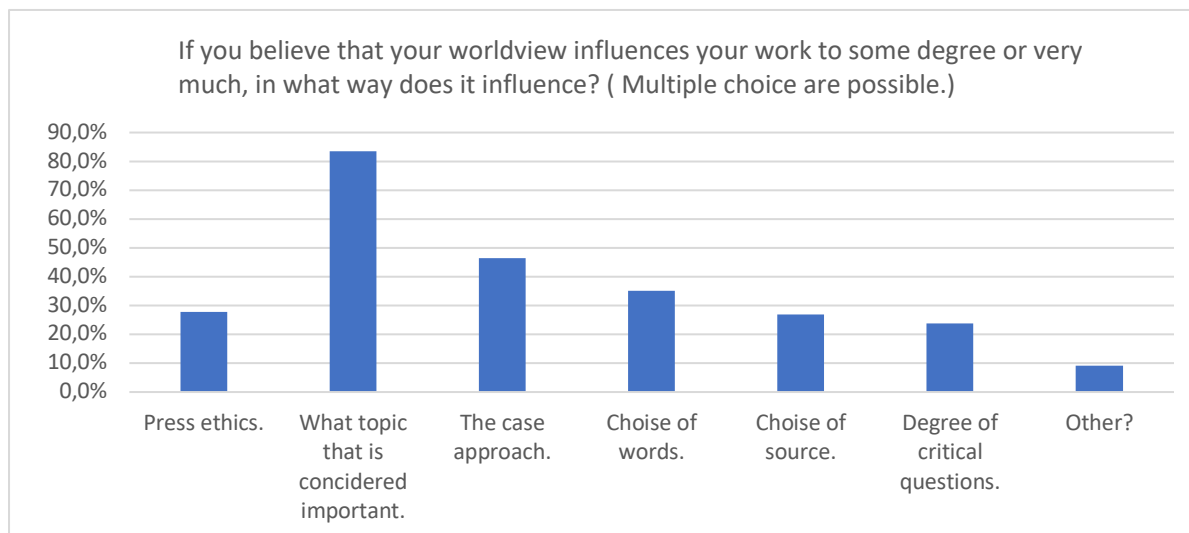


Figure 5. How do worldviews influence?

These findings support Kjersti Thorbjørnsrud’s opinions on political bias. Thorbjørnsrud believes political preferences influence what stories are found worthy of being debated, as discussed under Question 21 (Johansen, 2015). Willis (2009) expressed the same opinion on this and states that your worldview might influence what you find newsworthy, he says. All this confirms what the majority of journalists in this survey believe.

A personal testimony from a journalist illustrates what consequences a lack of diversity on values or worldviews in the news room might lead to. The example is from the trial of Kermit Gosnell, a Pennsylvania abortion doctor, who were on trial for several lurid crimes done at his clinic (Mcardle, 2013). Journalist Megan Mcardle says there had been very little coverage of a story which should have had much more attention and been on many more front pages. After receiving questions about why the story was not covered Mcardle started some investigations and her conclusion was that mainstream journalists had been selective. Megan Mcardle said: «The truth is that most of us tend to be less interested in sick-making stories – if the sick-making was done by `our side’ » (Mcardle, 2013)¹³.

On the other hand, an awareness of possible influence might also make the journalists extra careful, like one of the informants explains to Dahlstrøm (2015). He believes that he has become more critical in the meeting with sources he agrees with. He thinks that he is even more aware of being objective and letting more voices be heard (Dahlstrøm, 2015).

¹³ Reference to a website, therefore no page number.

In addition to the choices in the question, some gave in-depth comments on how worldviews might influence them. Here are some of the main points.

- Knowledge about the topic.

- My worldview influences everything I do, also when I am not a journalist.

- The red thread through the story which builds up to a conclusion, I believe will be influenced by the worldview.

- I believe none is unaffected by one's own worldview. I believe what happens behind the story, like who we ask, what we consider a topic worth writing about is how worldview influences and not the choices of word and angling of the story necessary. Words and angle, I believe is more influenced by the publication than one's own worldview.

It's no doubt that journalists have a high awareness of ethical principles in their daily work as it is a part of their profession and the codes of ethics lie there as guidelines. It also seems, according to the findings in this survey, that there is an awareness among journalists on how worldviews might influence them. This might be in contrast to people in general, as Dr. Norman Geisler says that most people don't have a conscious relationship to their worldview, neither do they know how they got it, nor how important it is in their lives (All about worldview, 2016). Gjerde (2010) also argues that values might be a source which drives you, both consciously and unconsciously.

The respondent that says « The red thread through the story which builds up to a conclusion, I believe will be influenced by the worldview» is quite in line with the example Oltedal (2001) refers to. The story is within the science field of biotechnology and was compared between the Christian newspaper, Vårt Land, and the tabloid newspaper, VG. The common features in both newspapers are that both the journalists present the facts in terms of what the consequences of the new knowledge in the science field represents. But it seems that the facts are interpreted by the journalists according to his or her personal values and ethical principles. This is for example shown in the title and by the choices made on words and expressions. In Vårt Land, there is a sceptical interpretation of the facts, and in VG, a supportive conclusion. Only one newspaper, Vårt Land, presents both perspectives from the research field in the story (Oltedal, 2001, pp. 148-149).

