

Anxieties, Expectations, and Truths of Contemporary Journalism:

A Case Study of the Mike Daisey Scandal

Louisa Hunker

A thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the

Requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

University of Washington

2013

Committee:

Christine Harold (chair)

Randal Beam

Richard Kielbowicz

Program Authorized to Offer Degree:

Communication

©Copyright 2013
Louisa Hunker

University of Washington

Abstract

Anxieties, Expectations, and Truths of Contemporary Journalism:
A Case Study of the Mike Daisey Scandal

Louisa Hunker

Chair of Supervisory Committee:
Christine Harold, Ph.D.
Communication

In the tradition of studies that examine journalistic breaches, this thesis analyzes a journalistic scandal: *This American Life's* (*TAL*) radio broadcast and subsequent retraction of the story "Mr. Daisey and the Apple Factory" by Mike Daisey. I analyze the text of Daisey's stage show "The Agony and Ecstasy of Steve Jobs," the *TAL* broadcast based on that performance, *TAL's* retraction, and numerous public written responses to the scandal. This public response, in particular, serves as a reflection on the boundaries, rules, and purpose of journalism in democratic society, as an expression of anxieties over the state of contemporary journalism, and as a debate on the nature of truth. Using an approach that is indebted to the cultural studies of journalism and critical rhetoric, and drawing upon paradigm repair theory and public sphere theories, this thesis furthers previous work on journalistic breaches. I provide an update based on a 2012 example and look specifically at the question of what "truth" is and why people think it is important.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The management also wishes to remind you that this is a true story, and like every story being told in every medium, all stories are fiction. —Mike Daisey

On March 16 2012, host Ira Glass introduced the public radio program *This American Life* with these words: “I’m coming to you today to say something that I’ve never had to say on our program. Two months ago, we broadcast a story that we’ve come to believe is not true” (Glass, 2012b). Glass, who described himself as “horrified,” was announcing that *This American Life* (TAL) was retracting its most popular episode ever (“Retracting ‘Mr. Daisey and the Apple Factory,’” 2012).

TAL had broadcast the episode “Mr. Daisey and the Apple Factory,” in January, 2012. The episode consists of a single story by dramatist Mike Daisey, which was an adaptation of Daisey’s staged monologue “The Agony and Ecstasy of Steve Jobs.” The story, presented on TAL as a piece of amateur journalism, describes Daisey’s visit to Chinese factories producing popular Apple technology products for the U.S. market, such as iPhones and iPads, and details the abuses of workers he witnessed there. Through compelling personal storytelling, Daisey’s work makes a strong activist case that Americans should care about the people who manufacture their technology, and that consumers should hold the Apple corporation accountable for the conditions in its Chinese suppliers’ factories. Daisey also criticizes mainstream journalists for failing to focus attention on the inhumane factories. I argue in this thesis that his work offers an alternative to that mainstream journalism and articulates a non-journalistic definition of truth based on a different ethical framework.

The episode was wildly popular. At over 880,000 downloads, it soon became the most downloaded episode ever of TAL’s already-popular podcast, and Daisey enjoyed a period of

media fame as an activist and Apple critic, writing opinion pieces and appearing on at least four television networks (Kurtz, 2012). *TAL* listener Mark Shields started a petition against Apple that quickly gathered over 150,000 signatures. Within weeks of the broadcast, Apple made several changes that increased the transparency and accountability of its suppliers. News coverage of Chinese factory conditions increased; shortly after the *TAL* episode aired, the *New York Times*, for example, published an indepth series of articles about the factories (Emerson, 2012).

Mainstream American journalists working in China developed suspicions about the truth of Daisey's story based on their experience reporting on the same subject matter. American Public Media's *Marketplace* reporter Rob Schmitz investigated Daisey's claims further, and uncovered a number of factual inaccuracies. About two months after its original broadcast, *This American Life* aired an hour-long retraction of the story, explaining that many of its details turned out to have been fabricated. Specifically, a number of the people who Daisey vividly describes in his story did not exist. He combined details from several different factories in different locations into a single composite. He also frustrated *TAL*'s fact checking process by lying to producers that his translator was impossible to contact for verification (Doctor, 2012; Glass, 2012b; "Retracting 'Mr. Daisey and the Apple Factory'," 2012).

Daisey's work served as both an exemplar of what conventional journalism aspires to and simultaneously as a lesson in what mainstream journalism explicitly condemns. It reached a large audience and inspired that audience to humanitarian action; Shields' online petition, for example, specifically cites the *TAL* episode as its inspiration (Shields, n.d.). As commentator Rosenberg notes, "journalists are often proud to see their work have an impact on the world" (Rosenberg, 2012). At the same time, the retraction revealed that Daisey's truth standards flagrantly violated core tenets of journalism, particularly its regard for factual accuracy.

In the days and weeks following the retraction, numerous journalists, media critics and audience members commented on the scandal. It is evident that, based on the enormous amount of commentary that appeared immediately, the retraction hit a cultural nerve. One of my central questions in this thesis is: What was that nerve? Why did people, especially journalists, care so much? Though Daisey was quickly rebuked by the majority of commentators, his work was also representative of broader trends in journalism that are matters of impassioned debate. I argue that Daisey's work presented a comprehensive case in favor of changing the journalistic paradigm: it articulated an alternate conception of truth, offered a different set of priorities for journalism, and suggested alternate models of the public sphere and journalism's role within it. The public reflection that occurred following the retraction peeled back some of the layers of journalistic assumptions. It created an opportunity to examine a number of taken-for-granted truths about journalism.

Commentators were forced to confront the question of what counts as journalism and where its boundaries lie. Daisey's work appeared in both a journalistic and a theatrical context. Daisey is clear that he is not a journalist, but his work was journalistic in many ways. *TAL* itself also operates on the very edges of what is considered journalism. After grappling with the question of Daisey's work's genre, commentators asked themselves what truth standard it should be held to and, more generally, how truth should be produced. Though many journalists tried to marginalize Daisey's work as an unfortunate but isolated case, Daisey's work also evoked more general anxieties about increasing "truthiness"¹ in society at large, the blurring of generic boundaries, and changing journalistic priorities that are replacing truth with storytelling, activism, and popularity.

¹ Nicole Smith Dahmen (2010) defines truthiness –a term popularized in 2005 by satirist Stephen Colbert– as the societal acceptance of the appearance of truth in place of truth itself.

Of course, these questions are not entirely new. Truth scandals have occurred periodically throughout the history of journalism, and have often prompted similar questions. The “New Journalism” of the 1970s represented, in many ways, the same priorities and definition of truth as Daisey’s work. Writers of New Journalism became characters in their own stories and freely used techniques outside mainstream journalism, such as reconstructing dialogue and using composite characters, in an attempt to capture holistic reality. Just as journalists challenged Daisey’s accuracy, traditional journalists regularly challenged the factual accuracy of New Journalism (Sims, 2007, pp. 219–262). Daisey and New Journalism both contested the power of traditional journalism by questioning the possibility of objective truth and the power of the journalist to produce authoritative accounts.

The Daisey commentary also participates in a longstanding debate over journalism’s boundaries and the tug of war between objectivity and advocacy. In his history of journalistic objectivity, David T. Z. Mindich explains that debates over the nature of journalism have recurred throughout history each time old media regimes are challenged by upstarts: “Whenever the hegemony of elite news brokers is threatened, intense debates over the nature of news occur” (Mindich, 1998, p. 138). Though the Daisey case is not directly about the decline of newspapers or the impact of the internet on journalism, it reflects concerns about changes in journalism related to those phenomena.

This sphere of debate was not new to Mike Daisey, either. Throughout his career in theater his monologues generally combined fiction and nonfiction, and questions about the boundaries of non-fiction and what constitutes truth had appeared in his work long before “The Agony and Ecstasy of Steve Jobs.” Daisey’s 2006 monologue “Truth” specifically looked at the truth controversy over James Frey’s fictitious memoir and, according to Daisey’s website,

included an “autobiographical accounting of Daisey's own history of lying and telling the truth in an attempt to illuminate the uncertain landscape of the emotionally true, the literally true, and the constant struggle to speak the truth” (Daisey, n.d.) In questions eerily reminiscent of later debates, *New York Times* theater critic Jason Zinoman (2006) wrote that “Truth” asks questions such as, “Is lying acceptable when in service of a greater truth? What does truth mean in the context of art?”

Previous studies of journalistic breaches have illuminated something about the cultural context in which they occur by treating the breaches as symptoms of larger cultural trends. The breaches highlight which parts of the journalistic paradigm are being questioned in that historical moment. Commentary surrounding the breach brings the anxieties of the times into focus. Eason’s study of the Janet Cooke scandal, for example, argues that “Janet Cooke became a representative figure who personified changes in journalism during that period,” of the 1970s and early 1980s (Eason, 1986, p. 434). Cooke was black in a time that ushered in increasing numbers of racial minority journalists. She wrote her fabricated story in the midst of evolving journalistic conventions that included literary New Journalism as well as investigative journalism that relied on anonymous sources. Commentators on the Cooke scandal therefore focused on Cooke’s race and her use of anonymous sources. They debated timely questions such as: Was Cooke less than qualified but hired because of her race? Was she only able to carry out her deception because of an increasing tolerance for anonymous sources?

In 2012, the changes occurring in journalism –and their associated anxieties– were different than they were when Janet Cooke wrote her story in 1980. In the Daisey controversy, recurring questions and concerns about journalism found a uniquely current expression. The definition of truth seems uniquely relevant and urgent in today’s political environment, which

some describe as “the age of truthiness.” Questions of journalism’s mandate and role in society have become particularly salient as institutions of journalism are disappearing or having to change in radical ways in order to be financially solvent. And as the world is increasingly globalized and more diverse populations are included in “public sphere” debates, the question Daisey raises about how journalism can serve a larger and more diverse population is particularly relevant. Like Janet Cooke did over 30 years ago, Mike Daisey serves as a nucleus around which larger debates and anxieties about journalism, politics and truth have coalesced. My aim is for this analysis to capture a snapshot in time of these concerns and debates.

Daisey’s work, *TAL*’s retraction, and the corpus of public commentary are this thesis’ objects of analysis. Using an approach that is indebted to the cultural studies of journalism and critical rhetoric, I broadly consider what the scandal has to say about contemporary American journalism, truth and the public sphere.

Journalistic standards of practice and the purposes they serve are often taken for granted. Advocating a version of critical rhetoric based on the work of Michel Foucault, Raymie McKerrow (1989) calls for critics to interrogate this kind of “undiscussed” discursive power. The Daisey scandal provides an ideal opportunity to engage in this kind of critique, which McKerrow calls the “critique of freedom.” McKerrow’s critique of freedom, as opposed to his “critique of domination,” doesn’t aim to question the repressive, hegemonic ideology of a ruling class. Instead, this kind of critique teases apart the fabric of power that is all around us. It doesn’t aim to upend a particular regime, but instead to engage in never ending skepticism that draws attention to unquestioned dogma and discursive rules, especially rules for the production of truth. It therefore opens up new possibilities for action or in this case, new possibilities for the practice of journalism.

The Daisey case lends itself to such a critique of freedom, because there is a wide gap between Daisey's journalistic practice and traditional journalistic dogmas, rules and assumptions. The scandal highlighted those assumptions; they became topics of conversation. The violation of norms brought the norms themselves into the spotlight. As Foucault writes, "transgression forces the limit to face the fact of its imminent disappearance, to find itself in what it excludes" (Foucault, 1977, p. 34). David Michael Ryfe makes this same point about journalism specifically: "Within any particular news regime, then, its core vision of what counts as news will be produced and reproduced precisely through dissent" (Ryfe, 2006, p. 211). This process of finding the limits of "what counts" occurred in the discussion among journalists and critics that followed TAL's retraction. Some commentators defended traditional journalism and explained why they supported its rules; others argued that Daisey's unconventional work drew attention to some of the weaknesses of the traditional model.

Dahlgren (1992) divides the assumptions behind a "traditional notion of journalism" into two broad categories. The first category is epistemological. These assumptions privilege rationality, a representational view of language, and an absolute, transparent notion of truth. The second set of assumption is political and societal; these have to do with journalism's place in the world and its role in public life. In this thesis, I examine both sets of assumptions as the Daisey scandal reveals and comments on them. I do this through furthering previous work on journalistic breaches and paradigm repair theory, which speak to the ways in which journalistic scandals highlight the discursive power of traditional journalistic paradigms. I also utilize theory of publics and the public sphere, which help explain criticisms and defenses of Daisey that relate to journalism's role in democracy and civic life.

Journalistic Breaches, Public Responses, and Paradigm Repair

I position this thesis in the tradition of studies of journalistic breaches. I borrow the term “journalistic breaches” from Barbie Zelizer, who identifies the study of journalistic breaches as a scholarly tradition within the broader category of cultural analysis of journalism. A journalistic breach is a rupture in an otherwise fairly seamless suite of journalistic norms, conventions, assumptions and worldviews. The rupture provides an opportunity to examine how those norms, conventions, assumptions and worldviews –the journalistic paradigm– usually function. (Bennett, Gressett, & Haltom, 1985; Hindman, 2005, p. 226; Zelizer, 2004, pp. 196–197).

Journalistic breaches generate reactions from journalists and from the public. Within a few days of *TAL*'s retraction of “Mr. Daisey and the Apple Factory,” numerous news institutions such as the *New York Times*, *Slate*, the *Atlantic*, the *Economist*, the *Guardian*, the *Chicago Tribune*, *Salon*, the *New Yorker*, *Time*, Reuters, *Marketplace*, *CNN*, the *Huffington Post*, and the *Washington Post* published opinion pieces on the scandal, as did organizations of media criticism such as Poynter, the Nieman Journalism Lab, the Columbia Journalism Review and numerous independent blogs.

These reactions provide insight into the journalistic paradigm. They describe societal, institutional and professional expectations of journalists, fears about the current or future state of journalism, and opinions on the role that journalism plays or ought to play in society. To fully understand the breach and its impacts, it is fruitful to analyze not just the transgressive texts themselves but also responses to the breach. It is in these responses, largely written by traditional professional journalists, where the rupture between the paradigm and the transgressive text crystallizes.

David Eason (1986) began the tradition of analyzing journalistic breaches with his study of the way journalists made sense of the Janet Cooke scandal, which involved high-profile

journalistic fabrications. The scandal, according to Eason, “provided an occasion for journalists to reflect publicly on the social and cultural processes whereby their accounts gain authority in society” (Eason, 1986, p. 430). In other words, the breach created an opportunity to articulate rules and mechanisms of knowledge production that are typically taken for granted.

In their analysis of the controversy surrounding Nobel laureate Rigoberta Menchú’s 1983 autobiography, Avant-Mier and Hasian explain that the reckoning that occurs in the wake of a journalistic breach provides the researcher access to a rare public debate over journalistic norms, the rules for the production of truth in general, and opinions on the role that journalism should play in public life.

Nicole Smith Dahmen (2010) uses a frame analysis of opinion pieces on James Frey’s controversial memoir *A Million Little Pieces* to catalog the public’s descriptions of the breach and diagnoses of its causes. The frames she identifies explain how the public makes sense of the event and reveal widespread societal anxieties about the status of journalism and truth in a particular historical moment. These opinion pieces, according to Dahmen, express concern about the “slippery slope” between truth and fiction in the memoir genre, which they blame on an increasingly voyeuristic society. They are alarmed at the “age of truthiness,” and respond by defending journalistic truth as an important foundation of democracy.

A number of scholars have noted that responses to journalistic breaches serve the specific purpose of “paradigm repair.” Bennett, et al. use “repair” to describe how journalists “normalize” a troublesome story to uphold traditional processes of news creation (Bennett et al., 1985). Reese (1990) and Hindman (2005) each further the concept of paradigm repair by applying it to journalistic breaches. Reese argues that a breach threatens the overarching journalistic paradigm and its rules of knowledge production. Repair work thus follows to mend the damage done to the

paradigm. The repair work reveals the usually invisible and implicit rules and limits of the paradigm (Reese, 1990, p. 391) by justifying and clarifying them in the face of a challenge.

Hindman (2005) explains that paradigm repair usually consists of two primary techniques: distancing the journalistic breach from proper, paradigm-conforming journalism and re-affirming the value of the paradigm itself. These techniques protect the paradigm while recognizing the breach. The outcome of successful paradigm repair, according to Hindman, “is that news media can continue operating as before because they have isolated and dismissed the anomaly.” (Hindman, 2005, p. 227).

Hindman adds, however, that some breaches are so significant that paradigm repair is not sufficient. She makes a case that the Jayson Blair scandal, for example, so disrupted the traditional news production paradigm that the *New York Times*, in addition to the usual repair work, responded by making some changes to the paradigm itself as practiced by that particular newspaper.

Theories of journalism’s publics.

Journalistic breaches generate particular controversy because of the important role that journalism is often assigned in the maintenance of democracy. According to many scholars and commentators journalism connects the public and the private; it is the independent mediator between people and politics. Many commentators therefore criticize journalism that operates outside the dominant paradigm as jeopardizing democracy. This criticism rests on a number of assumptions about both the superiority of the current paradigm and the operation of the democratic public sphere. In order to identify and explain these assumptions in the commentary surrounding the Daisey scandal, I draw upon various theoretical models of publics and the public sphere.

Jurgen Habermas' (1974) description of the ideal bourgeois public sphere has been highly influential as a normative vision of journalism's role in democracy, and informs a number of contemporary journalistic conventions (Allan, 1997). In Habermas' conception of the public sphere, citizens develop public opinion through reasoned discourse. This public sphere requires facts that are unadulterated by the interests of individuals and depends on rationality. It also entails equality; each citizen must have an equal opportunity to participate. Power differentials must be bracketed. Journalism serves as the medium of this public debate by providing the public with the information it needs to deliberate. Further, public debates in the press are analogous to debates in legislatures (Hampton, 2010). The press is necessarily separate from government, special interests, and corporate interests.

The model that Habermas articulated has been critiqued from many angles, a number of which resonate with Daisey's intervention. Daisey's text forwards an alternate conception of the public sphere. It attempts to expand what counts as a matter of public concern, who counts as the public, and critiques the role of journalism in the whole process.

In an argument that could be seen as sympathetic to Daisey, Nancy Fraser (1990) critiques Habermas' public sphere on the grounds that it is exclusive and elides real and important power differentials. A singular, rigid, bourgeois conception of "the public" and a single set of rules for what counts as appropriate public discourse excludes many communities and texts from discursive participation in democracy. Fraser argues that multiple "publics" is a more inclusive and more democratic model than Habermas' monolithic public. This model of multiple competing and overlapping publics, according to Fraser, allows participation on a broader range of topics from a wider variety of people, and it recognizes that societal inequalities

exist. Fraser doesn't specifically address journalism, but her modifications of the public sphere would certainly entail a reimagining of journalism.

DeLuca and Peebles (2002) also critique the traditional Habermasian conception of the public sphere for its narrowness. They take issue with its insistence on rationality and the privileging of face-to-face communication, especially in the 21st century technological context. They suggest the supplemental concept of the "public screen," which allows for the rhetoric of non-rational images in addition to rational discourse. Besides allowing a broader range of acceptable public discourse, the public screen also grants access to members of the public who may not have access to the traditional public sphere through the mainstream media, especially activists. Many critics have grappled with the problem of the pervasive commercial influence on journalism as an obstacle to the ideal public sphere. Where Habermas (1974) sees this influence as an obstacle that can be overcome, others, including DeLuca and Peebles, argue that it is an extensive problem that requires overhauling conceptions of journalism and the public sphere entirely (Curran, 2000; Hampton, 2010).