The questions raised in this chapter and the findings which indicate a lack of diversity among journalists when it comes to their worldviews, their beliefs and what they value,

becomes relevant when we see it together with the findings of influence. If the worldviews, values and attitudes among the «gatekeepers» lack diversity, and social control is still an important element of influence, what stories or news never reach the media's interest, and how easy is it to challenge the policy or culture in the newsroom if one is among the few with a different worldview? Could more transparency be fruitful in the light of these findings? We will see what the journalists themselves believe in the next and last question, before the conclusion.

Q. 23. This question gave the journalists three options about objectivity, transparency and credibility.

A total of 120 journalists answered this question (Figure 6), which is another way of asking if one's own worldview influences the journalistic work. In addition, it has the element of transparency and will be compared to Oltedal's study from 2008/09 (Oltedal, 2012).

The majority, 44%, says that it is not always possible to keep one's own point of view outside the story, but should be sought after anyway. 24% believes transparency about one's own points of views might build more trust, in addition to always striving for keeping them outside the news process (see Figure 6). There are some weaknesses because of the double condition in the question, which is mentioned in the chapter on methodology. 32% believes it is possible to remain distanced to one's own standpoint and values.

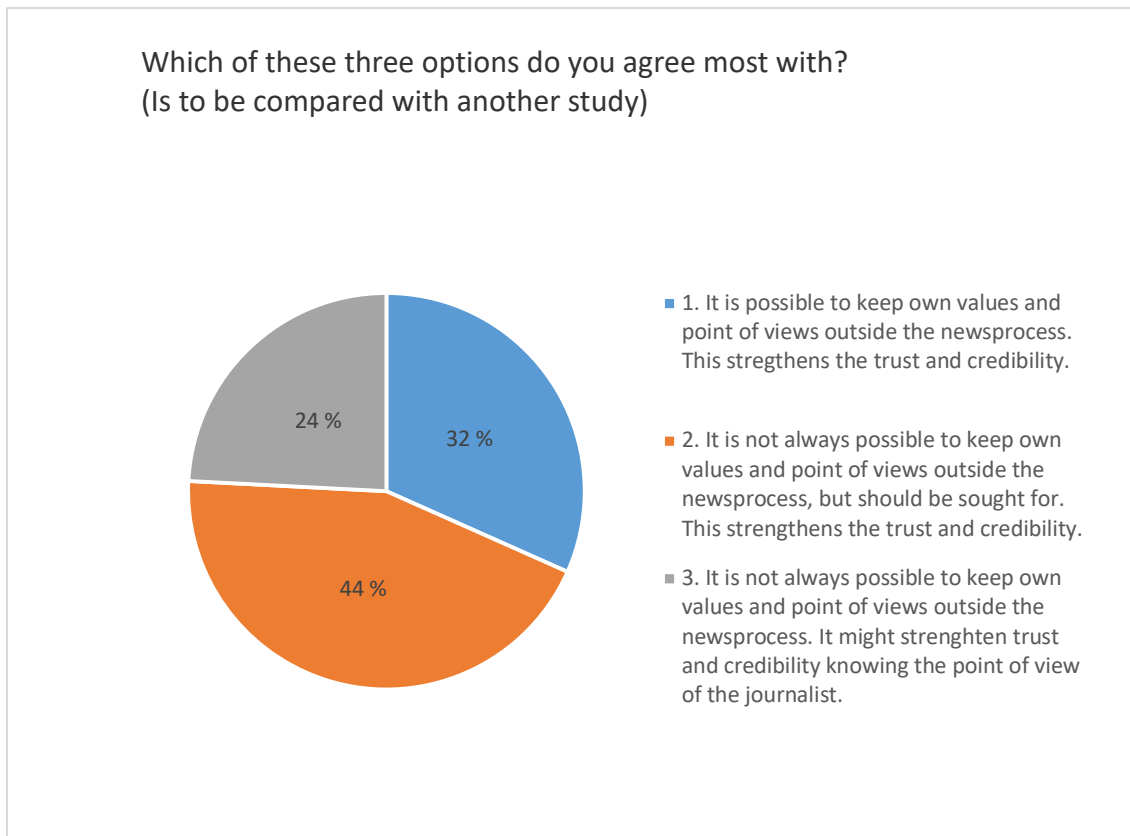


Figure 6. Own point of view, influence and transparency.

According to Richard Kaplan, it is possible to adopt the methodology of science and therefore «eliminate their own beliefs and values as guides in ascertaining what was said and done» (Kaplan, 2009, p. 26). Sociologist Gans confirms the idea that research methodology, especially on social - science are superior to the journalistic methods, but he believes it is not possible for journalists to adopt this, primarily because of lack of time (Gans, 2004). In this survey, one respondent's answer illustrates the idea that it is possible to be neutral because of one's own neutrality. He or she says « I have no preferences neither within religion nor in politics, so I feel free of such bindings and can be critical in all directions». This raises a question if neutrality is possible at all. Such a statement might signal that you don't have values if you don't have political or religious preferences. Whether you call it values or something else, we all have a heritage with us according to Bourdieu (1985). We all have our habitus, our social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1985), and as already discussed, one might not be aware of them. Another respondent sent an email and told that he didn't want to answer the rest of the survey because he meant the questions were completely irrelevant. He said: «Sorry, but for me as a professional journalist, I cannot see that such a survey has any relevance». He added that attitudes should not influence professional, journalistic work.

What we see from these responses and the 32% who chose Option One is that there is a belief among journalists that it is possible to be neutral from values and preferences, even in one's own life as one comment indicates, but the majority of journalists believe that it is not possible to keep one's own values outside of the news process. These findings are also in line with Dahlstrøm (2015) who have examined the influence of worldviews by doing qualitative interviews among nine experienced journalists working with worldview-journalism. In her findings, there were also different opinions regarding if and how their own worldview influenced their work. The majority said it will influence their work in one way or another. Most of the journalists focused on the method of letting different perspectives through. Even though they believed their own perspective might influence, they strived towards objectivity (Dahlstrøm, 2015).

4.2.2 Worldviews and Transparency.

24% believe transparency might promote more trust and credibility (figure 6). In Oltedal's findings from 2008/09 there are 23 journalists who are interviewed about this, a small number, but nevertheless, it's interesting to compare with. 15% chose Option One, 65% chose Option Two, and 15% chose Option Three with transparency as a solution to more credibility (Oltedal, 2012). It is necessary to mention that option three is not completely the same wording and this might be a source of error in the comparing¹⁴. As we see, there is a larger number choosing Option One and Three. Because of few informants in Oltedal's survey and a very different population, it is not possible with a firm conclusion but the tendency is in line with other voices. Brandtzæg & Følstad (2017), two Norwegian researchers at «SINTEF», addresses the need and importance for more trust in the media. They believe, especially in these times with the rise of the term *fake news*, that the media itself has the responsibility to be transparent on how they work, on the choices they make, their use of sources, etc., as being a solution for building trust (Brandtzæg & Følstad, 2017).

Another question to discuss is if the number of those who are positive to more transparency might be a reflection of the challenging times we live in - where the truth aspect also is challenged? As Sambrook says: «These days it is quite fashionable to question whether there is any such thing as truth at all. Whether facts actually prove anything, Whether objectivity is worth striving for » (Sambrook, 2004). This might be what Oltedal noticed in her study that

¹⁴ This choice was made in agreement with Oltedal. Instead of her option, which stated that it is not possible to keep one's own standpoints outside the news process, we changed it to not always possible.

those who chose Option One and Two used the word objectivity as an ideal, while those in the third choice had strong feelings against using that word. The journalists also found it challenging to speak about both truth and objectivity. If something is true, something must be wrong, and many find this difficult to combine with a balance (Oltedal, 2012). This confirms what Maras (2013) argues, that the term, *objectivity*, has clear weaknesses.

These observed challenges might very well be because of the philosophical roots of the truth aspect addressed by Maras, which again is connected to objectivity, depending on how you define it, (Maras, 2013) and might explain why these words are not a part of the Norwegian codes of ethics (Presse, 2016). The findings might show that more journalists find the truth aspect, or the term *objectivity* more complex than before, and therefore, tends to move more towards a transparency role.

It is also worth asking if these findings, with a higher number of journalists being positive to more openness and transparency, together with an increased level of meaning journalism (Mathisen et al., 2016) and the lack of trust in some of the media houses (Tillitsundersøkelsen, 2016), *might influence* the journalistic ethics and practice in the future. It might also strengthen the arguments from those who speak for a clearer and conscious theoretical reasoning behind the professional ethics (Brurås, 2009). And for a moral philosophical departure point as a foundation for ethics, which Røssland (2007) speaks for.

4.2.3 The Media Coverage.

When doing a survey among journalists on quite personal and challenging topics and also about influence, it is fair to ask them how they judge the coverage in their own media house. After all, they are aware of influence and how it influences, but how satisfied are they with the coverage within the different topics examined in this survey. This doesn't necessarily say anything about the actual coverage. Nevertheless, it is interesting to see how they judge it and if there are differences among the media houses.

The findings show that the different media houses have quite the same rating average between them on the same topic. The topic which journalists rated lowest when speaking about satisfaction of coverage was on faith and worldviews. Overall, it got less than three out of five possible on the rating average, which on this scale is less than «Somewhat good». This matches the answer on the question if more literacy on worldviews is needed, which the majority of journalists, 31%, said there is quite or very much need for, and in addition 43%

said there is some need for it. One possible explanation of this could be that there is an awareness of a majority of secular worldviews in the newsroom, and maybe one's own limitations on the topic of religion. Also, the immigration and refugee debate might influence this.