In an argument that is similar to Daisey's, DeLuca, Lawson, & Sun (2012) expand this argument to suggest that non-mainstream truths demand non-mainstream journalism. Through an examination of representations of the Occupy Wall Street protests from various media, DeLuca, et al. declare that the mainstream media represented the protests in a way that benefitted the status quo and those already in power. Less-mainstream blogs, however, represented the protests in a more complete and complicated way.

All of this is to say that, despite overwhelming condemnation by journalists and media critics, Daisey's alternative journalism is not so easily dismissed as a mere liar's perversion of

the democratic process. Instead it can be viewed as an application, with both faults and advantages, of some of these re-worked conceptions of the public sphere.

Textual Artifacts

In this thesis, I analyze two types of texts. First is the original work by Mike Daisey and *This American Life* (*TAL*) that sparked controversy. I examine the transcripts of Daisey's theatrical monologue "the Agony and Ecstasy of Steve Jobs," posted on Daisey's blog. I work with both the Feb 2012 version and the September 2012 versions, as Daisey made some changes in response to the controversy. I also look at *TAL*'s adaptation of the monologue, "Mr. Daisey and the Apple Factory." Additionally, I examine the transcript and audio of *TAL*'s subsequent "Retraction" episode.

Secondly, I look at approximately 80 pieces of written commentary by journalists, academics and members of the public produced in response to the retraction. In this corpus, I include pieces of both news and opinion. I include news stories under the category of "commentary," because they often include snippets of opinion from quoted sources or summaries of the controversy as they view it. With the goal of capturing the widest possible variety of opinions, rather than a systematic or representative sample, I assembled this corpus through *Lexis-Nexis* database searches, general Web searches, and following links between commentaries. This method produced a rich mass of texts from a great diversity of sources, from personal blogs to venerated newspapers. I attempted to include every piece of commentary available on the internet that appeared soon after the retraction. The vast majority of the commentaries in this study were published in the week following *TAL*'s "Retraction" episode, which aired on March 16, 2012. I have, however, included several relevant texts that fall outside of that timeframe. All were published within three months of *TAL*'s retraction.

Methods

According to Barbie Zelizer, cultural studies of journalism consider journalists to be “producers of culture.” This type of analysis looks at journalism as one type of “cultural argumentation, expression, representation and production” among many others (Zelizer, 2004, p. 177). A cultural approach necessarily entails a critical look at the journalistic worldview. It studies journalism as culturally and historically contingent, caught up in power dynamics, and ideological. It therefore interrogates accepted journalistic principles such as objectivity, independence, transparent facts, the strict boundary between fiction and non-fiction, balance, and direct and faithful quotation, among others.

These journalistic norms and values often fall into what Raymie McKerrow calls “the undiscussed.” The goal of critical rhetoric, similar to cultural studies of journalism, is to reveal the undiscussed in order to understand mechanisms of power in society that are typically taken for granted. Following Foucault, McKerrow calls for “permanent criticism” in his “critique of freedom” (McKerrow, 1989, p. 96). This type of critique interrogates assumptions in order to allow for new possibilities in power dynamics, social relations, and –in this case– the practice and function of journalism. My aim is explicitly not to advocate specific reforms of journalism, or even to suggest that they are necessary, but instead to participate in this ongoing permanent criticism by looking with skepticism at the rules and assumptions of contemporary American journalism. In McKerrow’s words, this type of critique “guard[s] against ‘taken for granted’ that endanger our freedom–our chance to consider new possibilities for action” (McKerrow, 1989, p. 97).

As paradigm repair theory argues, the overwhelming condemnation Daisey received from the journalistic community can be interpreted as an attempt to shore up traditional journalism’s

discursive power. As McKerrow explains, “Bringing the ‘undiscussed’ or concealed to the forefront is an act of heterodoxical rhetoric, met, naturally enough, by an orthodox rhetoric of defense of the status quo” (McKerrow, 1989, p. 105). One view could describe Daisey’s work as “heterodoxical rhetoric” designed to reveal the moral failings of traditional journalism and the critical responses from journalists as the orthodox “defense of the status quo.” Without either defending or dismissing Daisey’s work, my project is to explore the conversation it began.

Foucault’s perspective assumes that any status quo is not the product of linear progress. As historians of journalism have also pointed out, our current journalistic norms of practice are neither natural nor inevitable (see, for example, Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009; Schudson, 2001). According to Foucault, when a genealogist seeks to understand the way things are, she discovers, as Nietzsche did, “not a timeless and essential secret, but the secret that they have no essence or that their essence was fabricated in a piecemeal fashion from alien forms” (Foucault, 1984, p. 78). A search for the “best” way to practice journalism will therefore be fruitless, because there is no essence or secret to discover, no perfect journalism towards which our practices can evolve.

What we can do instead is reflect upon our conventions and our rules for the production of truth. In McKerrow’s version of Foucaultian critical rhetoric, critical reflection on the ways that truth is shaped by power and constraints is important, because it grants us “freedom” to imagine different possibilities for journalism and truth. Barbara Biesecker further articulates what Foucaultian rhetorical criticism can mean for social change: it can help alter the “grid of intelligibility” that serves as the conditions of possibility and directs the use of power (Biesecker, 1992). My project is sympathetic to these aims and perspectives. Its aim is to detail the conventions that Daisey’s work questions and explain the “grid of intelligibility” that the scandal illuminates.

Consistent with the concerns of both cultural studies and critical rhetoric, this thesis also emphasizes the audience. Because audience interpretations of a discursive event determine its significance, I devote two thesis chapters to the analysis of responses to Daisey's work and *TAL*'s retraction. I focus primarily on responses written by professional journalists and critics. These audience members dominate the commentary, not only because producing media content is their job. They also have personal stakes in debates over journalism, and are in the position to negotiate journalism's changing norms as they are the ones who enact and reproduce those norms.

Additionally, one of my primary questions concerns the relationship between journalism and its publics: what is journalism's role in democratic society? I am interested in understanding more than the rhetorical techniques of journalism; I want to investigate what it does in the world and what the public expects it to do in a moment when society's expectations of journalism seem to be changing.

With these analytical goals in mind, I carefully read the texts in my corpus and identified trends in the arguments. I then examined these arguments in detail and compared them to my own interpretation of Daisey's text. Based on previous work on journalistic breaches and theories of paradigm repair and publics, I specifically paid attention to:

- Definitions of truth and standards of truth production.

Related to the boundaries of journalism, contemporary fears about encroaching "truthiness," and the assumed link between truth and democratic deliberation, I examined arguments that addressed the truth or falsity of Daisey's work and arguments that attempted to define truth.

- Examples of paradigm repair or arguments against paradigm repair.

I was particularly interested in commentary that either seeks to preserve or questions the boundaries, definitions, and rules of traditional journalism. I therefore specifically looked for descriptions of *how* journalism is (or should be) practiced; its techniques and conventions, and for commentary that compares and contrasts Daisey and his methods with mainstream journalists and their methods.

- Anxiety about recent and future changes in journalism.

I paid attention to arguments that describe Daisey's work as symptomatic of societal or journalistic trends without attempting to pre-determine those trends.

- Arguments about journalism's role in the democratic public sphere.

I noted arguments that concerned the relationship between journalism, activism, and public debate. I also examined comments that consider the effects of Daisey's text on debates regarding the working conditions in Chinese factories.

Chapters of this Thesis

Chapter 2, "The Agony and Ecstasy of Mr. Daisey," focuses on transcripts of Daisey's stage show and the original TAL broadcast. First I ask what genre the piece belongs to, as that later became a topic of debate. I look at the framing discourses and textual features that allowed Daisey's work to find a home in both journalistic and theatrical contexts, which allows me to explore the mechanisms of rhetorical shorthand that indicate "journalism" and "truth" to audiences. I also investigate the question of whether the rules of truth production and the definition of truth vary by genre.

I then detail Daisey's non-journalistic definition of truth. In his piece, truth is not something that exists objectively. Instead of being fixed and verifiable, it is a constructed product

of power. I argue that this definition facilitates Daisey's indictment of mainstream journalism's coverage of Chinese factory conditions, and allows him to offer an alternate truth in its place.

Finally, I examine aspects of the text that contributed to its rhetorical power and facilitated its popularity. One of the frustrations of some Daisey critics is that other ("real") journalists were also documenting the abuses in Chinese factories, but it was Daisey's ("dishonest") work that brought attention to the issue.

In Chapter 3, "Mr. Daisey and Journalism's Paradigm," I examine commentary on Daisey's piece and *TAL*'s retraction. In this chapter, I broadly ask what this commentary, through the lens of the Daisey case, has to say about journalism more broadly. First, I analyze the techniques of paradigm repair that appear in these commentaries. I detail the mechanisms by which the commentary marginalizes Daisey and defends traditional journalism.

I conclude that the repair work has not been entirely successful, as the commentary expresses significant anxieties about larger (disturbing) trends in journalism that Daisey represents. These trends include increasing truthiness, blurred generic boundaries, and the reduced prioritization of truth in favor of storytelling, activism, and financial gain.

Chapter 4, "Mr. Daisey and Democracy: Journalism and its Publics," looks at how the commentary interprets journalism's role in the democratic public sphere. I describe how Daisey's work questions that role and also questions traditional assumptions about the nature and function of the public sphere itself. His work advocates expanding the public sphere to include more types of people, topics, texts and truths.

Finally, in the conclusion I reflect on Daisey's transgressions as part of larger historical trends in journalism.

Chapter 2: The Agony and Ecstasy of Mr. Daisey

Yes, Cathy. I'm going to lie to lots of people. –Mike Daisey

In this chapter, I examine the content of the *This American Life's* (TAL) episode “Mr. Daisey and the Apple Factory” as well as both versions of Mike Daisey’s stage transcript “The Agony and Ecstasy of Steve Jobs.” The similarities and differences between the various versions of this text are instructive and help illuminate some of the sources of the controversy that followed TAL’s retraction of the episode.

First, I examine the text’s genre, which has been a topic of debate in the controversy. Genre determines audience expectations and impacts how the text will be judged, so it sets the parameters for any debate over the text’s truth or success. I detail the indicators of different genres in this text, which include its context(s), the discourses that frame it, and its performance of genre through textual conventions. Although this text is a dizzying mix of drama and journalism, it is one that mobilizes rhetorical devices that powerfully signal “truth” to audiences.

There is a gap between the type of truth that audiences expect from the journalistic genre and the way Daisey constructs truth in this text. The next section of this chapter explains this gap. The text doesn’t simply ignore or flout journalistic truth standards; it presents an argument against them and elaborates its own view of truth. Journalistic truth is determined by its correspondence to external reality, while truth according to Daisey’s text is instead a product of power. It is therefore subject to change as power dynamics change. The text’s project is to contest the power that the Apple corporation and institutions of journalism have over the truth about Chinese manufacturing. According to this text’s logic, it cannot succeed by simply relating an alternate narrative; it must also mobilize power of its own.

In the final section of this chapter, I explore the sources of the text's rhetorical power. A significant source of that power is the text's claim that it describes actual events. Although the text rejects a journalistic definition of truth, it simultaneously relies on the rhetorical force that journalistic conventions confer.

Introduction: the Texts, Their Contents and Their Contexts

Mike Daisey started performing his theatrical monologue "The Agony and Ecstasy of Steve Jobs" in 2010. Though successful as far as staged monologues go, the work did not initially generate controversy or attract much media attention. In January 2012, the public radio show *This American Life* (*TAL*) based an entire episode on Daisey's monologue called "Mr. Daisey and the Apple Factory." This broadcast garnered attention and later generated controversy by exposing the material to a much larger audience and placing it in a different generic context. At over 880,000 downloads, the podcast of "Mr. Daisey and the Apple Factory" soon became *TAL*'s most downloaded episode ever ("Retracting 'Mr. Daisey and the Apple Factory,'" 2012). Due to the enormous initial popularity of the episode, Daisey released the transcript of his stage monologue with the idea that others might want to stage it. He posted the first version of the transcript to his blog on February 21, 2012.

The text (in both its monologue and broadcast forms) tells the story of Daisey's visit to Shenzhen, China, which is the site of a massive Foxconn factory, one of Apple, Inc.'s suppliers. Daisey explains that he was motivated to make the trip by a sudden curiosity about where his beloved Apple technology comes from (Daisey, 2012a, 2012d; Glass, 2012a).

According to the text, in China Daisey encounters shocking evidence of the abuse of Foxconn factory workers. He meets a number of specific, memorable characters who explain their desperate living and working conditions. He listens to their heartwrenching stories, which

involve working inhumanely long hours, developing preventable disabilities, and the presence of many underage workers. He also witnesses the working and dormitory conditions inside one of the factories.

As a non-journalist who has no experience in China, Daisey gains surprising access to these workers and to the factory itself through two rudimentary tactics: First, he stands outside the factory until people talk to him. Later he poses as an executive hoping to do business with the factory, and is rapidly allowed inside. Throughout the story, Daisey portrays himself as a naïf armed with nothing more than curiosity about Apple and a desire to know the truth.

In the text, Daisey is sharply critical of professional American journalists who, according to Daisey, have willfully ignored these inhumane factory conditions. He is even more critical of the Apple corporation, which is responsible for the conditions. His explicit goals are to encourage his audience of American Apple users to care about the Chinese people who make their technology “by hand,” and to take steps to hold Apple accountable for the inhumane treatment of those workers.

In the stage monologue, but not the *TAL* broadcast, there is a second storyline that tells the history of the Apple company. It follows Apple and its leaders through generations of technology and business decisions. This portion of the monologue was not subject to *TAL*'s retraction and generated no controversy.

The *TAL* broadcast brought significant attention to Daisey and to the plight of the workers in Apple's Chinese supplier factories. After the episode aired, Daisey made numerous media appearances on the topic, the *New York Times* published an extensive series of exposés, and members of the public pressured Apple and the U.S. Congress to take action on the issue (Doctor, 2012; Duhigg & Bradsher, 2012).

Meanwhile, journalists who had reported about the same Chinese factory conditions became suspicious about the literal truth of some of the story's details. Though by all accounts the factory conditions that Daisey describes do exist, reporters doubted the specifics of his tale, particularly some of its most powerful and intimate moments. American Public Media's *Marketplace* reporter Rob Schmitz investigated Daisey's story, tracked down his interpreter, and uncovered a number of fabrications. According to Schmitz's reporting, some memorable scenes that Daisey describes simply did not occur. For example, in "Mr. Daisey and the Apple Factory," Daisey describes his initial impression upon arriving at the gates of Foxconn: "I get out of the taxi with my translator. And the first thing I see at the gates are the guards. And the guards look pissed. They look really pissed. And they are carrying guns" (Glass, 2012a). According to Schmitz, security guards never carry guns in China. When Schmitz interviewed Daisey's interpreter Cathy Lee about the guns, "Cathy says she's never seen a gun in person, only in the movies and on TV, so she'd remember it" (Glass, 2012b, p. 5).

Other characters and stories were evidently composites that Daisey created from several sources, including the accounts of other journalists. Daisey describes an encounter with workers poisoned by N-Hexane, a chemical used to clean iPhone screens, whose "hands shake uncontrollably. Most of them can't even pick up a glass." In the course of his own reporting, Schmitz had met these same workers in a different city. Cathy Lee told Schmitz that she and Daisey had not met any workers who claimed to be poisoned by N-Hexane or anybody whose hands shook as Daisey described. According to Schmitz, "Cathy suggests that Daisey saw reports about this in the news, and copied and pasted it into his monologue" (Glass, 2012b, p. 7).

Schmitz also says that Daisey consistently over-reported the number of workers he met and the number of factories he visited. He also exaggerated the youth of the workers. According

to Schmitz, Lee, Apple, Inc. and other journalists, underage workers are rare at Foxconn factories, but Daisey claims to have immediately encountered several (Glass, 2012a, 2012b). In a damning indictment of Apple, Daisey says, “I do know that in my first two hours of my first day at that gate, I met workers who were 14 years old, 13 years old, 12. Do you really think Apple doesn't know?” (Glass, 2012a). Lee told Schmitz that if they had met workers that young, “I would be surprised. I would be very surprised. And I would remember for sure. But there is no such thing” (Glass, 2012b, p. 6).

Schmitz brought the results of his investigation, which included these and other detailed accusations, to *TAL*. The show retracted the entire episode as a result. The show broadcast its “Retraction” episode on March 16, 2012 (Glass, 2012b; Schmitz, 2012). The retraction sparked a controversy and a media debate, which are the subjects of Chapters 3 and 4 of this thesis.

In the retraction and afterwards, Daisey consistently defended his work. He admitted to a very small number of the infractions, and apologized only for broadcasting it as journalism on *TAL* (Daisey, 2012b, 2012c; Glass, 2012b). He continued to perform “The Agony and Ecstasy of Steve Jobs” on stage in a slightly amended form that addressed some of the retraction’s accusations. In September 2012, Daisey released the modified version of the stage transcript (“Release 2.0”).

Genre and Context

A significant component of the controversy had to do with the genre of Daisey’s work. Commentators debated whether the text was drama or journalism and which generic standards they should use to judge the text fairly. Through its different contexts, framing discourses, and textual features, Daisey’s text performed both journalism and theater, which allowed it to leverage the persuasive tools of both genres.

Daisey's use of journalistic framing and textual conventions, however, also burdened the text with audience expectations that it failed to meet. This is one of the primary causes of the controversy. Following the retraction, one of the questions critics asked was how Daisey duped his audience. Put less judgmentally, how did "Mr. Daisey and the Apple Factory" so thoroughly *seem* to be journalism when, as the retraction showed, the text fundamentally failed to uphold journalistic norms? This contested text provides a unique opportunity to explore the mechanisms of rhetorical shorthand that indicate journalism, drama, truth, and fiction to audiences.

As a stage show, the monologue neither had the political power nor generated the controversy of its radio broadcast version. Some of the power and controversy is likely a simple result of the large size of *This American Life's* audience, estimated at 1.7 million listeners per week. *TAL's* podcast is also the most popular in the United States ("About our radio show," n.d.). The increase in the audience size doesn't tell the whole story, however. The change from a theatrical to a journalistic context is also crucial, because it changed audience expectations of the piece's genre. A number of commentators on the controversy judge the piece as acceptable as drama in the context of a theater but condemn it as journalism in the context of a news program. Film critic Andrew O'Hehir, for example, wrote, "It was totally OK to do that onstage, and totally not OK to do it in the context of a radio news program" (O'Hehir, Williams, & Miller, 2012).

In their study of a parallel example, the controversy surrounding the truthfulness of Nobel laureate Rigoberta Menchú's 1983 autobiography, Avant-Mier and Hasian (2008) explain that the debate over that text often invoked genre. Many supporters justified Menchú's questionably "true" work by explaining its genre. As a Guatemalan *testimonio*, the purposes of *Me Llamo Rigoberta Menchú* are different from traditional North American journalism, as are its standards

of truth. The genre of *testimonio*, according to Avant-Mier and Hasian, is “a collectivist form of discourse” (p. 330). First-person accounts in *testimonios* speak for a community, rather than the literal, singular author. These texts are politically powerful; they create solidarity and give a voice to disempowered people who may not normally have access to the literary establishment. Because the genre does not conform to North American categories of “fact” and “fiction,” Menchú’s text attracted critics in the U.S. Menchú’s defenders argue that judging this text by the standards of North American journalism does not make sense, and further, does violence to the text and to the indigenous communities it represents. Although the first-person stories Menchú relates are not actual eyewitness accounts, they tell the “truth” according to the rules of the *testimonio* genre.

Menchú’s *testimonio* was clearly comprehended by the indigenous Guatemalans it represents and by those familiar with the *testimonio* genre. Detractors of the text were those from outside Latin America who (mis)understood it as a journalistic memoir. Generic identity depends upon conventions and a uniform set of rules, specific to the particular genre, that are understood by both producer and audience. When the audience and the producer understand a text and its genre differently, the text garners criticism.

Enthusiastic Daisey defender Scott Walters (2012a) argues that “The Agony and Ecstasy of Steve Jobs” is also a *testimonio*, and therefore should not be held to journalistic standards. Walters is in the minority here, and it is easy to see why. *Testimonio* is not a widely recognized genre in the United States. Even if Daisey’s work conformed strictly to the norms of the *testimonio* genre –which it does not– those norms are not well understood among the work’s intended audience. The audience, therefore, cannot be expected to classify the work as a *testimonio* and judge it by the standards of that genre. It will, instead, expect “The Agony and

Ecstasy of Steve Jobs” to uphold the norms of a more familiar genre such as literature, drama, journalism or memoir. Rhetorical scholar Carolyn Miller (1984) argues that genres participate in social action, and should therefore be classified pragmatically, according to what they do. She points out that genres are cultural; they correspond to recurring situations that are defined according to culturally-specific ways of organizing the world. She dismisses scholarship that, for example, attempts to classify contemporary rhetoric according to Aristotelian genres, as those genres accord with the situations of another time and place. The pragmatic tasks of the contemporary U.S. are not those of Aristotle’s, or of indigenous Guatemala, and consequently its genres will be different.

The question, then, is how the audience places a text within a genre and chooses the standards by which to judge it. Campbell and Jamieson (Campbell & Jamieson, 1978) suggest that genres cohere through several aspects; they “[fuse] substantive, stylistic and situational characteristics.” In the Daisey case, there are three types of generic indicators that can influence the generic contract the audience makes with the monologue. They roughly correspond to Campbell and Jamieson’s three kinds of characteristics. First is the context (or situation) in which the work appears; Daisey performed his work on stage, published a stage “transcript,” and broadcast it on a journalistic radio program. Second are framing discourses –introductions and epilogues– that surround the work. The different versions of Daisey’s text are framed by wildly different (substantive) messages about genre. Finally, discursive (stylistic) conventions within a text itself evoke genres; this text’s conventions are mixed. These various signals are inconsistent, placing the work in a muddled liminal zone somewhere between theater and journalism.

Following *TAL*’s retraction, Daisey defended his work. As Daisey described the piece, “It uses a combination of fact, memoir, and dramatic license to tell its story, and I believe it does so

with integrity.” He stated that he stood by the text, and only apologized for presenting it in a journalistic context. On his blog, Daisey wrote, “THIS AMERICAN LIFE is essentially a journalistic - not a theatrical - enterprise, and as such it operates under a different set of rules and expectations. But this is my only regret” (Daisey, 2012b, capitals in original). He had never intended the work to be journalism, and had belied that original intention by broadcasting the story on the journalistic show *TAL*. If *TAL* had not broadcast his story, Daisey suggests, it would never have been judged by the standards of journalism. A work’s context certainly impacts how the audience perceives its genre. Indeed, in addition to Daisey himself, a number of other commentators on this controversy draw neat correspondences between the theatrical context and fiction, and the *TAL* context and journalism. Media critic David Carr, for example, described the piece as “a fine bit of theater. It worked less well as a piece of journalism” (Carr, 2012).

The generic identities suggested by the theatrical and radio contexts are strengthened by introductions and epilogues that frame the text. In an introduction to both versions of the stage transcript, Daisey explains that he intends for the transcript to be an open-source “blueprint” that others can use to stage “The Agony and Ecstasy of Steve Jobs.” He notes that he performs the monologue slightly differently each time and that others staging it should feel free to adapt the transcript as they see fit. “We invite you,” writes Daisey, “artists of all stripes, to take our monologue and put your own unique spin on it” (Daisey, 2012a, p. 2)

The monologue transcript’s introduction clearly identifies the work as a piece of drama that doesn’t pretend to journalism. It repeatedly emphasizes that the monologue is “performed,” and allows –even encourages– individual performances to take liberties with the transcript. Further, Daisey locates the monologue within “the arts” and refers to others who might stage it as “artists” and “actors.” In direct contrast with the *TAL* version, there is no mention of the

integrity of facts or journalism (Daisey, 2012a, p. 2).

The introduction does not label the monologue as either fiction or non-fiction (though the Public Theater's program described it as "nonfiction"), but it does call itself "activist." Its explicit goal is to get Americans to care about the Chinese workers who make their electronics. This goal is spelled out in both the introduction and in two addendums to the end of the transcript labeled "Change is possible" and "The rest of the story is in your hands." "Change is Possible," a document theaters distribute to their audiences following performances of the monologue, begins "If you feel moved to take action from what you've heard tonight, there are concrete steps you can choose to take." The document then explains how audience members can pressure Apple and other corporations to improve their labor practices, and includes details such as email addresses, Twitter hashtags, and websites (Daisey, 2012a, p. 62). The epilogue "The rest of the story is in your hands," which appears only in the first version of the transcript, celebrates the monologue's political impact on Apple, Foxconn, and the news media since its appearance on *TAL* (Daisey, 2012a, p. 61).

By contrast, the *TAL* broadcast explicitly declares the piece to be journalism. *TAL* host Ira Glass' introduction describes Daisey as someone "who makes his living doing monologues on stage" but who "turned himself into an amateur reporter" for this story. The *TAL* broadcast follows Daisey's story with Glass explaining that *TAL* carefully fact-checked his work because "he's not a reporter." *TAL* interviewed "over a dozen" knowledgeable experts, including two during the broadcast, to confirm the main points of Daisey's story (though not its exact factual details). In its framing of the story as journalism, the broadcast carefully explains which of the details of Daisey's account are common and confirmed by other sources (that factories deceive auditors, for example) and which may seem exaggerated by Daisey's story (the prevalence of

underage workers and the suicide rate, for example) (Glass, 2012a). This portion of the broadcast clearly signals that the monologue is intended to be understood as journalism and that *TAL* has put its journalistic muscle behind making sure this “amateur’s” story lives up to professional journalistic standards of truth. It signals that *TAL* declares the story to be within the journalistic paradigm.

TAL doesn’t broadcast exclusively journalism. Its website describes the content of the show as “mostly true stories of everyday people, though not always. There’s lots more to the show, but it’s sort of hard to describe” (“About us,” n.d.). Several commentators blame the scandal on *TAL*’s complex mix of fiction and non-fiction with an emphasis on storytelling. The show’s overall lack of generic clarity (Myers & Silverman, 2012) or its unquestioning devotion to well-told stories (J. Rosen, 2012b) may have made it ripe for this type of scandal.

Nevertheless, *TAL*’s “Mr. Daisey and the Apple Factory” episode is explicit that it is broadcasting Daisey’s story as journalism. Daisey did not use the methods of professional journalists to gather information in China, but *TAL* worked to verify the story according to journalistic standards and devotes a segment of the broadcast to corroborating Daisey with other experts. In the broadcast, Glass states about Daisey, “He’s not a reporter, and I wondered, did he get it right? And so we’ve actually spent a few weeks checking everything he says in his show” (Glass, 2012a).

Importantly, context isn’t the only indicator of genre, or the only line separating factual genres from fictional ones. In order to make sense in a particular context, the internal components of a text also have to correspond, to some degree, to a genre appropriate to the context. The fact that the same text found an audience as *both* a staged monologue and as a journalistic story calls for a close analysis of the features of the text itself that allowed it to fit in

in both contexts. Despite the differences of introductions and epilogues, the content of Daisey's story on *TAL* is nearly identical to portions of the original stage monologue. The *TAL* broadcast is significantly shorter; *TAL* removed parts of the monologue—specifically the Apple history storyline—that didn't directly relate to Daisey's visit to China. However, the sections of the monologue that do appear in the broadcast are almost completely unchanged. Daisey's stage instructions call the story drama; Glass' interviews with experts call it journalism, but the content is the same. The next question, then, is how that content presents itself in terms of genre.

Marcel Broersma argues that the main feature of the journalism genre is its "claim to truth" (2010, p. 25) The truth of its content is the generally recognized dividing line between journalism and not-journalism, but Broersma contends that this line is based on performance, not substance. According to Broersma and others such as Fishman (1980), Ericson, Baranek, & Chan (1987), and Schudson (1995) journalism's authority comes from its rhetorical performance of genre, not from its factual correspondence to reality. That factual correspondence is not only impractical for audience members to verify, but is also impossible for any text to achieve. No text, including rigorous journalism, can ever be a simple reflection of reality. It will always be a partial, filtered representation from a particular vantage point that is constrained by the limits of language.

Journalistic fraud, in Broersma's view, prompts strong reactions from journalists and from the public because journalism's performative codes have been abused. The strength of those codes, which serve as a proxy for accepted newsgathering and news production practices, is crucial to journalism's authority and identity (2010, p. 25). Furthermore, performative codes are only as powerful as the audience's belief in them. As a parade of journalistic scandals demonstrates, there is no necessary correspondence between a text's performance of journalism

and its production methods. The journalistic audience makes that link and accepts a text as “true” based on trust and the quality of the journalistic performance.

This performance begins with the context and labeling, which I discussed earlier. When CNN advertises itself as “The most trusted name in news,” it is performing trustworthiness. The context of a text on CNN, the slogan argues, is one that has a history of truthfulness, and which many other people have chosen to trust. Therefore, audience members should, according to CNN, believe in the truth of its texts and understand them as journalism. Similarly, *TAL* adds weight to Daisey’s truth claims by surrounding his story with a forceful journalistic performance and a journalistic resume. When Glass and the show’s producers interview experts to evaluate Daisey’s claims, they are asserting to the audience, “You may not be able to trust Daisey, but you can trust us.”

Beyond context and overt labels, the audience’s only mechanism for identifying “truthful” journalistic discourse is through stylistic conventions. According to Broersma (2010), some examples of these (mainstream contemporary American) conventions include presenting material according to the norm of objectivity, indicating that the content has been produced according to accepted professional routines –such as particular interviewing procedures– and framing stories in ways that are meaningful and make sense within existing worldviews of the audience. Daisey’s text both utilizes and defies a number of journalistic conventions. This is typical of *TAL*, which describes its content on its website in this way: “The journalism we do tends to use a lot of the techniques of fiction: scenes and characters and narrative threads. Meanwhile, the fiction we have on the show functions like journalism” (“About our radio show,” n.d.).

“Mr. Daisey and the Apple Factory” does use scenes, characters and narrative threads.

Though those techniques are compatible with journalistic truth, the parts of the monologue that most strongly display these “techniques of fiction” are also the ones that later led to the retraction, a fact that Daisey’s critics highlighted. Many critics single out one scene in particular, which Daisey whistleblower Schmitz calls “the most dramatic point in Daisey’s monologue” (Glass, 2012b, p. 7). Daisey meets a man whose hand had been permanently disfigured in a workplace accident at Foxconn. The worker was subsequently fired from his job making iPad and laptop parts for working too slowly. Daisey shows the worker his own iPad:

He's never actually seen one on. This thing that took his hand. I turn it on, unlock the screen, pass it to him. He takes it. The icons flare into view. And he strokes the screen with his ruined hand, and the icons slide back and forth, and he says something to Cathy, and Cathy says, "He says it's a kind of magic." (Daisey, 2012a, p. 56)

This scene neatly encapsulates several of Daisey’s points in a memorable human moment. The character of the leathery, claw-handed man is unforgettable, as is his encounter with ironic “magic.” In an interview with Schmitz in *TAL*’s “Retraction,” Daisey’s interpreter Cathy Lee describes this scene as “just like a movie scenery.” In other words, Lee recognizes the encounter as utilizing the techniques of fiction. She also says that it *is* fiction: “This is not true” (Glass, 2012b, p. 8).

The monologue also uses pacing, dramatic storytelling and language that is atypical in journalism. The sentences vary between very long –occupying several lines of text– and very short –just two words. There are occasional long pauses and the repetition of impactful phrases. Daisey frequently speaks directly to the audience, calling it “you” and giving instructions. He asks the audience to visualize a cafeteria, then says “I’ll wait. No really. I’ll wait” (2012a, p. 28). A pause follows. He also speaks in colloquial language and profanity, as in this example:

“Because one of the ways Steve Jobs organized the universe is he divided everyone in the universe into Geniuses and Bozos—and there are only a few Geniuses and there’s a FUCKLOAD of Bozos” (2012a, p. 32).

Daisey provides a wealth of detailed personal information about himself. This not only flouts the norm of objectivity, but also goes beyond the norms of partisan or reflective journalism, which advocate taking a stance and explaining the journalist’s stakes in the story and makes no pretense of objectivity. (Broersma, 2010, p. 29) Daisey not only provides that type of disclosure, but further goes into detail about, for example, his history of computer ownership. He provides his own judgment, emotion and opinion at every turn. He sees “shitty Chinese advertising,” (2012a, p. 25) describes a couple of factory positions as the “worst job in the fucking world,” (2012a, p. 43) and takes time to rant against the uselessness of PowerPoint and Microsoft products in general (2012a, p. 41).

Daisey illustrates the story with fictionalized sounds. Even when he quotes others, the only voice in the story is Daisey’s. He makes his own sound effects and does some voice impressions of people he quotes. His impression of Apple co-founder Steve Wozniak appears in the transcript as “groggy incomprehensible bear-like geek sounds” (2012a, p. 23) One of the stage directions explains that Daisey performs a particular sentence “in the manner of a serious pirate” (2012a, p. 34). Furthermore, even the *TAL* version of Daisey’s story was recorded in front of an audience, and the broadcast includes sounds of audience laughter. These features are not those of typical journalism; they are those of theater. The text’s storytelling cadence, its humor, its colorful personal details, and its sound all combine to create a work that is at home in a theatrical context.

At one point Daisey quotes an aphorism, saying “I can’t remember who said it originally.” This type of attribution falls outside common journalistic practices, which would name the source of the quote. This example illustrates the priorities of Daisey’s monologue; it is less concerned with journalistic (or any) norms than with emotional appeal that furthers its activist purposes.

Although its textual elements aren’t classically journalistic, they do not preclude Daisey’s work from being journalism. It is important to note that journalistic conventions and, by extension, the definition of “good” journalism are neither universal nor fixed in time. As news sociologist Michael Schudson (1995) has persuasively detailed, they are changing, negotiable, and, above all, cultural. Schudson explains that the journalistic “conventions of one society or time are not those of another. Some of the most familiar news conventions of our day, so obvious they seem timeless, are recent innovations. Like others, these conventions help make culturally consonant messages readable and culturally dissonant messages unsayable” (Schudson, 1995, p. 55).

In the contemporary United States, a wide variety of literary styles are accepted as journalism. The trait that unites all journalistic varieties, as Broersma indicates, is their claim to truth. Indeed, the *New York Times*, in its analysis of the Jayson Blair scandal, describes “the cardinal tenet of journalism” as “simply truth” (Barry, Barstow, Glater, Liptak, & Steinberg, 2003).² And in their 2003 survey of U.S. journalists’ values and roles, Plaisance and Skewes (2003) found that “honest” was the value journalists ranked most important by a wide margin. The unorthodox style of Daisey’s text may make it uncommon among journalism, then, but doesn’t necessarily disqualify it from belonging to the genre. If the content claims to be true and

² Blair was a *New York Times* reporter who engaged in “widespread fabrication and plagiarism” (Barry, Barstow, Glater, Liptak, & Steinberg, 2003).

seems true to its audience, this text could still be perceived as journalism, albeit unique journalism.

Even in the context of the theater, and despite Daisey's preference for a theatrical style over a journalistic one, Daisey's work is not unambiguous fiction. The text consistently applies the journalistic metaphor of the eyewitness first-hand account. In "Retraction," Glass dismisses Daisey's argument that his text is perfectly honest in a theatrical context, if not literally true in a journalistic way. Glass tells Daisey, "I thought that the story was literally true seeing it in the theater. [...] I thought it was true because you were on stage saying 'this happened to me' (Glass, 2012b, p. 19). Hartley (2008) notes that the most powerful journalistic metaphors are those of sight: the eyewitness, the watchdog, revelation, in the spotlight, etc. The eyewitness convention, in particular, is an especially influential shorthand for "truth." Hartley further asserts that "This ideology of eyewitness authenticity is much stronger than the actuality of news-gathering practices" (2008, p. 921). In other words, the feeling of authenticity that the convention conveys outstrips the actual authenticity of news content.

Daisey strengthens his truth claims by asserting that he personally witnessed the events he describes. Daisey's controversial statement "I met workers who were fourteen years old, I met workers who were thirteen years old, I met workers who were twelve" (Daisey, 2012a, p. 31) is powerful not solely because of its shocking content, Daisey's theatrical delivery or its use of dramatic repetition. It is also powerful because its use of the eyewitness convention "I met" carries a sense of journalistic truth. That truth is a key component of Daisey's activist argument. In order to care about the plight of Chinese factory workers and take action on their behalf, the audience must believe that they are real.

Hartley extends the sight metaphor to describe journalists as “visionaries” who order the world. They imbue random events with meaning by imposing control and coherence on those events. To do this, according to Hartley, they use the techniques of “fakery,” by which he means the transformation of events into coherent stories that fit into a meaningful structure. What people understand as journalistic truth is not, according to Hartley, “that which exists in fact” but rather “plausible stories” (2008, p. 919). This is the same point Broersma makes when he explains that the persuasiveness of journalism’s truth claim depends on its content conforming to existing worldviews. Dahlgren also helpfully distinguishes between “analytic mode” and “story mode” in journalism, and suggests that these two modes evoke truth in different ways. He notes that “the more intense the narrative coherence, the less imperative is the referential function to an external reality for meaning to be conveyed” (Dahlgren, 1992, pp. 14–15).

Daisey’s work excels at telling a plausible, coherent story and in this way is believable as journalism. His story proceeds in a logical, easy-to-follow way and tells the familiar and appealing tale of an underdog. Daisey, a regular American, goes to China with no plan. He defies the advice of professional journalists and the intimidation tactics of the Apple corporation, and easily meets a variety of workers who neatly encapsulate all of the factories’ failings in vivid, personal ways. According to the monologue, when Daisey tells his plan to journalists in Hong Kong, “you can actually see them wrestling with just how to express to me just how totally fucked up my plan is” (Daisey, 2012a, p. 26). In spite of the journalists’ advice, Daisey goes to the gates of Foxconn where there are guards with guns and nets around the building because “day after day, week after week, worker after worker is climbing all the way up to the tops of these enormous buildings and then throwing themselves off” (Daisey, 2012a, p. 29). Sure enough, Daisey’s defiance and bravery lead him straight to workers such as one woman who

wanted to be paid overtime. She tells Daisey, “I went to the Labor Board, and I told them about my problem, and they took down my name and my address and my company, and they took my name and they put it on the blacklist. And they fired me.” Then, according to Daisey, “she shows me a copy of the blacklist” (Daisey, 2012a, p. 55).