The topic most journalists are satisfied with concerning their coverage is on refugees and immigration. The rating average on this question was approximately 4, which indicates the level of «Quite good». In the light of the findings in the survey about influence, and how worldviews might influence, together with the theory discussed, one explanation might be that the majority of journalists disagree with the government's policy as they see it as too strict, according to the findings in this survey. Therefore, it might be easier and more obvious to challenge the policy in the media coverage. As Oltedal says, two journalists with different views on immigration politics might also have different views on being critical to power and what it means to support the weakest part (Oltedal, 2012). The fact that journalists have other political preferences (Hagen, 2016) than those in government at this point of time, might also be an element to include, though we have seen that there are scholars who do not believe that this influences (Johansen, 2015).

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

Worldviews in the Norwegian newsroom

In this final chapter, I will sum up and conclude on my findings, present some thoughts for further studies on the topic, and give some closing remarks of this learning journey, which has been intense, exciting and challenging.

5.1 Summary.

The objective of this thesis has been to examine the worldviews (meaning; values, faith, secular and religious beliefs) among Norwegian journalists, also to what extent, and how, they believe their worldviews influence their journalistic work. I have done so by conducting a quantitative survey among journalists who work in the mainstream media, mainly in the centralized areas.

This approach does not say anything about whether or not the media is biased, neither in general nor on the chosen topics. But the findings, together with relevant theory, other research and examples, make it possible to say something about the diversity of worldviews in the press, the importance and relevance of the topic and how the journalist's perceptions match the theory in the field.

The main theories and discussions have been within the topics of what influences the news process and objectivity in the media, intercultural communication, the understanding of meeting between people, how we perceive the other and the other's message. In addition, I have touched upon sociology of religion and sociology. The main terms which have been discussed are *worldviews* and *objectivity*.

The most important outcomes of this study, according to the research questions, are the following.

1. The majority (64%) of Norwegian journalists in the mainstream media and daily agenda setter of news, say that secular humanism; atheist or agnostic, best describes their worldview. 26% say Christianity describes their worldview best. With a few

exceptions, this group identify mainly with The Norwegian Church. If one take into consideration questions about believing and behaving to measure a person's religious faith, it is likely that less than the 26 % of those who define their belonging to the Norwegian Church or other Christian assemblies fit in with the more traditional understanding of a Christian belief according to common ways of measuring faith within the sociology of religion (Furseth, 2015). However, it should also be noted that the numbers are relatively small and the questions meant to measure behaving and believing are too few to draw absolute conclusions. The findings also show that there is a higher percentage than the 26% who define Christianity as describing their worldview best, who believes in a spiritual realm and something divine. The findings also show that it is not only those with a spiritual or Christian worldview that define their worldview as important, also some of those with a secular view do so.

2. When it comes to values and attitudes on chosen topics there are several questions which tend to provide a clear majority at one end or the other. Those who had a high level of agreement on one side were on the questions about the rights for same gender couples. 88% agree on the rights for same gender couples in the marriage law. 4% believe that the fetus is ascribed with human dignity at conception. An additional 8% believes it begins when the heart begins to beat. The majority believes it begins after the abortion limit or at birth. There is also a quite restrictive attitude towards opening up for polygamy (73%), and almost 70% of the journalists believe singles should have the right to assisted fertilization. When it comes to the immigration and refugee policy almost 70% of the journalists believe an increase of immigrants and refugees is a resource. Nevertheless, they see challenges.
3. Journalists themselves see a need for more religious literacy in their profession, which is in line with their own expression on the question on how well their coverage of worldviews are. The topic of worldviews where the one topic out of the four given, where the journalists were least satisfied with their coverage.
4. On influence, there seems to be a great deal of awareness among many journalists about worldviews and influence. 44% believe it influence to some degree, and in addition 29% believes it has quite a lot or very much influence. Among the many choices given of how this might influence, the majority of journalists (84%) believe this influence is expressed on what topic which is considered important.

5. The last point, but also interesting, is that 24% of the journalists believe that transparency is something that can bring more trust and credibility.

In summing up the findings, there is a clear lack of diversity in the Norwegian mainstream media when it comes to worldviews. Also, the findings tend to provide a clear majority at one end or the other, of the scale, at some of the topics of values. When viewing this in the light of the theory discussed, the interesting question is if the lack of diversity in the news room is reflected in the journalistic work. Does the findings indicate less space for different voices to be heard, as is enshrined in the codes of ethics (Presse, 2016). According to theory and the journalists' own answers on how this influence is expressed, it is possible that some news stories, perspectives and voices never make it to the front pages or the headlines because of the lack of diversity on worldviews (meaning; values, faith, secular and religious beliefs) in the news room.

The interesting observation of the 24% of the journalists having an openness towards transparency seen together with other challenges, like low trust and credibility in some media houses (Tillitsundersøkelsen, 2016), an increased level of meaning journalism (Mathisen et al., 2016) and challenging concepts such as truth and objectivity as discussed in this thesis, might raise a question if these are small signals for a future change as compared to the way journalism is currently practiced.