In addition to its simple narrative coherence and charm, Daisey’s story of his trip to China is also plausible because, though not journalistically and literally true, the things Daisey describes are consistent with what other journalists have discovered about the factories. As Schmitz wrote, “What makes this a little complicated is that the things Daisey lied about seeing are things that have actually happened in China” (Schmitz, 2012). In the *TAL* broadcast Glass summarizes many experts’ reaction to the factory conditions as Daisey described them: “nobody seemed very surprised by them.” *Not being surprised* counts as vouching for the truth of Daisey’s claims. Daisey’s claims are not surprising; they are consistent with the opinions of experts, so therefore they count as truth.

Scholars may define journalistic truth as that which is believable and successfully performs news conventions. That is not, however, the way most news consumers understand journalism, who judge its truth based on how perfectly it corresponds to events that have happened. Daisey’s story was plausible and utilized some powerful journalistic conventions; it (partially) took the finished *form* of journalism. But during his trip to China Daisey did not, for example, meet workers who were 12 to 14 years old. Daisey did not produce his work according to journalistic *methods*. According to the retraction, some parts of his story were fabricated and others were adapted from the accounts of other journalists (Glass, 2012b). The monologue was not strictly based on Daisey’s first-hand experience in China even though it employed eyewitness language and told a congruent story based in reality with a familiar narrative arc.

The retraction thus created a moment of reckoning for its audience. It presented evidence that journalistic form doesn't guarantee the literal, empirical truth of its contents, and it encouraged a conversation about how we define journalistic truth. It reminded the public that it cannot trust its usual shorthand indicators of truth; it can never really know what's true. Even further, it can no longer be sure what "true" means and must confront the question of whether its expectations for "truth" are realistic.

Avant-Mier and Hasian beautifully describe this reckoning in their description of the Rigoberta Menchú controversy. The controversy, they write, "presents a rare moment of public post-structural debate. In it, the ongoing but normally subtle post-structural questioning of the epistemological and ontological foundations of knowledge production was pushed to the forefront in a public negotiation that leaped beyond academic circles" (Avant-Mier & Hasian, 2008, p. 326). Although rhetoricians, philosophers and literary critics often discuss the contingent or constructed nature of truth, in general the public does not, except in these "rare moments" when norms of truth telling are publicly violated.

Constructing and Controlling the Truth

The definition of truth became one of the points of debate in the controversy following *TAL*'s retraction. The retraction noted that the text's information about Apple and Foxconn "is true." However, "what's not true is what Mike said about his own trip to China" (Glass, 2012b, p. 1). This discrepancy became the foundation of a debate over the meaning of truth. Do the "small" inaccuracies of Daisey's story matter in the face of the "larger" correct points he makes about Apple? The answer depends on one's definition of truth.

When *TAL* and Schmitz fact-checked Daisey's story, they sought to verify its truth by measuring its equivalence to the real world. When they discovered systematic differences, the

text was received by journalists and the public as “not true.” In the original monologue, Daisey describes his meetings with members of illegal unions as, “They come in twos and threes and fours, they come in all day—it’s a nine, ten hour day. I interview all of them.” In “Mr. Daisey and the Apple Factory,” Glass asks Daisey exactly how many of these workers he met, and Daisey replies, “there were like 25, 30 throughout the course of the day.” Lee, Daisey’s interpreter, told Schmitz the number was between two and five, and Daisey later revised his figure down to ten. In order for Daisey’s description of the meeting to be journalistically true, the number of workers in his story needs to be accurate, verifiable by somebody else who was present (such as Lee), and unchanging. As it does not meet these criteria it is not, to use Glass’ words “true in the traditional way.” When Glass confronts Daisey in “Retraction,” and asks him to admit that parts of his story aren’t true, Daisey demurs. He tells Glass that “we have different languages for what the truth means.” The clash between these two understandings of truth underlies the controversy (Glass, 2012a, 2012b).

The text itself is not simply a catalyst for this debate; it also participates with a point of view of its own. Although the text utilizes a mixed set of conventions and powers from both fictional and non-fictional genres, it actively rejects a journalistic definition of truth. Not only does the text fail to conform to journalistic norms, but it also overtly critiques the journalistic perspective on what constitutes truth.

Daisey’s work portrays “truth” as something that is constructed and contested. Speaking about Apple devices, Daisey says in the monologue, “if you control the metaphor through which people see the world, then you control the world itself” (Daisey, 2012a, p. 12). The “metaphor” here is the Apple operating system that mediates so much of its users’ lives. Journalism is another metaphor that works the same way. Throughout the text, Daisey rejects Apple’s control

over its devices and its consumers. In a parallel way, he also rejects traditional journalism's control over what counts as "truth" and its ability to dictate the way its audience sees the world. At the core of Daisey's critique is the argument that both Apple and journalism have failed the workers in Chinese factories. Daisey describes himself as a "jailbreaker" who wants to free the truth from the control of the powerful Apple corporation and institutional journalism and then, though this goes unstated, put his own version of the truth in its place.

Throughout all three versions of the work, but most strongly expressed in the original monologue, runs a theme of control versus openness. In his introduction to the monologue transcript, Daisey explains the transcript's open-source nature in these control/openness terms. The introduction states that the response to Daisey's decision to release the transcript as open-source and royalty-free has been,

confused and wary from the media. We've been asked if we are afraid of what will happen when these words are free, if we're afraid of what will happen to this work? We're not afraid at all. [...] One of the most powerful forces for humanism is that we are capable of doing things that are not motivated by profit—something corporations are incapable of. We're delighted to throw away the royalties and control in favor of real openness, so that the work will bloom everywhere. (Daisey, 2012a, p. 2)

Unlike "corporations" (implicitly Apple), Daisey argues, he is not motivated by profit, and unlike "the media" (implicitly professional journalists) he doesn't feel the need to tightly control the truth. The "open performance license" that accompanies the monologue is an expression of this viewpoint. It encourages artists to stage his monologue freely—at no cost, taking whatever liberties they like with the script, and as much as possible. The implication is that this will set the truth free. The introduction suggests that the truth is larger than Apple, the media, and mere

facts.

The monologue consistently describes Apple as controlling and describes Daisey as seeking freedom from control, despite his loyalty to Apple technology. He begins the monologue by detailing a trip to a Hong Kong back-alley (which is highly reminiscent of the Chiba City in Gibson's *Neuromancer*, further blurring the fiction-journalism distinction) to get his Apple iPhone "jailbroken." This is a process by which, according to Daisey, "pirates... give people back ownership of the things they thought they already owned" by allowing them to circumvent Apple's built-in limitations on the device. (Daisey, 2012a, p. 10). Unless an Apple iPod, iPhone or iPad is jailbroken, the device's owner can only purchase software through Apple's official App Store. Apple, Daisey says, controls—even owns—its users. He imagines Apple dictating the terms of its devices to its users: "You will love them, and they will own you" (Daisey, 2012a, p. 52)

Daisey describes Apple as telling people that they are nothing but Apple consumers (2012a, pp. 51–52). In this circumscribed role, Apple will dictate exactly what they will want in their electronic devices and give them no choices, no options for customization. Apple operating systems and applications are controlled and sold, always, by Apple. By extension, so are its consumers until they jailbreak themselves and wrest back some of that control. In Daisey's worldview, that seizure of consumer control entails demanding that Apple address the working and living conditions of the Chinese workers who make its products. Daisey ends the monologue by returning to the metaphor of jailbreaking. He tells his audience members that now, after hearing the story of Daisey's trip to China, they will not be able forget or ignore thoughts of the people who make their electronics. The final words of the transcript are, "Tonight we are jailbroken. Tonight we are free" (Daisey, 2012a, p. 60). Daisey wants his audience to jailbreak

more than their devices. He also encourages consumers to jailbreak themselves from the control of the global manufacturing system's technology. He wants them to see through its beautiful façade and insist on re-writing its software, which means making it more humane.

In *TAL*'s original fact-checking of Daisey's story, the show sought comment from Apple. As Glass explains in the broadcast, Apple claims to be entirely transparent about their factories yet simultaneously refused to comment. Glass wryly complains that although Apple does do research and publicly report on the working conditions in the factories of its suppliers, it refuses to name those suppliers. This means, Glass notes, that "nobody can independently verify any of it" (Glass, 2012a). In other words, it is not possible to test Apple's claims according to a literal correspondence definition of truth.

The same way Apple maintains strict control over its devices and its operating system, it sought to control the public narrative about its supply chain. It released a good deal of information from its internal supplier audits, but not enough information that the truth of its narrative could be independently examined. According to Daisey, Apple also tried to hamper his investigations by discouraging journalists from helping him: "Apple would call journalists who had spoken to me, and tell them, "You know, I don't know if you want to be associated with him. He's kind of unstable. You know, he does work in the *theater*" (Daisey, 2012a, p. 59, italics in original).

Apple strove to control the truth, and, interestingly, so did Daisey. Apple refused to name the suppliers that appear in its public reports. Similarly, *TAL*'s retraction revealed that Daisey purposely obstructed *TAL*'s attempts to contact his interpreter for verification. As Glass said in "Retraction," "He said he had know way to reach her. [...] And he lied to us." (Glass, 2012b). In his monologue, Daisey claims to be seeking freedom from control, from the truth that Apple

wants its customers to believe. However, his obfuscations during *TAL*'s fact-checking suggest that he merely intended to replace Apple's control over the truth with his own. The retraction thus exposed the rift between Daisey the person, who fiercely maintained personal control over his story against the interference of *TAL*, and Daisey the character in his monologue, who is critical of all mechanisms of control and just wants the truth to be free. The retraction revealed the calculated inner workings of a text that presents itself as artless journalism.

Daisey's critique of Apple's control becomes a critique of professional journalism and its brand of truth. Throughout the original version of the monologue and, to some extent, the *TAL* broadcast, Daisey pushes back against the control of professional journalists and journalistic institutions. As he describes himself, Daisey refuses to play by the confining rules of professional journalists whose actions, like Apple's, have been inhumane. At best, according to Daisey, these journalists have failed to bring attention to the abuses taking place in Chinese factories. At worst, they have purposely overlooked the abuses.

The text doesn't directly accuse journalists of moral cowardice. It does, however, denounce their laziness and, more importantly, insinuate a lack of creative thinking that is the result of a dogmatic adherence to a limited set of reporting methods. These methods include a reliance on official and corporate sources. Daisey denounces technology journalists who "let themselves be flown all the way to Shenzhen in the company of PR reps for Foxconn, and walk around the gleaming factories, and then write cover stories for glossy magazines without ever speaking to a single worker..." (Daisey, 2012a, p. 58). The journalists tell Daisey that his plan for gathering information is terrible, and he "can't get anywhere" when he seeks help from the BBC. Only when Daisey disregards their advice and refuses to submit to their controlling rules do doors begin to open.

Daisey describes his relationship with journalism as analogous to the illegally unionized workers' relationship with Foxconn, and by extension, Apple. When he asks the workers how they organize,

They say, "Well, we talk a *lot*, we have a lot of meetings—we meet at coffeehouses, different Starbucks in Guangzhou, we exchange papers, sometimes there are books..."

And it's so clear, in this moment, that they are making this up as they go along. □ The way so many of us do. □ The way pirates do. The way rebels do. □ The way the crazy ones who change the world do—they all make it up as they go along. (Daisey, 2012a, p. 54)

"Make it up as they go along" is exactly how Daisey describes his reporting technique: "it's a kind of professional blundering" (Daisey, 2012a, p. 9). When Daisey's interpreter suggests that his plan to stand at the gates of Foxconn will not work, "I hasten to assure her that it *will* work, but I'm talking out of my ass because I don't know that it's going to work; in fact, I have a lot of evidence that this is not going to work" (Daisey, 2012a, p. 26). Daisey proudly places himself in the same group, "so many of us," as pirates, rebels, and the crazy ones who change the world. This group also includes the unionized Chinese factory workers and the jailbreakers who free Apple technology from the company's shackles.

Daisey's interpreter Cathy represents, in the text, the traditional way of thinking that he attributes to other journalists. When Daisey explains his plan to pose as a businessperson in order to get inside the factory, Cathy seems confused. Presciently, Daisey tells her, "Yes, Cathy. I'm going to lie to lots of people" (Daisey, 2012a, p. 39). As Daisey tells it, this plan works perfectly despite his slipshod homemade paper business cards. Daisey even gets to see Foxconn's dormitories, because, as he smugly explains, "I'm a valuable potential future customer: they will

show me anything I ask to see” (Daisey, 2012a, p. 44). The journalists Daisey criticizes do not get this kind of access using their sophisticated training. Daisey’s argument implies that journalistic training, experience and even their ethics may actually impose hobbling limits on those who seek the truth, which must be wrested from the grip of corporate powers. The story suggests that journalism, too, could use some jailbreaking.

The text’s overt critique of journalists parallels the implicit critique embedded in his unorthodox reporting methods, his violation of journalism’s performative codes, and his evasion of journalism’s fact-checking expectations. Combined, all of these actions add up to a strong rejection of journalistic truth. The retraction, therefore, was not just the simple story of supposed journalism exposed as fiction. It was also the beginning of a debate over Daisey’s critique of journalism and journalistic truth. In the view of Daisey’s critics, the lesson is that professional journalism’s norms, conventions and expectations exist for good reasons. A person such as Daisey who questions them and flouts them will end up being unmasked as a manipulative liar. In the next chapter, I will argue that this pushback against Daisey’s intimation that journalism needs jailbreaking took the form of paradigm repair.

To Daisey and his supporters, the narrative instead is that the “truthful” normative techniques of journalism have failed to stand up for the human rights of Chinese factory workers. Daisey constructed a different, more humanitarian truth according to unorthodox methods. Corporate powers and institutions of journalism then tried to marginalize Daisey because he contested their control, dared to critique them, and revealed truths they would rather not confront.

Daisey’s stance, if not his method, resonates with Allen (2008) and van Dijk (2009), who both argue that journalism reproduces dominant ways of interpreting the world. Far from simply

describing reality, journalism participates in constructing a reality that perpetuates existing power structures. Daisey's text portrays journalists as having upheld Apple's power in a tragic way. By failing to report on the horrors occurring in Chinese factories, they are supporting the dominant capitalist ideology and reinforcing Apple's corporate power. Rejecting journalistic "truth" goes hand-in-hand with rejecting Apple's ability to obscure the inhumane conditions in its suppliers' factories. Daisey asserts that truth should be judged by what it *does*. In the last minutes of the monologue, Daisey states, "Steve Jobs—this genius of design and form—blinded himself to the most essential law of design: that the way in which a thing is made is a part of the design itself." Daisey is, of course, referring to the fact that the exploitation of Chinese workers is designed into every beautiful Apple device. The sentence, however, also contains the suggestion that there are ethics in the making of truth. A piece of journalism or a monologue can be made in a way to support Apple's corporate interests or it can be made in a way that supports the human rights of the workers in Apple's suppliers' factories. The text's argument against journalistic truth is that it has failed to fight for the oppressed. Whether that is an appropriate measure of truth or journalism is a debate throughout the commentary on the story and its retraction.

To some degree, the text is participating in the type of critical rhetorical project that McKerrow (1989), following Foucault, advocates. As Foucault (1972, 2001) explains, truth is a function of power and a product of constraint. In a journalistic context Foucaultian "truth" has a double meaning. It refers both to cultural conventions or expectations of how journalism *should* operate as well as the actual "truthful" texts that those conventions produce. In McKerrow's version of Foucaultian critical rhetoric, critical reflection on these truths of our society grants us freedom to imagine that journalism and truth could be otherwise. Importantly, the possible

“otherwise” situations will not uncouple truth from power. Critique, according to Foucault and McKerrow, merely allows us to understand our own culture’s truth-power relationship and to realize that our definition of journalistic truth and our rules for good journalism are neither natural nor inevitable.

This realization presents a danger to institutionalized journalism. At least to some extent, journalistic authority depends on its opacity. When audiences believe in journalism’s truth, they do not question the journalistic method as the best way to get at truth. As Eason writes about the scandal following *Washington Post* reporter Janet Cooke’s fabrications, “The scandal revealed the foundation of the news process to be a trust that sustains the authority to determine the facts” (Eason, 1986, p. 432). When the trust between audiences and journalists is broken, journalistic authority is undermined. Daisey’s text asks audiences to question their trusting relationship with journalism, to ask whether other methods might generate preferable truths. As a result, journalism’s very foundation—its truthfulness—is no longer sound. As I will discuss in Chapter 3, this crack in the foundation of journalistic truth is one of the fears of Daisey’s critics.

In the monologue, Daisey confesses that he used to assume that Apple products were made by robots, like “a *60 Minutes* story about Japanese automotive plants” (Daisey, 2012a, p. 17). Daisey dares his audience to release itself from that lie and to understand that behind all the “perfectly minimalist Apple packaging” are real people living and working in unacceptable conditions to make the technology by hand: “Everything is handmade. If you have the eyes to see it” (Daisey, 2012a, p. 56;45). Similarly, journalism is not made by truth-seeking robots. Daisey points out that beneath its authoritative exterior journalism is also handmade, and reflects particular (corporate) interests. It could be constructed differently and therefore tell different truths.

Daisey critiques journalism's humanitarian failures and its coziness with Apple. His text also participates in the project of identifying the links between truth and power, and therefore questioning journalistic authority, in two additional ways. First, the text questions journalistic methods by offering alternative ones. As I explained earlier, it plays with and subverts some of the conventional norms of journalism both stylistically and substantively. Stylistically, the text combines, among other techniques, the journalistic eyewitness convention, a live audience, dramatic pauses and profane vocabulary. Substantively, the piece presents itself as true without conforming to the expectations for creating a journalistically true text. Near the end of the monologue, Daisey declares to his audience, "And tonight—we know the truth." Daisey's "truth," however, wasn't produced according to journalistic expectations such as meticulous quotation of real people, narrating events according to the sequence in which they occurred, or basing his account strictly on what he personally observed.

Secondly, through its portrayal of the struggle against the truth-control of Apple and professional journalism, the text's content advances a constructed notion of truth. In this understanding of truth, to use Schudson's words, "news does not mirror the world, but constructs one" (1995, p. 66) This viewpoint can be compatible with a journalistic correspondence conception of truth, which defines true discourse by its literal correspondence to the nondiscursive world. It is possible to concede that journalism inevitably involves a process that selects and organizes facts while maintaining an allegiance to a traditional notion of "fact." Daisey's text, however, discounts correspondence-truth entirely, which sets up its conflict with journalists and news consumers. As I will illustrate, in Daisey's text the facts themselves are changeable, subject to the influence of power and subservient to the larger truths they support.

The revised introduction to "Release 2.0" acknowledges the controversy indirectly. It

declares the new version to be better than the previous one because it has been “made ethically.” It is telling that Daisey describes the monologue as “made.” Several sentences later he calls it “buil[t].” This language of manufacture reveals the philosophy, embedded throughout Daisey’s work, that the truth is constructed rather than discovered.

The differences between the monologue’s original version and “Release 2.0” are not extensive, as Daisey’s contrition following *TAL*’s retraction was limited. In line with his non-journalistic understanding of truth, Daisey disputed *TAL*’s charges that he had lied, and defended his piece as “a story that captured the totality of my trip” (Glass, 2012b, pp. 10–11). Most of the changes in “Release 2.0” address the specific details that the retraction disputed. The guards outside the Foxconn factory gates are no longer described as carrying guns. The testimony about the underage workers has been removed, as are references to the number of unionized workers who came to meet with him. A couple of particularly memorable moments are removed, including the scene in which the disabled worker declares Daisey’s iPad to be “magic.” Daisey also scales back claims that professional journalists weren’t reporting on the horrors of Chinese factories. All of these details reflect facts that Schmitz, *TAL* and Daisey’s interpreter discredited.

Aside from some added material unrelated to Daisey’s trip to China, there aren’t changes between the two versions in any of the undisputed material. “Release 2.0” appears, therefore, not as an ethical attempt at greater journalistic truthfulness but instead as an effort to mollify critics. Daisey even removes a portion of the monologue that was never a factual statement but instead a subjective impression: Referring to the union organizers he met, Daisey originally stated “they don’t even look college-aged, they look younger than that” (Daisey, 2012a, p. 54). Daisey’s use of the word “look” indicates that the workers’ ages are Daisey’s opinion, which is not normally the kind of claim that would be subject to fact-checking or retraction. Worker age was, however

a flashpoint of the controversy. Therefore, this possibly inflammatory reference is removed along with the other declarative statements about workers' ages. The updates to the text in "Release 2.0" are part of a negotiation over the truth between Daisey and his critics. Daisey removes references to underage workers in order to satisfy critics; as a result, he gets to keep performing his monologue. By placing truth in the realm of the negotiable, the text underscores its truth-is-a-construction perspective.

According to the text's (and Daisey's) definition of truth, the original version of the monologue was true. The updated "Release 2.0" is also true, although its details are different. This is possible because, according to Daisey, truth is not fixed and verifiable; it is built. Furthermore, the factual details that critics disputed were not vitally important to the text's overall truth. As Daisey has since argued on his blog, his story aims to get at an *emotional* truth, which is constructed differently from corporate or journalistic truth. Daisey writes to TAL listeners, "if you felt something that connected you with where your devices come from—that is not a lie. That is art. That is human empathy, and it is real" (Daisey, 2012c). The text engages in a struggle to legitimize this alternate conception of truth and to contest journalistic authority and control over what counts as true.

The new introduction to "Release 2.0" is still defiant. Daisey expresses pride in having committed himself to "the hard work of reforming" the monologue rather than abandoning it altogether, as his critics might have preferred. In Daisey's view, to quit performing the monologue because of the controversy would have amounted to abandoning the cause of Chinese workers' rights and allowing his truth to be silenced by the powerful, which includes both Apple and his journalist critics.

While it critiques journalism, however, the text simultaneously recognizes its cultural power. Institutions of journalism that audiences trust —based on a history of adherence to performative codes— have authority that Daisey, as a journalistic interloper, doesn't have: the authority to declare what is true. Daisey acknowledges that audiences may not have the same confidence in his truth that they are likely to have in the journalism of the *New York Times* or CNN. Although he doesn't subscribe to a journalistic definition of truth, Daisey tries to mobilize some of its power. In the epilogue to the first version of the transcript, Daisey claims that those venerated institutions and others "corroborated" his story. "Release 2.0," includes a summary of Chinese factory abuses uncovered by other journalists since Daisey's trip to China. He introduces this section by saying "You don't have to believe me. You could believe the *New York Times*" (2012d, p. 61). This journalistic power to generate belief is likely what led Daisey to broadcast his show on *TAL*, a decision he later came to regret as inappropriate (Glass, 2012b).

The text's stance that truth is a function of power comes across in its mixing of genres. It attempted to harness the power of journalistic discourse while simultaneously maintaining the complete rhetorical control that fiction affords. While journalists are, at least to some extent, constrained by what they see and hear as "eyewitnesses," creators of fiction are not. In order to counter the heartless truths of Apple and professional journalists, Daisey attempted to mobilize as many discursive weapons as possible. In "Retraction," Daisey explains that "everything I have done in making this monologue for the theater has been toward that end – to make people care" (Glass, 2012b, p. 18)

Truth, according to this Daisey's work, is determined in battle. It is never free; it is always subject to the control of power. The only way to disseminate a marginalized truth, according to this text, it is to seize control from those who have authority and hold onto it tightly.

Rhetorical Power

In *TAL*'s introduction to Daisey's story, Glass expresses wonder at Daisey's storytelling skills: "He took this fact that we all already know, this fact that our stuff is made overseas in maybe not the greatest working conditions, and he made the audience actually feel something about that fact. Which is really quite a trick." Presumably, it is this unique storytelling ability that attracted *TAL* to Daisey's monologue.

One of the trends in the frustrations expressed by professional journalists in their commentary about the scandal is that Daisey's work had so much political power. The *TAL* broadcast drew more attention to the issue of Chinese factories, specifically those producing Apple products, than any professional journalism has done. The work's impactfulness comes from several sources, which are the same sources that generate the generic confusion.

First, as Glass identified, are Daisey's storytelling skills. The dramatic pauses and language use I discussed earlier aren't simply a result of Daisey's lack of journalistic training. They are a result of his expertise as a dramatist. His story is entertaining to listen to. It is personal. It is emotionally touching. The last moment in the *TAL* episode, for example, is an exchange between Daisey and his interpreter Cathy in which they discuss whether the workers whose stories they've heard are mentally ill or lying.

And she suddenly looks very tired. And she takes off her glasses, and she rubs the bridge of her nose. And she says, "No. I do not think they are mentally ill. It's just that you hear stories, but you do not think it is going to be so much. You know? It's just so much."

And I reach across the table, and I touch her hand. It's the first and last time we will ever touch, I and this woman whose real name I don't even know. I say to her, "I know exactly what you mean." (Glass, 2012a)

The drama and the emotion of this moment (which did not occur, according to Cathy Lee) are engineered by a skilled expert with a particular focus. Daisey's goal in the monologue is not simply to tell an entertaining story so he can make a living in theater. He is clear that he wants people to care more about where their technological devices come from. This activist goal helps focus his storytelling skills on a specific appeal, which also strengthens the work's power. All of the dramatic devices are aimed at eliciting sympathy for the Chinese workers, a sense of urgency for their plight, and guilt at having been complicit in their exploitation. At the same time, the piece does not feel preachy. Daisey describes himself as "an Apple aficionado, I am an Apple partisan, I am an Apple fanboy, I am a worshipper in the cult of Mac. I have been to the House of Jobs, I have walked through the stations of his cross, I have knelt before his throne" (Daisey, 2012a, p. 12). As in this passage, the piece's use of humor and self-deprecating personal detail counter the weighty emotions with entertainment and build rapport between Daisey and his audience.

This persuasive focus is a major difference between Daisey's work and the professional journalism on the same topic. In TAL's "Retraction" episode, Glass interviews *New York Times* reporter Charles Duhigg, who has also covered Chinese Apple supplier factories. Glass asks Duhigg how Americans should feel about the working and living conditions in those factories. Duhigg replies, "So it's not my job to tell you whether you should feel bad or not, right? I'm a reporter for the *New York Times*, my job is to find facts and essentially let you make a decision on your own" (Glass, 2012b, p. 24). When a professional storyteller such as Daisey puts all of his skill behind persuading the audience to feel something about the factory conditions, it is not surprising that his work is more politically powerful than the work of a reporter who believes in finding facts and letting the audience make decisions on their own.

I would like to suggest, however, that Daisey's considerable storytelling skill, even used with persuasive righteousness, cannot account for the entirety of the work's power. Its journalistic performance, which confers a sense of empirical truth, is vital to its rhetorical force. The story's details are made more haunting by the suggestion that Daisey personally witnessed them. This power is evident in a comparison of changes between the two versions of the monologue's transcript. In the original version, Daisey says "I talk *to* people whose joints in their hands have disintegrated from working on the line, doing the same motion hundreds and hundreds of thousands of times" (Daisey, 2012a, p. 54, italics added) In "Release 2.0," updated in response to the controversy, this sentence becomes "We talk *about* people who work on the line doing the same motion hundreds and hundreds of thousands of times" (Daisey, 2012d, p. 59, italics added). With the adjustment of one word, the passage loses its eyewitness character and some of its force. It is transformed from a touching personal encounter into the simple record of a conversation.

This type of change is a pattern. In "Release 2.0," Daisey no longer asserts that he saw the dormitories himself. Other first-hand meetings are replaced with third-person stories of workers Daisey has heard *about*. Over the entire monologue, this pattern changes the character of the work. The story morphs from astonishing and deeply affecting first-hand journalism to a well-told based-on-a-true-story fiction that is drawn from others' journalistic accounts. "Release 2.0" lacks the immediacy of the original version. Because Daisey is more removed from the lives of his characters, he is also more distant from his audience.

The closeness between Daisey and the Chinese workers is necessary to the work's persuasiveness. Daisey (2012d, p. 63) and Glass both point out that the audience *already knows* the basic story; that many of the products it uses are "made overseas in maybe not the greatest

working conditions” (Glass, 2012a). Daisey’s work doesn’t bring new information to light, but it does bring the audience to care. This empathy is created through the seemingly real personal connections between Daisey, a privileged Apple product devotee, and the exploited workers who make his Apple devices.

Daisey’s story projects truth so strongly that, according to several theater critics, it doesn’t lose much of its force even when performed by other actors (Bresloff, 2013; Cavendish, 2012; Vire, 2013). The story’s use of the eyewitness convention and its description of personal interactions between Daisey and compelling characters create the sense of reality and evoke empathy regardless of who voices the monologue. Theater critic Lubitow writes of a performance in which actor Remi Sandri plays Daisey that “during the talkback following the performance, many audience members continued to address Sandri as though he himself had written the monologue, despite his repeated attempts to set them straight” (Lubitow, 2013). When an equally talented actor who is not Mike Daisey says “I talk to an older worker with leathery skin. His right hand is twisted up, it was maimed in some machinery,” the dramatic re-enactment carries similar emotional force as Daisey’s version, because the testimony is still based on the same “truth” and because the text’s journalistic conventions carry so much force. Those conventions serve to make the text appear true and remove the distance between the audience and the Chinese workers, even when the actor is performing someone else’s factually questionable story.

Daisey intensifies this truth-power by portraying himself as an unskilled but sincere non-journalist. The text describes his reporting plan as the so-crazy-it-just-might-work idea of a clueless but hopeful outsider in a Hawaiian shirt. Daisey intensifies this guileless self-presentation through his profanity and casual voice. He comes across as merely a layperson who

uses Apple devices, like everyone in his audience, who then happened to become curious and uncover some uncomfortable truths. This mythology serves to further develop identification between Daisey and his audience.

Daisey's non-journalist identity also makes his story seem more true. His successful performance transforms Daisey from a skilled professional storyteller in real life into a regular guy on stage, who appears to be doing no more than narrating what happened to him during his crazy trip to China. This aspect of the performance camouflages the monologue's artifice. The retraction's revelation that the monologue was a carefully-measured performance broke this spell. When Daisey's handiwork became apparent, his public image shifted from a likeable amateur into a calculating manipulator.

The performance created the impression that Daisey and his audience were on a truth-seeking journey together. Daisey as a character does not claim superior status or knowledge to the audience; he presents the relationship between himself and his audience as one of equality. On the surface, this situation is reminiscent of Habermas' "communicative rationality," which sees truth as a product of consensus (Habermas, 1984, p. 10). Statements are true, according to Habermas, if there are good reasons in support of them; if they can be "argumentatively vindicated," as Biesecker explains (1997, p. 82). This truth-by-consensus is only possible in the right kind of intersubjective context, the "ideal speech situation" in which everyone's goal is to seek the truth, rather than to persuade, and there are no power differentials. Daisey's text presents itself as if these were its conditions. Through the course of the monologue, it seems that Daisey and the audience together reach a consensus that they must do something about their complicity in the inhumane conditions in Chinese factories.

The retraction had the effect of exposing this consensus-journey as a rhetorical performance. The text never defined “truth” in the same journalistic way as its audience, though its conventions made it appear as if it did. Its goal was success-oriented persuasion rather than mutual truth-seeking. This text doesn’t seek consensus truth. Viewing the truth as a product of power and control, it instead aims to gain some of that control for itself.

Conclusion

The simplest criticisms of Daisey accuse him of lying. While the text certainly plays with and subverts audience expectations, it does more than lie; it makes an argument for a different kind of truth. The text mobilizes journalistic conventions and masks its craft so that an audience is likely to understand it as true, even according to a correspondence definition of truth.

Simultaneously, the text interrogates that same definition of truth by comparing it to Apple’s unscrupulous corporate power and criticizing its failure to stand up for exploited workers. In its effort to advocate for those workers, the text avails itself of the persuasiveness of journalistic conventions, but declines to abide by the “controlling” substantive expectations that some of its conventions carry.

Truth, says this text, is not in the world waiting to be found. It is contested and won. The contest is inevitable, but the outcome is not. Daisey argues for a truth that is empathetic rather than merely capitalist (like Apple’s) or dogmatic (like journalism’s), and he fights for it.

Daisey makes his case in ethical terms. He argues that the restrictions of traditional journalism have led it to participate in a humanitarian failure. It is his ethics that drive his alternate truth. At the same time, as I will show in the next chapter, the resounding censure of Daisey reproaches him as unethical; his violation of journalism’s performative codes didn’t merely question conventions, it disregarded ethical guidelines. The text and its retraction thus

opened a forum to debate fundamental questions of our knowledge society: How do we know what's true? What counts as truth? What should truth *do*, and what is its relationship with ethics?

Chapter 3: Mr. Daisey and Journalism's Paradigm

I know but I feel like I have the normal worldview. —Ira Glass

This chapter analyzes media critics' attempt at paradigm repair that followed the retraction of *This American Life's* (*TAL*) episode "Mr. Daisey and the Apple Factory." Both *TAL's* "Retraction" episode and a wealth of media commentary worked to repair the journalistic paradigm in the wake of the scandal. The first step in the paradigm repair was to marginalize Mike Daisey as a skilled liar and *TAL* as a journalistic outlier. Then supporters of traditional journalism reaffirmed the value of the paradigm itself by arguing that Daisey hurt the humanitarian cause he was trying to support and that he damaged trust in journalism. The repair work, however, was not entirely successful, and the rupture remains open. Instead of simply dismissing "Mr. Daisey and the Apple Factory" and returning to journalism-as-usual, the commentary grapples with larger trends in contemporary journalism that Daisey's text represents. These trends include a perception of "truthiness" replacing truth, increased blurriness of the boundaries between genres, and factual accuracy as a diminished priority in favor of storytelling, activism, and financial gain.

Introduction: The Retraction and the Reaction

Between January 6th and March 16th, 2012, Mike Daisey enjoyed celebrity as an Apple critic. Following the popularity of *This American Life's* (*TAL*) "Mr. Daisey and the Apple Factory" Daisey became a well-known spokesperson for the cause against inhumane working conditions in Chinese factories that manufacture Apple products for the U.S. market. He was a leading voice in the growing demand for Apple to change its production practices. He published opinion pieces in national newspapers and appeared on numerous television shows (Kurtz, 2012; Weprin, 2012). Although a number of U.S. journalists who had worked in China later claimed to

have harbored suspicions about Daisey's factual accuracy, they did not publicly voice those concerns at the time (Fallows, 2012; Osnos, 2012; Ulanoff, 2012). Only Rob Schmitz, a Shanghai-based American journalist, followed those suspicions with action.

In the original *TAL* broadcast, host Ira Glass states, "we have gone through his script and fact checked everything that was checkable" (Glass, 2012a). Knowing that Daisey was a storyteller rather than a professional journalist, the program worked to verify his claims according to journalistic standards. As part of that effort, producers asked Daisey for his interpreter's contact information. Daisey told them that her real name was Anna (he calls her "Cathy" in the monologue) and that her phone number no longer worked. As a result, the program did not check Daisey's story with his interpreter (Glass, 2012b).

After the episode aired, Schmitz conducted his own independent fact-checking. Through a Google search, he quickly found Daisey's interpreter, whose name actually was Cathy. Cathy Lee (Li Guifen in Chinese) remembered Daisey's trip to Shenzhen well and disputed many parts of his story. Between Schmitz's perception that Daisey's details were inconsistent with his knowledge of China, Lee's memories that differed from Daisey's account, and some written evidence in the form email exchanges between Lee and Daisey, Schmitz was confident that Daisey's story did not happen as he narrated. According to Schmitz, Daisey used composite characters, plagiarized details from the accounts of other journalists, exaggerated numbers, changed the order of events, and invented interactions and facts. Furthermore, Daisey had lied to *TAL* in order to keep the show's fact-checkers from talking to Lee.

Schmitz took the results of his investigation to *TAL* producers, who decided to retract the entire episode "Mr. Daisey and the Apple Factory." On March 16th 2012, *TAL* issued a press release explaining that it was retracting the story, and aired the episode "Retraction" as a

broadcast, a podcast and a written transcript later that same day. Also that day, Schmitz reported on his investigations on the public radio show *Marketplace*. The simultaneous release of all of the suspicions, reporting, revelations and the retraction quickly became headline news. On March 16th alone, critics from the *Atlantic*, *Bloomberg BusinessWeek*, *Business Insider*, *Forbes*, the *Guardian*, the *New York Times*, *Poynter*, Reuters, *Slate*, *Time*, *TVNewser* and the *Washington Post* all commented on the scandal.

TAL's episode "Retraction" is an hour-long broadcast. In the episode, Glass clearly explains the details of how the story was produced and authenticated. He apologizes for *TAL*'s incomplete fact-checking. Schmitz also tells the story of his investigation, interviews Lee on the air, and explains in detail which facts in Daisey's story are untrue according to journalistic standards. Both Schmitz and Glass interview Daisey and challenge him with their newly discovered evidence of his impropriety. In both interviews, Daisey defends his work and refuses to confess to many of the accusations. He only concedes that his work is not appropriate for a journalistic context. Finally, Glass interviews Charles Duhigg, a *New York Times* journalist who has reported extensively on Apple supplier factories in China, to explain the real conditions in those factories.

The immediate and massive public discussion that followed Schmitz's revelations and *TAL*'s concurrent retraction often took the form of paradigm repair, which defends the journalistic status quo from the threat posed by a breach such as Daisey's. Commentators on the retraction, who were mostly journalists, worked to marginalize Daisey and *TAL*, and argued that the scandal could have been prevented by simply applying some traditional norms of journalism practice. Most argued it was Daisey's failure to adhere sufficiently to journalistic standards that was to blame, not some weakness inherent in the journalistic paradigm itself.

As journalism scholar Reese (1990) points out in his study of paradigm repair in the case of a socialist reporter at the *Wall Street Journal*, the repair work that follows in the wake of journalistic “anomalies” is a rare window into the paradigm itself. The journalistic paradigm is normally so seamless as to be invisible. It is only when it is ruptured that its contents and boundaries become accessible. Eason, in his study of the Janet Cooke journalistic fabrication scandal, points out that journalistic conventions prohibit discussion of the news creation process, including topics such as reporters’ relationships to sources, the process of editing and institutional structure (Eason, 1986, pp. 429–430). Only following a violation does the public discuss these behind-the-scenes components of the process. Journalistic breaches thus become opportunities for the public to learn more about the typically unnoticed news production paradigm and opportunities for journalists and critics to suggest changes to it.

Suggesting changes to the paradigm exceeds the work of paradigm repair, which seeks to show that the paradigm itself is sound despite the breach. “Mr. Daisey and the Apple Factory,” however, was more than an isolated and easily contained threat to the paradigm, and the work of the commentary ventured significantly beyond paradigm repair to debate the weaknesses of the paradigm itself. Though most commentators were quick to condemn him as an extreme example, Daisey represents more widespread threats to the journalistic paradigm that are not so easily dismissed. As I explained in Chapter 2, Daisey’s text does not merely flout or circumvent the paradigm; it presents a case against it. Some commentators agree with the text’s argument and contend that the paradigm needs to be changed. Others still cling to the paradigm, but believe that it is in jeopardy, and that Daisey’s text is symptomatic of a larger attack on the foundations of good journalism. The plethora of commentary on the retraction illuminates American society’s anxieties about the current state of our journalism.