The awareness of personal influence in the news process and the fact that many Norwegian journalists are not satisfied with their media house's coverage of worldview-related topics, could spark a fruitful debate about the lack of diversity of worldviews in the newsroom and what implications this might have. Even though we live in a democratic country as Norway with the freedom of the press, freedom of speech, a high level of ethical awareness and a consciousness on detachment, some of the theory discussed and the journalists' own perception of influence shows that we are not necessarily free or detached from our own worldviews, even not as journalists.

5.2 Further Research.

1. Editorial Influence. As the findings among editors and commentators also are quite homogeneous, and influence of editorial policy and personal belief both has a high score

according to WJS (Worlds of Journalism, 2016b), it could be interesting to study further editorial policy and see this together with worldviews among editors in some of the media houses.

2. Transparency and Credibility. Qualitative interviews to gain more in-depth information about the possibility of the media being more transparent and what this transparency would look like.

3. Lack of diversity? Do a content analysis on some of the debated topics in the media and see this in the light of the lack of diversity of worldviews in the news room.

5.3 Closing Remarks.

While working on this thesis, I thought at some point that everything is connected with everything else, especially on the topic of what influences the news. There are many elements and many of them are connected to each other. How is it possible to conclude on anything?

Also I had in mind the words of Marilyn Strathern (1997), who says that *our meanings are not static*. Whether you fight for more freedom or defend traditions, the world is always on the move. And of course, it is. Journalism too changes and have changed; codes of ethics adapt to the changes in society, but the theories and research show that words like bias and trust, have been discussed for a long time and the challenge of objectivity is not something new. Also, the political preferences and tendencies of journalists leaning more towards the left and liberal in the mainstream press are not new, neither is the critique of the press. It might just be the destiny of the profession. Therefore, because of this, the discussion on the topic of influence should be continuously and vitally debated. After all, the public needs the press, but the press also needs the public and its trust.

I will close with a question referred to by Schmalzbauer (2003) and Mindich's (1998) definition of objectivity as; the curious quality. The question Schmalzbauer refers to was asked a group of journalist students and consists of four short words; «*How do we know?*» It is not easy in these hectic times, with news 24/7, but maybe therefore, it is even more

important than ever to ask this question and to be curious about the other's perspective, especially when the newsrooms lack diversity.

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APPENDICES

Worldviews, Journalism and Objectivity

Appendix 1. Codes of ethics 1975. In Norwegian.

Vær Varsom

Vedtatt av Norsk Presseforbund
(første gang i 1936, senere revidert i 1956 og 1966. Siste gang revidert 12. november 1975.)

1. En fri presse ivaretar viktige oppgaver i vårt samfunn ved formidling av informasjon, debatt og samfunnskritikk. Det er pressens rett å informere om det som skjer i samfunnslivet og avdekke kritikkverdige forhold. Den kan ikke gi etter for press fra noen som søker å hindre fri informasjonsformidling, fri adgang til kildene og åpen debatt. Samtidig har pressen et ansvar for at ulike syn kommer til uttrykk i rimelig utstrekning. Det er en oppgave for pressen å beskytte enkeltmennesker mot overgrep eller forsømmelser fra offentlige myndigheter og institusjoner, organisasjoner, private foretak og andre. Den enkelte avis og de enkelte medarbeidere må kunne opptre fritt og uavhengig og verne om sin integritet. En journalist kan ikke pålegges å skrive eller gjøre noe som strider mot egen overbevisning.
2. Trykkefriheten og ytringsfriheten legger et ansvar på journalisten og avisen:
 - Vær kritisk i valg av kilder og kontroller så langt det er mulig at opplysninger som gis er korrekte.
 - Gjør det klart for leseren hva som er faktiske opplysninger og kommentarer.
 - Misbruk ikke andres tillit. Det bør fremgå at de opplysninger og uttalelser som gis kan bli offentliggjort.
 - Vis værlig hensyn overfor personer som ikke kan være klar over virkningene av sine uttalelser. Misbruk ikke andres følelser, uvitenhet eller sviktende dømmekraft.
 - Vis respekt for menneskers privatliv, rase, nasjonalitet eller livssyn. Fremhev ikke personlige avvik når dette er saken uvedkommende.
 - Sørg for at titlene ikke går lenger enn det er dekning for i stoffet.
 - Oppretthold et klart skille mellom annonser og redaksjonell tekst, og gi aldri tilsagn om redaksjonell omtale som motytelser for annonser.
 - Vær på vakt mot forsøk på å oppnå fordeler i forhold til avisen, og utnytt ikke stillingen som journalist til å oppnå private fordeler.
3. Vern om avisens kilder! Oppgi ikke navn på hjemmelsmann for opplysninger eller forfattere som opptrer under pseudonym, hvis ikke vedkommende selv samtykker. Først når det foreligger et pålegg fra en domstol om å oppgi kilde eller navn på forfatter, er det avisens og den enkelte medarbeiders plikt å vurdere om kilden eller forfatteren skal gjøres kjent.
4. Innrøm og beklag feilen hvis uriktige opplysninger er kommet på trykk. Gi snarest mulig plass for tilsvaret og dementier, forutsatt at innlegget er av rimelig omfang, holder seg til saken og har en anstendig form. Utstyr ikke innlegg med redaksjonell, polemisk replikk.
5. For bruk av bilder gjelder de samme aktsomhetskrav som for det skrevne ord. Unngå bearbeidelse som ender et bildes karakter og skaper et feilaktig inntrykk. Vær varsom med bruk av bilder i en annen sammenheng enn den opprinnelige.
6. Legg særlig vekt på saklighet og omtanke i rettsreportasjen, så vel i sivilsaker som i straffesaker. Skyldspørsmålet for en mistenkt, anmeldt, siktet eller tiltalt er først avgjort når endelig dom foreligger. Gjør det derfor alltid klart at det som kommer fram i anmeldelser, siktelser, tiltalebeslutninger, stevninger og lignende ikke kan tas som kjensgjerninger før det er prøvet av retten. Unngå bruk av navn og bilder i retts- og kriminalreportasjen hvis ikke sterke allmenne hensyn taler for det. Vær varsom med å trekke fram eldre og sonete forgåelser. Glem ikke at den som utsettes for en forbrytelse forsvarsløst kan få sitt privatliv utlevert for offentligheten. Utsett ikke offeret, de implisertes pårørende og andre i deres miljø for slike overgrep.
7. Selvmord og selvmordsforsøk skal som hovedregel ikke omtales.