Paradigm Repair

Generally, a paradigm is the set of widely accepted unwritten guidelines for the practice of a discipline. Reese describes the news paradigm as akin to Foucault's "ensemble of rules according to which the true and false are separated" (Reese, 1990, p. 392). A paradigm is a set of norms and assumptions that govern knowledge production. Hindman (2005), who also studies journalistic paradigm repair, notes that paradigms are normalized to the point of being unquestioned and invisible. The journalistic paradigm is a set of "taken for granted" standards of news production. Reese argues that the journalistic paradigm in particular is deeply influential because it "defines what becomes part of our second-hand reality received through the news media" (1990, p. 392). In a way that normally goes unnoticed, the journalistic paradigm restricts the possible truths that news consumers come to know about the world.

Reese's (1990) definition of the journalistic paradigm focuses specifically news production routines, which he argues are the mechanisms of reproduction and negotiation of the journalistic paradigm. These routines include avoiding opinions except as they are articulated by sources, drawing upon sources that represent a variety of viewpoints, relying on official sources and editors vetting content for "bias." Hindman's definition is slightly more expansive; she refers to journalists' paradigm as "the fundamental ways they define, gather, process, and present information" (Hindman, 2005, p. 226). I would like to expand the definition of the news paradigm even further to include values. Daisey certainly violated accepted journalistic production routines such as fact-checking, but he also ruptured the paradigm by questioning its values. Specifically, Daisey's text disagreed with the paradigmatic value that true discourse should prioritize literal factual accuracy above all else.

Bennett, et al. first introduced the concept of paradigm repair to describe how journalists “normalize” a troublesome story—what I am calling a journalistic breach—to uphold traditional processes of news creation (Bennett et al., 1985). A journalistic breach, such as a story that doesn’t conform to conventional scripts or a journalist who violates traditional norms, threatens the overarching structure of the paradigm. Repair work thus follows to mend the damage. The repair work reveals the usually invisible and implicit rules and limits of the paradigm (Reese, 1990, p. 391). Reese and Hindman both apply Bennett’s concept to scandals involving rogue journalists who violated standards of objectivity and truth production.

Hindman (2005) explains that paradigm repair usually consists of two primary techniques that work together. First, the repair work isolates and marginalizes the journalistic breach from proper, paradigm-conforming journalism. Second, it reaffirms the value of the paradigm itself. The commentary on Daisey utilizes both of these techniques, as I will elaborate below. This repair work protects the paradigm’s integrity while recognizing the breach. “What paradigm repair does not do,” Hindman points out, “is acknowledge a need for systemic change in the way news is defined, gathered, and presented” (Hindman, 2005, p. 227). Successful paradigm repair results in a return to the status quo. I will argue that this did not occur in the Daisey case.

Each isolated case of paradigm repair, Reese points out, only illuminates a small part of the paradigm, because the repair only operates on the specific norms that have been threatened by that particular breach. Reese’s example focuses on the norms of objectivity and a reliance on official sources. These norms are not central to the repair work in the Daisey case. Instead, Daisey threatened the paradigm’s routine of independent fact-checking and value of factual accuracy above other agendas and purposes. By disputing the paradigm’s emphasis on verifiable facts, Daisey questioned the paradigm’s very definition of truth.

Marginalizing the breach.

The first typical step in paradigm repair is marginalizing the breach. This process minimizes and isolates the reporter or news outlet that violated the paradigm's norms, so as to downplay the impact of the breach and distance it from mainstream journalism. As journalism scholar Lowrey explains, ““Individuals and organizations have developed stakes in agreed-upon and legitimized conventions, routines and grammars. ‘Mavericks’ who defy conventions are often banished to the hinterlands” (Lowrey, 2011, pp. 140–141). This repair work—or “banishing”—thus insulates the traditional journalistic paradigm from the threat the breach presents to it. The commentary on *TAL*'s retraction of Daisey's text strongly participates in this process. Many of the commentators work to marginalize Daisey as a “bad apple,” and a number also marginalize *TAL*.

By and large, the commentators are people who have personal or professional stakes in the Daisey case. Most are journalists whose professional standing and self-image rely upon the traditional paradigm. Many are specifically media journalists and journalism educators. A number are people who personally reported on the same Chinese factories as Daisey. Others are theater critics who have followed Daisey's career. Others are experts in business and technology who are interested in the Apple corporation. Very few of the commentators in my analysis are bloggers without any particular connection to the Daisey case.

These journalist-commentators marginalize Daisey in three steps. First, they simplify Daisey into an easily dismissed pejorative category, that of “liar.” Second, they emphasize that Daisey is not an average everyday liar, but is particularly conniving and convincing. The commentary describes Daisey's skills as finely honed enough to fool even rigorous editorial oversight. Finally, they portray Daisey's deceptive talent and lack of ethics as extreme and

unusual. He appears to be an isolated, atypical case, and therefore does not represent a larger threat to the journalistic paradigm.

By far, the most common label attached to Daisey throughout the commentary is “liar.” Commentators describe him as somebody who disregards the basic journalistic (and human) ethic of honesty. For example, media critic and NYU journalism professor Jay Rosen (2012a) calls Daisey a “master manipulator” on his blog. Jeff Jarvis (2012), also a journalism professor, blogs that Daisey is a “bald-faced liar” who does not practice the ethics Jarvis learned from his mother at a young age. This label simplifies the discussion and neatly avoids addressing Daisey’s questions of truth and activism in journalism. It dismisses his arguments as invalid, because he is no more than a talented liar.

Reuters press-and-politics columnist Jack Shafer (2012) and *New York Times* media columnist David Carr (2012) both point out that even the most rigorous editorial technique and fact-checking can be subverted by someone who is actively deceptive. Shafer writes, “the highly regarded public radio show *This American Life* learned a lesson that many journalists, including me, have learned the hard way: It’s almost impossible for an editor to fact-check a contributor who lies.” Carr concurs: “There is nothing in the journalism playbook to prevent a determined liar from getting one over now and again.” This argument suggests that Daisey was no more than an isolated unethical bad apple. Other truth scandals in journalism history notwithstanding, Daisey’s transgressions do not represent a systematic problem with the journalistic paradigm, or the “journalism playbook,” to use Carr’s term. According to Carr and Shafer, the fact that there are no plays —no editorial mechanisms— designed to catch a liar like Daisey only speaks to how extreme a case this is.

In a CNN discussion, American Public Media's *Marketplace* journalist Kai Ryssdal takes this argument a step further by suggesting that Daisey's manipulations were so convincing as to almost bewitch journalists into failing to fact-check his details. It is true that *TAL* did not adequately fact-check Daisey's story, Ryssdal says, but Daisey's lies and storytelling were so skillful that "it's really difficult to take it apart and say, listen, let's think about this for a second and what doesn't really work here." (Kurtz, 2012). *Forbes* media and technology journalist Jeff Bercovici (2012) also articulates a similar argument: "It is [...] their unabashed lack of self-doubt that makes these fabulists such convincing liars in the first place and makes them so difficult for news organizations to spot coming." Ryssdal and Bercovici acknowledge that the breach in the paradigm went beyond Daisey's personal actions, but is still quick to lay all the blame at Daisey's feet.

TAL's "Retraction" works similarly to Ryssdal's argument. *TAL* accepts some responsibility for the text's failings, but focuses more on portraying Daisey as unusually evasive. At the beginning of the episode, Glass divides the responsibility this way:

I can say now in retrospect that when Mike Daisey wouldn't give us contact information for his interpreter we should've killed the story rather than run it. We never should've broadcast this story without talking to that woman. Instead, we trusted his word.

Although he's not a journalist, we made clear to him that anything he was going to say on our show would have to live up to journalistic standards. He had to be truthful. And he lied to us. (Glass, 2012b, p. 2)

The acceptance of responsibility helps locate *TAL* squarely within the journalistic paradigm, and the representation of Daisey as an exceptional liar places him far outside the paradigm's boundaries.

First, *TAL* openly apologizes for its fact-checking failures and explains what it should have done according to the norms of journalism. Although Glass concedes that *TAL* “should have killed the story,” (Glass, 2012b, p. 2) he later assures listeners that *TAL* follows the same rigorous journalistic processes as other “big daily news shows” (Glass, 2012b, p. 20). The detailed and lengthy retraction itself echoes the corrective action of the *New York Times* in the wake of its 2003 Jayson Blair scandal. In her study of paradigm repair in the Blair case, Hindman describes the *New York Times*’ reasoning behind its unusually extensive retraction and explanation. She quotes an *Editor’s Note* explaining that the paper acted “in the belief that the appropriate corrective action for flawed journalism is better journalism—accurate journalism” (Hindman, 2005, p. 235). This same belief underlies of *TAL*’s “Retraction.” Glass declares near the episode’s beginning that “we want to be completely transparent about what we got wrong, and what we now believe is the truth” (Glass, 2012b). The similarity between the two retractions also invites comparisons between *TAL* and the highly venerated *New York Times*. This renews *TAL*’s commitment to the journalistic paradigm, which is a necessary step to paradigm repair, especially for a program that occupies ambiguous territory on the border of the journalistic genre.

After the episode briefly acknowledges *TAL*’s mistakes and renews its dedication to the paradigm, it issues a long and scathing critique of Daisey. Schmitz’s reporting and three accusatory interviews with Daisey fill 38 minutes of the 57-minute broadcast. “Retraction” presents evidence that Daisey clearly understood that his work would be held to traditional journalistic standards, despite his later arguments, in public appearances and on his blog, that he is not a journalist and works in theatrical truth rather than journalistic truth. In the episode, Glass confronts Daisey with an email a *TAL* producer sent to Daisey during the production process:

“Being that news stations are obviously a different kind of form than the theater we wanted to make sure that this thing is totally, utterly unassailable by anyone who might hear it.” Daisey’s email replied, “I want you to know that makes sense to me” (Glass, 2012b, p. 15). Later in “Retraction,” Daisey does admit that his text “it is not up to the standards of journalism and that’s why it was completely wrong for me to have it on your show,” though he continues to maintain that his work tells the truth (Glass, 2012b, p. 18).

All of this evidence is presented in order to demonstrate that Daisey did not simply err, and that there was no misunderstanding about whether his work would be presented as theater or journalism. He understood the expectations of *TAL* and he disregarded them. He knew that his work would be fact-checked, and he lied about the name and contact information of his interpreter so as to avoid this. As the retraction presents it, *TAL* made some mistakes. The program should have worked harder at the fact-checking or throw out the story, but that was an execution error rather than a lack of ethics. Daisey, on the other hand, practiced unscrupulous and knowing deception. In “Retraction,” Glass says to Daisey, “You put us in this position of going out and vouching for the truth of what you were saying and all along, in all of these ways, you knew that these things weren’t true” (Glass, 2012b, p. 15)

Ethics, of course, are not universal. As I suggested in Chapter 2, Daisey justified his work on ethical terms while critics rejected it on different ethical terms. In its condemnation of Daisey, *TAL* draws upon accepted journalism ethics and also upon general cultural values of honesty and truth. During Glass’ accusatory interview of Daisey in “Retraction,” Glass tells Daisey, “I feel lied to.” Daisey rejects being characterized as a liar, and insists that his work is truthful, just not according to the same definition of truth that *TAL* chooses to use. Daisey tells Glass, “We have different worldviews on some of these things. I agree with you truth is really important.” Glass

quickly responds, “I know but I feel like I have the normal worldview.” Glass’ use of the word “normal” here is instructive. He acknowledges that ethics and truth can vary, but isolates Daisey’s variations of ethics and truth as culturally abnormal, not to mention distinctly outside the journalistic paradigm.

“Retraction” further marginalizes Daisey by highlighting his continued defiance. In the episode, Glass and Schmitz prompt Daisey numerous times to admit that he lied. Daisey never does, despite *TAL*’s strong evidence. He continues to rationalize and to “stand by” his work. Schmitz says that “talking to Daisey was exhausting,” because Daisey constantly offered excuses and qualifications. As Schmitz describes their interview, “It was never simple. He never just said: ‘I lied’” (Glass, 2012b, pp. 11–12). Not only is Daisey a liar, according to “Retraction,” he’s an unrepentant or deluded liar. Other commentators make this same point. Media and politics columnist Shafer (2012) dismisses Daisey’s self defense with this short sentence: “Liars come up with all sorts of justifications when caught.” Journalism critic and professor Jay Rosen describes Daisey as arrogant enough to believe that he can keep lying and manipulating his way out of the scandal, and imagines Daisey’s internal thoughts during the “Retraction” interview with Glass: “*I can talk my way out of this, out of anything. This is just another performance!*” (2012a).

A number of commentators express approval at *TAL*’s nicely executed paradigm repair (Carr, 2012; Fallows, 2012; Oppenheimer, 2012; J. Rosen, 2012a; Wain, 2012). They appreciate the seriousness with which *TAL* addressed the breach of journalistic norms and communicate satisfaction with the retraction as appropriately contrite and highly effective in its marginalization of Daisey. *Business Insider* editor Henry Blodget (2012), for example, initially criticized *TAL* for failing to properly fact-check its story and wrote, in his commentary’s

headline, that the program “Throws Mike Daisey Under Bus.” Blodget later amended his original commentary after listening to “Retraction.” In the update, Blodget writes that he is impressed with *TAL*’s “serious explaining” and, “this does sound like it was mostly Mike Daisey’s fault.” In the view of these commentators, the retraction successfully argues that the problem was not the journalistic fact-checking process, but that Daisey purposely frustrated it.

Another strand of commentary refuses to absolve *TAL*. This commentary participates in an analogous marginalization process for the purposes of paradigm repair, but it marginalizes *TAL* as a whole instead of just Daisey. The criticisms of *TAL* center around the show’s failure to properly fact-check Daisey’s story (Clark, 2012; Cook, 2012; Myers & Silverman, 2012; Pintak, 2012; Silverman, 2012). Good fact-checking is a cornerstone of the journalistic paradigm. The paradigm is effective in preventing misinformation, say these critics, but *TAL*, unlike better institutions of journalism, just did not do it right. Washington State University journalism professor Lawrence Pintak, for example, criticizes “Retraction,” in the *Columbia Journalism Review* because “what some consider Ira Glass’s classy response to the episode was just a tad self-serving, letting his program off the hook too easily for allowing it to happen in the first place” (Pintak, 2012). In contrast with Carr’s argument, this commentary contends that even someone as manipulative as Daisey can be corralled if news production norms are properly followed. *TAL* could have produced journalistic truth, even in this case, if they had correctly executed the process within the paradigm. In this view, *TAL* is the problem.

Other paradigm repair studies have looked at journalistic breaches within long-established mainstream news outlets such as the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Washington Post* (Eason, 1986; Hindman, 2005; Reese, 1990). This case is different, because it concerns an edgy journalistic upstart. *TAL* only began broadcasting in 1995, and has never

practiced highly traditional journalism. In 1999, Marc Fisher wrote in the *American Journalism Review* that *TAL* “is at the vanguard of a shift in American journalism” and referred to Glass as “a revolutionary” (Marc Fisher, 1999, p. 42) This journalistic shift, according to Fisher, is the result of a decrease in media credibility, and involves moving towards an aesthetic that feels less edited and filtered, more direct and “raw.” In other words, it seems more real. Soon after it began broadcasting, *TAL* started winning awards, including a Peabody Award, a large Corporation for Public Broadcasting grant, the duPont-Columbia award, the Murrow award, and the Overseas Press Club award. *TAL* also commands a huge audience of about 1.7 million radio listeners per week and around 500,000 podcast downloads per week (“About our radio show,” n.d.; Marc Fisher, 1999).

In light of the show’s innovation and rapid success, the Daisey scandal provides ammunition to those who would prefer journalism to stick to a more traditional model. Despite its façade of realness, the scandal shows that *TAL* may purvey less truth than other journalism. By casting Daisey’s work as typical of *TAL*, critics marginalize the show as a whole and the model of journalism that it represents.

This commentary views *TAL*’s fact-checking errors in the Daisey case as part of a larger pattern. *TAL*, it argues, is a chronic offender that regularly prioritizes storytelling above factual accuracy. The show’s lax approach to fact checking is evident, notes journalist Craig Silverman (2012) in *Poynter*, by how easy it was for Schmitz to find Daisey’s interpreter through a simple Google search. Daisey did lie to *TAL* about his interpreter’s name and contact information, but if producers had put any effort searching for her, they would have found her. Silverman also asserts of *TAL* that, “if they’d practiced real fact checking chances are the outcome would have been different.” Journalists Myers and Silverman (2012), again in *Poynter*, point out that the show has

also aired material by Stephen Glass, a notoriously discredited journalist who fabricated stories for the *New Republic* in the 1990s. Though *TAL*, especially in “Mr. Daisey and the Apple Factory” and “Retraction,” insists that it is a journalistic enterprise, a number of commentators disagree and place the entire program squarely outside the journalistic paradigm. This has the effect of isolating *TAL* as an outlier, which helps protect the paradigm.

Many of these critics cite *TAL*’s regular broadcast of David Sedaris’ humorous stories, which are narrated as truth, but which almost certainly exaggerate and are definitely not subject to fact-checking by *TAL*. *Gawker* editor John Cook, for example, writes in direct response to media columnist Carr’s condemnation of Daisey and simultaneous defense of *TAL*, “Daisey got what was coming to him. But why the reluctance to throw Sedaris, or [David Foster] Wallace, or who knows how many other *This American Life* contributors whose tales Carr always assumed were not ‘literally true,’ overboard with him?” (Cook, 2012). Through its regular broadcast of work by storytellers who do not abide by “literal” truth, goes the argument, the show refuses to respect important journalistic norms, which is how it got itself into trouble. Like Daisey, the show wanted to appear journalistic to harness the power that comes with a label of “truth,” but it was merely an imposter.

Reaffirming the value of the paradigm.

Confirming the importance of journalistic norms is the second primary component of paradigm repair: reaffirming the value of the paradigm. All of the paradigm-repairing commentary, regardless of whether it marginalizes Daisey or *TAL*, shares enthusiastic support for the paradigm itself, which in this case centers on fact-checking, the prioritization of factual accuracy above other goals, and the definition of truth as a collection of literal facts. Daisey’s violation of the paradigm’s orientation towards facts did not just bring scandal upon himself,

commentators argue, but it also damaged the case for improving the conditions in Chinese factories and contributed to a general erosion of audience trust in journalism. The scandal just demonstrates the vital importance of the traditional paradigm, according to these commentators.

First, critics roundly reject Daisey's critique that journalists, following practices circumscribed by their paradigm, failed to stand up for the human rights of Chinese factory workers (A. Chen, 2012; Fallows, 2012; G., 2012; Hesseldahl, 2012a, 2012b; Osnos, 2012; Zinoman, 2012). They argue that Daisey was simply wrong in his assertion that journalists were not bringing attention to an important humanitarian failure; this was another of his fabrications. *Gawker* journalist Adrian Chen (2012) criticizes Daisey for "trivializ[ing] the work of journalists who actually do real reporting on the issue." It was not the journalists who failed morally, Chen and other commentators argue. They list examples of many journalists who were thoroughly reporting on Chinese factory conditions while abiding by journalistic norms. After citing detailed reportage by *Bloomberg Businessweek*, the *Atlantic*, and the BBC, technology journalist Arik Hesseldahl (2012b) wonders of Daisey in *AllThingsD*, "Who does he feel has not been talking about this?"