Husk: *Det trykte ord gir både makt og ansvar. Misbruk det ikke!*

Vær varsom!

La det ikke kunne sies med sandhet at pressen setter folk unødig i gapestokken.

Selvmord, selvmordsforsøk og sinnssykdom bør ikke omtales uten i helt ekstraordinære tilfeller.

Sedelighetsforbrytelse bør ikke omtales undtagen hvor det gjelder å advare mot en farlig person eller hvor det gjelder å efterspore en sedelighetsforbryter.

Offentliggjør ikke navn på dem som mistenkes eller anmeldes for noe rettsstridig. Det kan godt hende at vedkommende er like uskyldig som De selv.

Fremhold ikke livsstilling, arbeidssted, politisk eller religiøs opfatning m. v. hos en tiltalt medmindre disse ting står i direkte forbindelse med hans forbrytelse.

Nevn ikke navn når det gis betinget dom. Det dreier sig ofte om et forholdsvis ubetydelig lovbrudd, og offentliggjørelse av navn kan skade vedkommende for livet.

La ikke meldinger om mindre lovbrudd få sensasjonelle overskrifter.

La ikke overskriftene få en tendensies form som innholdet ikke berettiger til.

Vær så hensynsfull som mulig ved referater av vidneprov. Understrek ikke den undertiden hensynsløse kryss-eksaminasjon som vidnene kan være gjenstand for i retten.

Ta ikke inn løse forlydender om norske bedrifter uten først å konferere med vedkommende firma. Det har hendt at store bedrifter er blitt skadelidende fordi ukontrollerte rykter er blitt offentliggjort i pressen.

I tvilstilfelle konferer med andre aviser på stedet.

Husk at pressen eier stor makt og derfor pålegges stort ansvar.

N O R S K P R E S S E F O R B U N D

Den første «Vær varsom-plakat» vedtatt av NP i 1936.

Appendix 3. Letter of information to respondents. In Norwegian.

Forespørsel om deltakelse i forskningsprosjektet

ved NLA Mediehøgskolen Gimlekollen og masterstudent Tone Dalhaug

”En verdi og livssyns-undersøkelse blant norske journalister.”

Bakgrunn og formål.

Undersøkelsen er en del av en masteroppgave ved NLA Mediehøgskolen Gimlekollen, som stiller følgende forskningsspørsmål:

1. Hvilke livssyn og verdier finner vi blant norske journalister?
2. I hvilken grad mener norske journalister at deres personlige verdier og livssyn påvirker det journalistiske arbeidet, eventuelt hvordan?

Utvalget av journalister gjøres ved å kontakte redaksjoner direkte. Målet er minimum 150 svar, men optimalt 360 for å gi undersøkelsen best mulig validitet.

Hva innebærer deltakelse i studien?

I denne eposten finner du en link til undersøkelsen. Der er 25 spørsmål innenfor følgende tema:

1. Livssyn, 2. Liv og død, 3. Ekteskap, kjønn og familie. 4. Innvandring og flyktninger 5. Journalistens verdensbilder og journalistikken.

Undersøkelsen er fullstendig anonym, både med tanke på spørsmål i selve undersøkelsen og ved bruk av SurveyMonkeys anonymiserte funksjon som heller ikke lar IP adressen spores.

Tidsfrist: Der vil være en tidsfrist på 1 uke for å besvare spørsmålene.

Hva skjer med informasjonen om deg?

Alle opplysninger vil bli behandlet konfidensielt. Det vil kun være undertegnede, og eventuelt veileder som vil ha tilgang til resultatene.

Prosjektet skal etter planen avsluttes og leveres 2. Mai. Deretter en muntlig presentasjon i juni. Data utover det som publiseres i oppgaven vil bli slettet etter dette.

Frivillig deltakelse

Det er selvsagt frivillig å delta i undersøkelsen, men jeg håper mange nok vil delta for å gi validitet til tall og opplysninger til et tema som ikke så ofte settes fokus på i norsk journalistikk.

Undersøkelsen ble meldt til Personvernombudet for forskning, NSD - Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS og godkjent som anonym undersøkelse, og dermed ikke meldepliktig.

Mvh Tone Dalhaug Journalist og masterstudent NLA Mediehøgskolen Gimlekollen
Tlf: 92 85 34 03 - epost: tone.dalhaug@sfjbb.net

Appendix 4. Questionnaire. In Norwegian. Will be translated for the printed version.

Weblink for viewing the survey online. For a better graphic experience. Copy and paste or enter manually. <https://no.surveymonkey.com/r/2GYV9DJ>

Verdi og livssynsundersøkelse - Journalister. Nr.3

1. VELKOMMEN.

Takk for at du vil delta i undersøkelsen.

Denne undersøkelsen er en del av en masteroppgave i global journalistikk ved NLA Høgskolen. Oppgaven skal skrives på engelsk, og jeg bruker der det engelske ordet «worldview», som gjerne oversettes med livssyn på norsk og som vi ofte forbinder med tro. På engelsk har dette begrepet et rikere innhold. Det er en bred forståelse jeg diskuterer i oppgaven, og derfor spør jeg om mer enn kun tro/livssyn i denne undersøkelsen.

Temaene i undersøkelsen er valgt med hensikt og diskuteres selvsagt i masteroppgaven, men utvalget er gjort med utgangspunkt i andre verdiundersøkelser og aktuelle tema i media. Flere andre temaer kunne vært valgt, feks. klima, naturvern, bruk av religiøse symboler i det offentlige rom, mer om bioteknologi osv. Men dette måtte begrenses og er kun et lite bidrag i det å undersøke verdier og livssyn blant norske journalister.

Bruk av gradering/skala som svaralternativ kan løses på flere måter. Løsningen som er valgt er en skala uten midtpunkt. Valget er gjort med tanke på å kunne sammenligne svar med andre undersøkelser. En kvantitativ undersøkelse har sine begrensninger på såpass krevende spørsmål, men dette vil diskuteres i oppgaven. Mengden kommentarmuligheter må også begrenses.

Undersøkelsen er anonym i alle ledd. SurveyMonkey har en funksjon som gir full anonymitet. Det er derfor få svaralternativ med rom for fritekst, og kun spørsmål om alder og kjønn når det gjelder opplysninger om journalisten.

Forskningsspørsmål:

1. Hvilke verdier og livssyn finner vi blant norske journalister?
2. I hvilken grad, og eventuelt hvordan, mener journalister at dette påvirker deres arbeid?

Det er 25 spm. i undersøkelsen.

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2. Om journalisten.

1. Kjønn

- Kvinne
 Mann

2. Alder?

16 80

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3. Tro og livssyn.

3. Hvilken av de følgende kategoriene beskriver best ditt livssyn? (Her inkluderes sekulære livssyn.)

- Jeg ønsker ikke å definere mitt tros eller livssyn.
- Sekulær humanisme – agnostiker.
- Sekulær humanisme – ateist.
- Holist/holisme.
- Kristen - Den norske kirke (Dnk).
- Kristen - Frikirker - protestantiske kirkesamfunn utenom Dnk - inkl. pinsekarismatiske forsamlinger.
- Kristen - Den romersk-katolske kirke.
- Kristen - Den ortodokse kirke-russisk, gresk, andre.
- Jøde.
- Muslim.
- Hindu.
- Buddhist.
- Annet.

4. Hvor viktig er ditt livssyn for deg?

Ikke viktig i det hele tatt	Ikke så viktig	Litt viktig	Ganske viktig	Svært viktig	Vet ikke
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. Hvor viktig er det å ha fellesskap med andre som deler ditt livssyn?

Ikke viktig i det hele tatt

Ikke så viktig

Litt viktig

Ganske viktig

Svært viktig

Vet ikke

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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6. Tror du på noe av det følgende? (Flere svar er mulig.)

Gud (en kristen beskrivelse av Gud).

Gud (Allah).

Noe guddommelig

Et liv etter døden.

Helvete.

Himmelen.

Synden.

Bønn.

Mirakler.

Reinkarnasjon.

Karma.

Ånder/gjenferd.

7. Er det behov for mer kompetanse om tro og livssyn i norske medier generelt?

Ikke behov i det hele tatt

Ikke særlig behov

Noe behov

Ganske stort behov

Svært stort behov

Vet ikke

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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8. Hvor godt synes du ditt mediehus dekker temaet tro og livssyn?

Ikke godt i det hele tatt

Ikke så godt

Nokså godt

Ganske godt

Svært godt

Ikke relevant

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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4. Liv og død.