In the monologue, Daisey describes his information-gathering techniques, such as standing at the gates of Foxconn, as unorthodox and highly effective. Daisey says,

My plan is to stand at the main gates and talk to anybody who wants to talk to me. And when I tell journalists in Hong Kong about this plan, they say, "That's...different. That's not really how we usually do things in China .ah...that's really a bad idea—" (Daisey, 2012a, p. 27)

Daisey's critics reject this characterization (A. Chen, 2012; Fallows, 2012; Osnos, 2012). The *New Yorker's* China correspondent Evan Osnos (2012), for example, writes, "Going to the

factory gates is exactly what reporters do in China.” Journalist James Fallows (2012) accompanies his critique in the *Atlantic* with a photo he himself took of the gates of a Foxconn factory in Shenzhen. According to these critics, Daisey was no rebel genius; his methods for meeting workers and learning about factory conditions were standard fare. He didn’t gain more access to workers and didn’t pay more attention to their plight than other journalists had done. Instead, according to critics, the main way Daisey disregarded journalistic norms was his non-literal translation of his pedestrian experience in China into his monologue. This started with his not taking notes during any of the interviews (Glass, 2012b; Larris, 2012) and progressed into outright fabrications. Independent blogger Rachel Joy Larris (2012) dismisses Daisey’s critique of other journalists’ China reporting, and describes him as merely inept. Daisey, she writes, “doesn’t have the discipline of being a reporter. He doesn’t have the skills to ferret out secret information, to get reluctant sources to talk and to get them to say meaningful things.”

Not only was Daisey wrong about journalism’s complicity in the exploitation of Chinese factory workers, say these critics, but his improper journalistic technique undermined his humanitarian cause (Fallows, 2012; Max Fisher, 2012; Larris, 2012; Poniewozik, 2012; Stelter, 2012; Su & He, 2012). These critics fear that the truth controversy will focus the public’s attention on Daisey and *TAL*, effectively distracting it from the important questions of Chinese factory workers’ human rights, and perhaps leading to public suspicion about future journalism on the same topic. As journalist Max Fisher wrote in the *Atlantic*, “Now, the story isn’t Chinese labor abuses anymore. The story is Daisey’s own dishonesty, which tinges everything he touched – the made-up details as well as the truth behind them – as compromised and untrustworthy” (Max Fisher, 2012).

These commentators additionally contend that the disgrace of Daisey’s influential text

only provides ammunition to those who seek to deny the very real horrors occurring in Chinese factories. In a typical example, journalist Fallows writes,

When they get all huffy, Chinese nationalists love to present the Western press as being irremediably biased against Chinese achievements and ambitions, and willing to pass along the most outrageous slanders about China without checking them for accuracy or even plausibility. [...] Daisey is everything they warned against, come to life (Fallows, 2012).

There is evidence in the commentary that factory defenders did use Daisey's downfall to support their position. *Forbes* contributor Josh Barro (2012), for example, notes that Daisey's audience is not his only, or even his most important, victim. Daisey's "primary victims," writes Barro, are "Apple and Foxconn, the companies he has been maliciously lying about, and their shareholders." Additionally, in the wake of the retraction, an online petition circulated that aimed to recall a previous online petition against Apple that had been inspired by Daisey's work. The second petition reasoned "The power and efficacy of Change.org is diminished by allowing petitions that are based on lies" (Sandoval, 2012c). Journalist Sally Wang, in the *South China Morning Post*, observed that many Chinese media used the retraction as an excuse to dismiss all American allegations of substandard working conditions in Chinese factories (Wang, 2012). According to Wang, "The Guangzhou Daily, for example, ran a headline saying: 'Foxconn as sweatshop is fake news, well-known American media all disgraced.'"

Some of the commentary expands the argument that Daisey hurt his cause to suggest that Daisey's violation of journalistic norms disturbs audience trust in journalism in general. Journalist Max Fisher (2012) wonders about Daisey's audience, "How receptive will they be the next time a reporter writes about [inhumane Chinese labor practices]? Will they bother to listen

[...] Or will they think back to Mike Daisey, and wonder who else might be lying to them?"

Fisher and others are arguing that by abusing the performative codes of journalism, Daisey damaged the strength of the contract between journalists and their audiences.

Entertainment Weekly writer Anthony Breznican (2012) explains, "There's an unspoken contract with the viewer (or listener, or reader) and when that is deliberately misrepresented, there is no way to retroactively change that original perception." The genre of journalism, like all genres, comes with a contract. Audiences expect texts classified as journalism to be produced according to certain procedures such as independent fact-checking and scrupulous note-taking. When journalism fails to meet those rigid expectations, goes the argument, it voids the generic contract, which is based on trust (Breznican, 2012; Carr, 2012; Clark, 2012; Diaz, 2012; Max Fisher, 2012; Garfield, 2012).

To many people, Daisey's text appeared to be journalism. Because of Daisey's persuasive use of the eyewitness convention, they experienced his text as factual "truth," which granted it significant power over its audience that it would not have wielded as fiction (Cook, 2012; Gimein, 2012; Isherwood, 2012; Larris, 2012; Manteuffel, 2012; Salmon, 2012; Zinoman, 2012). *New York Times* theater critic Charles Isherwood (2012), for example, writes, "The weight, authority, emotional power and — like it or not, theatricality — of 'The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs' derive precisely from the assumption that Mr. Daisey is telling the truth about the events he describes." *Slate*'s theater critic Jason Zinoman agrees: "The reason Daisey became a star is that he was seen—by critics and audiences alike—as much more than a theater artist. [...] Daisey clearly traded on his audience's expectation that he was delivering accurate accounts, not inventing experiences" (Zinoman, 2012).

TAL's "Retraction," however, revealed that Daisey had violated the journalistic contract

by failing to conform to expected production routines (Glass, 2012b). As *Grist* editor Scott Rosenberg (2012) writes, Daisey made too many changes to his story; he “improved” reality too much. According to Rosenberg, “The distinction between cosmetic changes and substantive fabrications is relatively easy to make,” but Daisey did not respect that distinction. Rosenberg further dismisses Daisey’s argument that he is not a journalist, and explains that Daisey established a contract, or “trust,” with his audience that he later broke:

Theater can do journalism; it can do activism; it can do anything. What it must do first to do any of these effectively is to establish some kind of trust: “I trust that you’re going to entertain me well.” Or “I trust that you’re going to tell me something true about our lives.” Or “I trust that you’re giving me important information about the world.”

The problem with the Mike Daisey story is that he broke trust repeatedly. (Rosenberg, 2012)

Rosenberg (2012) says that Daisey broke trust with his audience by abusing its “faith in his reliability.” A unique feature of the journalistic genre’s contract is that it confers truth. Eason wrote of the Janet Cooke scandal, “The scandal revealed the foundation of the news process to be a trust that sustains the authority to determine the facts” (Eason, 1986, p. 432). The word “determine” is important here. According to Eason, everybody understands that journalism isn’t an objective mirror that simply reflects the world. It is a partial selection of events, a constructed story. Based on trust that they follow particular practices in the production of news—that they conform the established journalistic paradigm—audiences grant journalists the authority to determine, not just present or reflect, the truth.

In their study of truth and memoir, Tullis Owen, et al. explain that “A reader’s expectation of truth symbiotically relates to her or his expectations of genre and degree of

authorial trust. If trust wanes, truth follows” (Tullis Owen, McRae, Adams, & Vitale, 2008, p. 189). They refer to the contract between writers and readers as a “relationship” that is sustained by meeting generic expectations, which fosters trust. If a writer (in this case, a journalist) fails to uphold the truth standards of her audience, she will damage the relationship. Conversely, Tullis Owen, et al. also argue that damage to the relationship can damage truth. If an audience does not trust the accounts of journalists, those accounts no longer function as “true.”

As I explained in Chapter 2, an audience cannot know if a piece of journalism was created according to the norms of the accepted paradigm. It can only trust that journalistic conventions have been followed. Daisey chose to disregard the contract that links journalistic performance with journalistic production methods. *Entertainment Weekly* writer Breznican makes this argument by calling Daisey’s work “counterfeit:” “Counterfeit truth, of course, is built out of the thing it’s imitating, just like counterfeit cash is made out of paper and ink. That doesn’t make it authentic, and authenticity is the intangible thing that makes it worth something” (Breznican, 2012).

To extend Breznican’s metaphor, a number of commentators fear that after a certain amount of “counterfeit” journalism enters circulation, the market will no longer trust in the authenticity of any journalism. *Atlantic* journalist Rebecca Rosen puts it succinctly: “Factual accuracy is the currency by which sources -- news outlets -- establish credibility” (R. J. Rosen, 2012). In other words, when journalism fails to consistently apply the paradigm’s expectation of factual accuracy, audiences trust journalism less overall. These critics fear that the loss of credibility and trust will have unfortunate consequences for innocent Chinese factory workers and other important causes. Breznican (2012) explains that “corruption of journalism is a big deal too, and without trust in what we read or see or listen to, nobody’s reporting about important

issues will be heard.” The world that results from a dissolution of trust in journalism is a frightening dystopia to these critics, and it can only be prevented by assiduously abiding by the generic contract and producing journalism according to the traditional paradigm. According to anonymous *Economist* blogger E.G, Daisey’s criticism of mainstream journalism is believable because of a number of cases of “liars like Mr. Daisey,” and further perpetuates a cycle of distrust in the media that destroys truth:

When challenged on his lies, Mr. Daisey, like most of the narcissists who turn up in public these days, turned around and started blaming things on our dysfunctional media. This is the type of attack that gets a lot of traction these days in part *because of* liars like Mr. Daisey, who turn up in the press claiming to have seen or done something they didn't actually see or do, and who have thereby helped damage the credibility of mainstream media organisations. (G., 2012)

Daisey himself observed the link between media condemnation of his text and the loss of focus on the issue of Chinese factory workers’ human rights, but he interpreted it differently. In the wave of criticism he received following the retraction, Daisey wrote on his blog, “Especially galling is how many are gleefully eager to dance on my grave expressly so they can return to ignoring everything about the circumstances under which their devices are made” (Daisey, 2012c). A few defenders made this same point. Journalist Adam Matthews (2012), for example, chided, “Blaming Mike Daisey for lying about Steve Jobs misses the point.” As I argued in Chapter 2, Daisey’s text draws a parallel between its rebellion against unquestioned norms of journalism and its rebellion against Apple’s unquestioned manufacturing process and corporate power. Viewed through this lens, the scandal appears to be a case of powerful institutions of journalism and corporations rushing to dismiss a truth-telling rabble-rouser. Though most

commentators saw the text's disregard for the journalistic paradigm as manipulative and disrespectful of its audience, Daisey viewed himself as courageously challenging the status quo of both journalism and overseas manufacturing. Daisey's text certainly did not conform to the generic expectations of its audience. Daisey dared to suggest that those expectations themselves could use some "jailbreaking." He attempted to break the paradigm beyond repair.

In his study of the paradigm repair that took place following the revelation that A. Kent MacDougall was an active socialist during his long career as a reporter for the *Wall Street Journal*, Reese argues that journalistic occupational ideology—the journalistic paradigm—participates in the process of hegemony. It reproduces society's dominant ideology, which is decidedly capitalist: "Despite journalism's stated goal of depicting reality, the news media—tightly interlocked at the top levels with other institutions—have an interest in preserving the larger liberal, capitalist system by helping maintain the boundaries of acceptable political discourse" (Reese, 1990, pp. 394–395). In MacDougall's case, the paradigm repair served to reassure journalists and the public that no socialist values had inflected the "objective" news. Reese explains that the paradigm repair worked by separating MacDougall's threatening personal values from his work as a professional and by demonstrating the effectiveness of journalistic routines in wringing any trace of those values out of MacDougall's journalism. MacDougall himself participated in this repair work by insisting that he stuck to accepted newsgathering practices and subordinated his political views to his professional standards.

Daisey and his text took the opposite approach. The text proudly announced its political purpose and brazenly violated professional journalistic standards. Those two acts both questioned dominant ideologies. Mainstream journalistic practices, according to Reese and Daisey, support a capitalist system. Daisey's work specifically accuses journalism of maintaining

the same system that allows for the abuse of Chinese workers who manufacture products for the U.S. market. Daisey's rejection of the journalistic paradigm is one piece of his rejection of the larger apparatus that allows Americans to condone and perpetuate inhumane factory conditions in China. When journalist Adrian Chen (2012) questioned Daisey about his story's facts, "he wasn't interested in "cutting hairs" or obsessing over facts about Foxconn because 'no matter what we actually do, we're still colluding with a fascist country. We're still working with people who are fundamentally not free.'" In the same interview, according to Chen,

"We should be able to talk to the tech journalist who went and wrote this story," [Daisey] said. "Oh wait, there isn't one. It's fucking retarded. It's ridiculous. It is absurd that there aren't people writing this story. I mean it's really absurd. It's actually disgusting. There's an entire field. I mean, not many fields of human endeavor are lucky enough to have an entire field of people who are technology journalists. How can there be no one who has enough fucking time to go do an in depth story about this." (A. Chen, 2012)

This audacious questioning of dominant ideologies is not as easily repaired as the case of a mere rogue journalist or story. Though whether Daisey's work helped or harmed Chinese factory workers is a matter of debate, the text did manage to stir controversy over the normally unquestioned journalistic paradigm. It inspired reflections on the current and future state of journalism.

Larger Threats to the Paradigm? Anxieties and Debates Over Changes in Journalism

To classify the great wealth of commentary following TAL's "Retraction" as solely a project of paradigm repair would be missing something important. The repair work was not entirely successful; Daisey's journalistic breach stayed at least partly open; his challenge to

journalism could not be easily dismissed. The text and its retraction served as a catalyst for a debate over contemporary trends in journalism and what they mean for the paradigm itself.

In his study of the 1980 Janet Cooke scandal, in which Cooke's fabrications eventually led to the *Washington Post* forfeiting a Pulitzer Prize, Eason explains that "Janet Cooke became a representative figure who personified changes in journalism during that period [of the 1960s and 70s]" (Eason, 1986, p. 434). Similarly, commentary on the Daisey scandal encapsulates a number of larger anxieties about journalism in American society today. Despite its efforts to paint Daisey as an isolated liar, much of this commentary expresses worry that Daisey is representative of disturbing trends. Ken Doctor (2012), a news industry analyst for the Nieman Journalism Lab, describes the controversy as "connecting up all our next-era hopes and fears." Theater critic Isherwood (2012) says the Daisey controversy "raises a knotty issue that deserves examination in the light of the increasingly blurred lines, in various media, between entertainment and journalism." The paradigm is still very important, Isherwood and a number of other journalists and media critics argue, but maybe not so easily repaired. One sign that the rupture may be too large to repair is that the commentary is not universal in its condemnation of Daisey's text. Throughout the scandal, a small number of commentators expressed support for the work's transgressions. This support shows that Daisey is not alone in the margins of the journalistic paradigm. Those margins are encroaching upon and questioning the mainstream.

In her study of the *New York Times* paradigm repair following the Jayson Blair plagiarism/fabrication scandal, Hindman (2005) argues that the *New York Times* responded to the scandal with more than a defense of the paradigm. The newspaper concluded that the paradigm warranted an update, and changed some of its institutional practices as a result. Though less frequent than calls for a return to the established paradigm, arguments that journalism needs

updating, rather than just defense, also appear throughout the commentary on the Daisey case, even among the commentary that rejects Daisey as a liar.

Even further, a few commentators wholeheartedly agree with Daisey's arguments and practices, and support a radical redefinition of journalistic truth. Support for a breach of this kind is unique to the Daisey case. Other studies of journalistic breaches have not found staunch defenders of the paradigm-disrupter. As Eason wrote, "No one stepped forward to defend Cooke and no one defended the use of composite characters and fictionalized dialogue in reporting" (Eason, 1986, p. 430). Eason explains that journalists perceived Cooke's transgressions be extremely far outside the paradigm; not near its boundary, so her case did not inspire many suggestions for updates to the paradigm. In the Daisey case, several opinion writers *did* defend the use of composite characters and fictionalized dialogue as well as other outside-the-paradigm reporting techniques that Daisey's text employed.

Like Cooke's did several decades ago, the Daisey scandal's threats to the journalistic paradigm map onto a set of anxieties about changes in contemporary American journalism. Through their commentary on Daisey, critics express a nervousness that truthiness is replacing truth, a wariness of increasingly blurred boundaries between genres, and a concern that journalistic values are being reprioritized at the expense of factual accuracy. These anxieties are each visible as a debate within the commentary between the majority who argue for vigorously defending the paradigm from the impending threat and those who call for changes in the wake of the scandal. Next, I will look at each of these anxieties and their attending debates in detail.

Truthiness.

The first anxiety the scandal brings into focus is that truth is increasingly giving way to "truthiness" in society as a whole. Nicole Smith Dahmen (2010) defines truthiness –a term

popularized in 2005 by satirist Stephen Colbert— as the appearance of truth in place of truth itself. It was declared the “word of the year” by the American Dialect Society in 2005 and by Merriam-Webster in 2006 (“Truthiness voted 2005 word of the year American Dialect Society,” 2006, “Word of the year 2006,” n.d.). In her frame analysis of opinion pieces on James Frey’s *A Million Little Pieces*, a memoir which generated controversy over its fabrications, Dahmen identifies the “age of truthiness” as one of the common explanations for Frey’s misdeeds. In the age of truthiness, goes the argument, society accepts truthiness as truth, and is unable or unwilling to identify the difference between the two.

Truthiness as a cultural phenomenon didn’t begin in journalism; it started with politics. The primary example of truthiness commentators use—and one Colbert invoked when he introduced the term in the first episode of his television show—is the George W. Bush administration’s case for invading Iraq based on evidence of weapons of mass destruction that never existed. As Schudson (2009) explains, during the Bush era (2001 to 2009) something changed in the way politicians oriented themselves towards truth. The Bush administration’s attitude towards truth betrayed a belief that truth is malleable, independent of verifiable facts, and gets to be decided by those in power.

In the *New York Times* magazine in 2004, Ron Suskind described Bush’s relationship to truth as rejecting “inconvenient” facts in favor of certainties (his “truths”) that are based on his faith in God: “He has created the faith-based presidency” in which, according to Suskind “open dialogue, based on facts, is not seen as something of inherent value” (Suskind, 2004). When Suskind interviewed a senior Bush aide, who is generally assumed to be Karl Rove,

The aide said that guys like me were "in what we call the reality-based community," which he defined as people who "believe that solutions emerge from your judicious study

of discernible reality." I nodded and murmured something about enlightenment principles and empiricism. He cut me off. "That's not the way the world really works anymore," he continued. "We're an empire now, and when we act, we create our own reality. And while you're studying that reality -- judiciously, as you will -- we'll act again, creating other new realities, which you can study too, and that's how things will sort out. We're history's actors . . . and you, all of you, will be left to just study what we do. (Suskind, 2004)

It is worth noting that this description of the Bush administration's definition of truth is very similar to the one I attributed to Daisey in Chapter 2, which explains why Daisey's text evoked political truthiness to his critics. As in the Frey controversy, commentators on the Daisey scandal saw Daisey's transgressions as symptomatic of the problematic increase in truthiness. *Time* pop culture critic James Poniewozik (2012), for example, even subtitled his commentary on the case "The Danger of Truthiness." Entertainment writer Breznican (2012), indicating that he sees Daisey's text as part of a trend of the watering down of truth, calls the scandal the "latest downgrading" of the idea of "based on a true story."