9. Når mener du fosteret får fullt menneskeverd?

- Ved unnfangelsen.
- Når hjertet begynner å slå.
- Ved 12. uke, grensen for selvbestemt abort.
- Når fosteret overlever utenfor livmoren (med eller uten hjelp).
- Vet ikke.

10. Hva mener du om muligheten til å ta abort av en frisk tvilling? (Noen vil ønske premisser på denne type spm. Mener du det noen ganger er rett, kan du velge "noe enig" f.eks.)

Ikke enig i det hele tatt

Ikke så enig

Noe enig

Ganske enig

Svært enig

Vet ikke

11. Hvor viktig mener du det er å åpne opp for aktiv dødshjelp i Norge? (Noen vil ønske premisser på denne type spm. Mener du det noen ganger er rett, kan du velge "litt viktig" f.eks.)

Ikke viktig i det hele tatt

Ikke så viktig

Litt viktig

Ganske viktig

Svært viktig

Vet ikke

12. Hvordan synes du ditt mediehus dekker temaet liv og død?

Ikke godt i det hele tatt

Ikke så godt

Nokså godt

Ganske godt

Svært godt

Ikke relevant

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5. Ekteskap, kjønn og familie.

13. Hvor enig er du i rettighetene for likekjønnede i den nye ekteskapsloven?

Ikke enig i det hele tatt

Ikke så enig

Noe enig

Ganske enig

Svært enig

Vet ikke

14. Hva mener du om å åpne for flere enn to i et ekteskap? (Polygami)

Ikke enig i det hele
tatt

Ikke så enig

Noe enig

Ganske enig

Svært enig

Vet ikke

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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15. Bør enslige få rett til assistert befruktning?

Ja

Nei

Vet ikke

Annet (vennligst spesifiser)

16. Hvordan synes du ditt mediehus dekker temaet ekteskap, kjønn og familie?

Ikke godt i det hele
tatt

Ikke så godt

Nokså godt

Ganske godt

Svært godt

Ikke relevant

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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6. Innvandring og flyktninger.

17. I hvilken grad kan økt innvandring / et økende antall flyktninger bli et problem for Norge?

Ingen problem i det
hele tatt

Ikke så stort problem

Noe problem

Ganske stort problem

Svært stort problem

Vet ikke

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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Utdyp.

18. I hvilken grad kan økt innvandring / et økende antall flyktninger bli en ressurs for Norge?

Ingen ressurs i det
hele tatt

Ikke så stor ressurs

Noe ressurs

Ganske stor ressurs

Svært stor ressurs

Vet ikke

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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Utdyp.

19. I hvilken grad mener du dagens innvandrings- og flyktningpolitikk er for streng? (Spm. er stilt slik fordi regjeringen har fått mye kritikk.)

Ikke for streng i det hele tatt	Ikke for streng	Litt for streng	En god del for streng	Altfor streng	Vet ikke
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

20. Hvordan synes du ditt mediehus dekker temaet innvandring og flyktninger?

Ikke godt i det hele tatt	Ikke så godt	Nokså godt	Ganske godt	Svært godt	Ikke relevant
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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7. Journalistens verdensbilde og praktisk journalistikk.

21. I hvilken grad tror du ditt verdensbilde (politisk, livssyns- og verdimesig) påvirker ditt journalistiske arbeid?

Ingen påvirkning i det hele tatt	Ikke så mye påvirkning	Noe påvirkning	Ganske mye påvirkning	Svært mye påvirkning	Vet ikke
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

22. Dersom du mener ditt verdensbilde påvirker det journalistiske arbeidet noe, eller ganske mye, på hvilken måte påvirker det mest? (Flere svar er mulig.)

- Presseetisk.
- Hvilke tema som vurderes som viktig.
- Vinkling på saken.
- Ordvalg.
- Kildevalg.
- Grad av kritiske spørsmål.
- Annet (vennligst spesifiser.)

23. Hvilke av disse punktene er du mest enig i når det gjelder eget ståsted, troverdighet og transparens? (Skal sammenlignes med en tidligere undersøkelse.)

- 1. Det er mulig å holde egne verdier og ståsted utenfor nyhetsprosessen. Det styrker troverdigheten.
- 2. Det er ikke alltid mulig å holde egne verdier og ståsted utenfor nyhetsprosessen, men bør tilstrebes. Det styrker troverdigheten.
- 3. Det er ikke alltid mulig å holde egne verdier og ståsted utenfor nyhetsprosessen, men bør tilstrebes. Det kan styrke troverdigheten å vite hva journalisten står for.

Utdyp valget.

24. Hvilke fem stikkord mener du beskriver god journalistikk?

1	<input type="text"/>
2	<input type="text"/>
3	<input type="text"/>
4	<input type="text"/>
5	<input type="text"/>

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8. HJERTELIG TAKK.

Her kan du skrive eventuelle kommentarer. Vær obs på å ikke skrive opplysninger som gjør at du ikke lenger er anonym. Takk for ditt bidrag til en viktig undersøkelse.

25. Kommentarer til undersøkelsen.