Daisey's "truthy" story was initially accepted not just by *TAL*, but by numerous institutions of journalism. Following the broadcast of "Mr. Daisey and the Apple Factory," Daisey wrote opinion pieces in the *New York Times* and the *New York Daily News*. He made appearances on MSNBC, CNN, CBS, PBS, and HBO, none of whom fact-checked his story. (Kurtz, 2012). Technology journalist Hesseldahl (2012a) decries "the national media's willingness to give Daisey a platform to repeat the same lies and fabrications without making the slightest effort to vet them." Weprin (2012), a journalist who focuses on television, suggests that these other news outlets may owe retractions as well.

Several commentators make explicit connections between Daisey and the politicians who ushered in the age of truthiness. Media journalist Bob Garfield (2012) writes in the *Guardian*, “The Bush administration's fictions about Iraq frightened America because they seemed to confirm the nation's worst fears and suspicions. Mike Daisey may be no Dick Cheney, but how do I know?” Making a similar connection with a more recent political example, media blogger and journalism professor Jarvis (2012) wonders, “Isn't telling the truth the norm in our society? [...] So how could that norm be canceled for public figures, for politicians who insist we'll have death panels or for performers on stage who think the spotlight forgives lies?” While a number of critics think Daisey could have avoided all controversy with a simple change in label (from journalism to theater, perhaps) or a disclaimer that his work was “based on a true story,” Garfield and Jarvis are making the point that people have a responsibility to be factual regardless of genre. A belief to the contrary leads to the encroachment of truthiness which, as Garfield points out, has in the past led to the horror of unnecessary war.

As almost everyone agrees, Daisey's fabrications did not misrepresent the main story of the inhumane conditions in Chinese factories (which is why, despite their suspicions, that journalists other than Schmitz didn't attempt to verify Daisey's tale). Daisey really was no Dick Cheney. His fabrications were small in scope and still amounted to, in the language of Daisey's defenders “larger truth” (Coddington, 2012). The question they ask of Daisey naysayers is: why does it really matter that Daisey did not meet the specific people he said he did or do everything in the same order as his work implies? The answer lies in Garfield's question, “but how do I know [that Daisey's fabrications will not be as disastrous as Cheney's]?” What Garfield objects to is that, in a world where truthiness is acceptable, he is forced to trust the motives of liars.

A different line of criticism against Daisey's truthiness argues that Daisey's "larger truth" was actually significantly distorted by his exaggeration of numerical data. Several critics identify Daisey's biggest crime as making some abuses in Chinese factories appear to be more widespread and common than they actually are. By describing occasional problems as all happening in a single factory and easily observed by Daisey during a short visit, Daisey misrepresents the rarity of these problems (Barro, 2012; Engber, 2012; S., 2012; Salmon, 2012; Schmitz, 2012). As *Slate* science columnist Daniel Engber (2012) writes, "those extra zeroes get inside our heads. They make the difference between consumer disquiet and moral outrage, between a company that makes some mistakes at the margins and one that's guilty of corporate malfeasance." According to this argument, Daisey's fabrications were not as innocent as his defenders claim, and did *not* amount to "larger truth."

In both of the arguments exemplified by Garfield and Engber, the larger problem is that Daisey didn't allow his audience to make up its own mind about the conditions in Chinese factories based on uncontroverted facts. He altered the truth to tip the scales in the favor of his argument, which replaced journalism's informing function with a persuasive or activist function. This is alarming to those who believe that journalism serves a crucial democratic role as a medium of rational consensus-seeking debate in a Habermasian public sphere. I will return to the question of journalism's responsibility to democratic society in Chapter 4.

To those alarmed by the increasing tide of truthiness, the solution is old-fashioned fact-checking. In other words, it calls for a return to the core rituals of the journalistic paradigm. *Poynter's* journalistic writing teacher Roy Peter Clark lists some of these rituals that, in his opinion, need to be re-emphasized in light of the Daisey scandal: "ask over and over, 'How do we know this?' 'Who told you that?' 'How many sources do you have for that?' 'What did you

see with your own eyes?’ ‘Do you have any documentary evidence to substantiate that claim?’”

At least two commentators repeat, in their criticism of Daisey and *TAL*, axiomatic advice they learned as journalists: “If your mother says she loves you, check it out” (Janensch, 2012; Lieblich, 2012).

A number of commentators note that *TAL*’s “Retraction” episode is very difficult to listen to. The interview between Glass and Daisey is highly confrontational, and Daisey’s discomfort is audible, which is part of the challenge for *TAL* listeners. The larger irritation for the audience, however, is the fundamental absence of understanding between Glass and Daisey. Glass asserts that Daisey lied, and Daisey maintains that he did not. Daisey does not accept Glass’ suggestion that he should label his work as fiction in the theater. Daisey tells Glass, “Well, I don’t know that I would say in a theatrical context that it isn’t true.” Daisey concedes that his piece “is not up to the standards of journalism” but insists that it does tell the truth. It just works according to a different definition of truth that is not the one traditionally used in journalism. Glass, like the critics concerned about truthiness, clings tightly to a literal, verifiable fact-based definition of truth. Daisey’s notion is more malleable. The yawning gap between these two understandings of truth is the foundation of the larger debate over truthiness amongst commentators.

Daisey and his supporters reject the call for a return to a traditional model of journalism. They want to keep the gap open, which means continuing the conversation about how we define truth: is it an accretion of small, verified facts or something larger? It means asking what new possibilities a different definition of truth allows. In the opinion of Daisey and his defenders, focusing on the larger truth rather than the small facts allows for a truth that better serves the exploited workers in Chinese factories.

As Apple co-founder Steve Wozniak said of Daisey, “His method succeeded” (Sandoval,

2012b). Daisey's goal was to bring more attention to the very real plight of Chinese factory workers, which he certainly did. Technology entrepreneur Kevin Slavin (2012) agrees, and notes that Daisey's captivating storytelling brought more attention to the issue he cared about than journalists before him had done. In the *Washington Post*, technology journalist Joshua Topolsky concedes that Daisey lied, but doesn't see that as particularly important: "Daisey found a way to tell the sad, human part of this story. To make it catchy enough to stick, even if it was a lie." Theater expert Scott Walters (2012b) agrees in the *Huffington Post*, and rejects *New York Times* reporter Charles Duhigg's statement in "Retraction" that "it's not my job to tell you whether you should feel bad or not" (Glass, 2012b). Walters, by contrast, argues that Daisey's "moral outrage" is exactly what's called for. According to Walters, the "lies" in Daisey's story were trivial and unimportant if they were lies at all. To Daisey and his defenders, truth is only valuable for what it achieves. They do not see truthiness as problematic. To the contrary, a more generous definition of truth facilitates the accomplishment of good in the world. According to this view, the obsession with a traditional notion of fact does little more than hamper important messages.

Blurred generic boundaries.

The next anxiety that bubbles up out of the Daisey scandal is that generic boundaries are becoming increasingly blurred. This concern is highly related to the perception of encroaching truthiness. The fear is that if the journalistic genre doesn't maintain its rigid boundaries and conventions, the contract of trust between journalists and audiences will dissolve. On his blog, Daisey described his piece's genre as "a combination of fact, memoir, and dramatic license" (Daisey, 2012b). Similarly, *TAL* describes its radio show on its website as "an experiment." The show broadcasts both journalism that "tends to use a lot of the techniques of fiction" and fiction

that “functions like journalism” (“About our radio show,” n.d.). As I explained in Chapter 2, Daisey’s text itself sends decidedly mixed messages about its genre.

The debate in the wake of “Retraction” didn’t make the piece’s genre any clearer. Daisey vigorously defended himself as a dramatist: “What I do is not journalism” (Daisey, 2012b). Others, such as Walters (2012a) agreed. Walters declares that Daisey’s piece was obviously not journalism and that “I find absurd the idea” that any audience member (such as Glass) could have mistaken Daisey’s stage show for literal truth. Glass obviously disagrees, as did many other critics, who pointed out that the text’s eyewitness character and presentation on *TAL* made it appear distinctly journalistic.

The hybrid genre of Daisey’s piece, and of *TAL*’s broadcast in general, is worrisome to a number of critics. Theater critic Isherwood (2012) flatly states, “Nonfiction should mean just that: facts and nothing but the facts.” Daisey’s text harnessed the power that comes with the label of “truth” without conforming to journalistic norms, which, as I explained earlier, some critics fear strained the relationship between journalism and its audience with distrust. The journalism-audience relationship was fragile to begin with, they argue, because the blurring of generic boundaries is a trend. *Salon* journalist and literary critic Laura Miller writes that the whole episode “raises (once more) the question of how much fiction we’re getting in our nonfiction” (O’Hehir et al., 2012). The parenthetical “once more” is telling in that Miller considers this mixing of genres and changing truth standard to be a cultural trend.

Salon film critic Andrew O’Hehir identifies an unfortunate cyclical relationship between blurred genres and a cultural appetite for material that seems to be real. Because audiences aren’t able to distinguish truth from fiction, he argues, they crave truth more intensely. This audience

demand increases the temptation for fabulists such as Daisey to make their work appear to be true, and makes audiences more subject to such manipulation:

We're obsessed with the question of whether things are "real," which betrays our doubts about whether anything we encounter in the media should be considered real. So the appearance of authenticity becomes a valuable commodity, and people seek it out when they do not deserve it. Every other Hollywood movie professes to be "based on a true story," which often is just an excuse for shoddy storytelling. (O'Hehir et al., 2012)

According to O'Hehir, the solution is to improve society's media literacy, so that audiences can "understand the distinction between fiction and journalism and the varying pathways to truth (and definitions thereof) that each can offer." This argument still calls for rigid boundaries between fictional and journalistic genres; it just places the burden of determining the boundary on the audience rather than on producers of media texts.

News industry analyst Doctor (2012) relates the trend of less rigid generic boundaries to media convergence in the digital age. According to Doctor, new technology is affecting the boundaries of news. "We're having a hard time defining the journalism — and the other stuff — that digital media either creates, or amplifies," he writes. After describing the difficulty of classifying today's media and journalism in our old categories, Doctor explains, "We're still coming to grips with these overlapping lines, and we can [sic] the same kinds of issues here in the Daisey story and retraction." *Guardian* media columnist Michael Wolff (2012), who defends Daisey, notices the same trend but doesn't find it alarming. He points out that popular media get away with the blurry generic boundaries that Daisey was faulted for because "they're creating a new form of blurred lines that seem to speak to the evolving polymorphous information

consumer, while journalism, in its strict and parochial sense, is losing its audience” (Wolff, 2012).

Salon journalist Mark Oppenheimer, who respects Daisey as an artist but disapproves of his dishonesty, also calls for celebrating these new blurry genres, but advocates transparency about their hybrid nature: “We need to learn how to love this hybrid, because as Mike Daisey shows, it’s the next great art form. But we need to be honest about what it is” (Oppenheimer, 2012). A significant number of commentators agree that a simple disclaimer that Daisey’s work belongs to a liminal genre between fiction and journalism would satisfy their complaints (Fallows, 2012; C. Jones, 2012; Madison, 2012; Oppenheimer, 2012; Wain, 2012). Indeed, the Public Theater, which staged “The Agony and Ecstasy of Steve Jobs,” made such a disclaimer in a press release and then continued to stage Daisey’s mostly-unchanged monologue (Mosher, 2012).

News industry analyst Doctor (2012) agrees with this suggestion, and explains that in today’s new media landscape, we need to “not build a wall, but disclose the blur” between different genres. He argues for a “big tent” that accepts many different media and many different genres. This is important “to pay the bills for the news-gathering.” Doctor and several other critics gesture towards the idea that the increasingly porous boundaries around the genre of journalism are linked to financial need. As newspaper circulation declines and traditional funding models no longer support news institutions, journalism is having to adapt. One of the adaptations, which is scary to some and welcome to others, may be a redefinition of what “journalism” includes.

The substantial number of critics who welcome such a redefinition and who accept blurred boundaries are calling for a re-write of the generic contract. The willingness to redefine

journalism is notably distinct from paradigm repair, which advocates a return to strictly delimited, rigid boundaries around journalism. These critics are admitting that those rigid boundaries no longer seem realistic. In their view, Daisey is more than an errant imposter; he represents a changing journalism landscape.

Misplaced journalistic priorities.

Another anxiety that the Daisey scandal unearths is that changing journalistic priorities, which non-professionals such as Daisey represent, are contributing to the disturbing trends of increased truthiness and blurred generic boundaries. These changing priorities include replacing an absolute devotion to factual accuracy with emphasis on storytelling, activist causes, or financial gain. While a few critics suggest that Daisey's status as a non-professional meant he lacked journalistic skills and training, the majority do not question his abilities but instead take issue with his irreverence towards journalistic priorities. They worry that such irreverence is increasingly prevalent.

In "Retraction," Glass blames some of the fabrications on the fact that Daisey was an amateur journalist with less professional oversight than usual. "Generally," says Glass in the episode, "if we are working with a non-journalist on a story, one of our producers is actually there for every step of the tape gathering and the reporting so we know what is true" (Glass, 2012b, p. 20). Only professional journalists, this passage suggests, are qualified to determine the truth. For no other reason than his status as a non-journalist, *TAL* states that it should not have trusted his story to tell the truth according to journalistic standards.

Journalism professor Pintak notes that Daisey has a history of mixing genres, and suggests that he is not fit to practice journalism: "Passing off as journalism the work of a performance artist with a track record for conflating fact and fiction has inflicted yet another

wound on public radio and the journalism industry as a whole” (Pintak, 2012). Pintak does not explain further, as if to assume that this history of wounds is well known. He does make clear, however, that Daisey’s status as a “performance artist” whose past work is non-journalistic should cast doubt on his ability to practice journalism. Allowing the work of someone with Daisey’s history and credentials to appear in a journalistic setting is dangerous to journalism, according to Pintak.

Independent blogger Rachel Joy Larris claims that Daisey has the expertise of a storyteller, not that of a journalist. She points out that Daisey lacked the journalistic skills of interviewing, working with a translator, and “[taking] notes when you interview someone” (Larris, 2012). Glass, Pintak and Larris are all defining “professional journalist” in the same way: A professional is somebody who works as a journalist (rather than as, say, a performance artist) and possesses a particular skill set. Their critiques echo broader concerns about how journalism is changing with the recent influx of “citizen journalists” and bloggers. Though these critics do not say this explicitly, they are casting Daisey as an example of how truth can be corrupted if just anybody is allowed to practice journalism.

Larris’ critique notwithstanding, Daisey’s employment history and lackluster skills are not really what most of his journalist-critics object to. They do not think he is incompetent; they think he is unethical. Most of the journalists who criticize Daisey as an amateur define professionalism differently. What Daisey lacked as a non-professional, they suggest, was not skills or credentials but appropriate reverence for the journalistic paradigm. When Daisey’s critics decry a decrease in journalistic professionalism, what they fear is a lack of respect for traditional journalism’s norms and standards which can lead, as in the Daisey case, to a watering-down of the truth.

Media journalist Garfield (2012), for example, writes that he wondered, "How could a performance artist have so scooped the whole world of journalism?" Garfield goes on to answer his own question: "by making stuff up," or in other words, by ignoring the norms of the journalistic paradigm. As a non-journalist, Daisey didn't respect the paradigm's values and chose other priorities above the literal presentation of facts. Journalist Rosenberg (2012) agrees, and stipulates that amateurs *can* practice journalism as long as they abide by its rules: "Journalism is an activity that theater artists — like filmmakers, authors, business people, anyone — can choose to undertake." Daisey's amateur status is not these critics' primary objection; it is symbolic shorthand for his lack of loyalty to the value of the journalistic paradigm.

Journalism scholar Daniel Hallin describes journalistic professionalism as an ideology, an attitude toward the world, rather than as membership in a particular group. American journalistic professionalization, according to Hallin, is linked to the idea that journalism serves the "public interest," which has come to mean that it should be non-partisan and objective (Hallin, 2000, p. 245). By this definition, Daisey is a non-professional simply because he does not conform to traditional notions of what journalism should look like. Interestingly, Hallin, writing in the mid-1990s, notes that this "high modernist" definition of journalistic professionalism is in decline without ever mentioning the internet or the death of newspapers.

As Hallin (2000) makes clear, the trends that Daisey represents and the questions his scandal inspired are not new. Is the movement away from professionalism democratizing journalism by allowing for more varied and less elite writing styles, political perspectives, and journalistic business models? Or merely weakening it by disregarding the truth standards that the journalistic audience expects? This long-running debate has not been resolved. To the contrary, it reached a fever pitch in the Daisey controversy. I would like to suggest that criticism of Daisey

as a non-journalist actually reflects a more generalized concern among journalists that the primary priority of traditional professional journalism, factual accuracy, is becoming corrupted by other (less worthy) aims. The Daisey scandal highlights three of these encroaching priorities: storytelling, advocacy, and financial gain.

First, many critics warn against the temptation of a beautifully crafted story. They suggest that the priority to tell an excellent story often conflicts with telling the truth, and cite Daisey as an example of storytelling being improperly prioritized over truth. As labor-focused journalist Michelle Chen (2012) described Daisey, “He basically decided that the ugly truth wasn't quite dramatic enough for him.” A number of others make this same point. Reuters finance blogger Felix Salmon writes, indicting not just Daisey but the whole enterprise of nonfiction storytelling, “One of the central problems with narrative nonfiction is that the best narratives *aren't* messy and complicated, while nonfiction nearly always is” (Salmon, 2012). Journalist Rosenberg writes of Daisey's falsified imagery, “The images...fit our images of what such images should be” (Rosenberg, 2012). Schmitz (2012), the journalist who was the original Daisey whistleblower, also traces Daisey's missteps to the allure of a simple easy-to-understand narrative. Journalist Cook (2012) notes that there is rhetorical power to a well-told story and there is also rhetorical power in truth. Unfortunately, writers do not get both powers at the same time, which is what Daisey wanted. Cook says we need to accept that sometimes the truth is mundane. It is made of facts that do not fit perfectly into a theatrically-appropriate tale. He writes of storytellers such as Daisey that “the reason they appeal to ‘larger truths’ is that the ordinary, regular-sized truths with which most of us live make for boring stories.”

As I mentioned earlier, some critics denounce *TAL* as a whole for the same reason. NYU journalism professor Jay Rosen expresses a wish for *TAL* to “question whether it is possible to

fall too deeply in love with ‘stories’ and their magical effects; whether that kind of love erodes skepticism” (J. Rosen, 2012b). The skepticism Rosen is referring to is the journalistic attitude that all claims are dubious and require fact-checking.

Media columnist Wolff, an enthusiastic Daisey defender, argues that journalists are defensive because they are bad writers and Daisey is a good writer. According to Wolff, journalists defend themselves with “facts” as an excuse for shoddy storytelling. He laments the decay of journalism from the days of the 1960s and 1970s when, in his view, journalism tried to be good at storytelling. He describes contemporary journalism, by contrast, as “a bureaucracy of fact and process and convention at the expense of language and expression” (Wolff, 2012). Beautiful writing, according to Wolff, is not something to be criticized. He also supports Daisey’s choice to prioritize storytelling above facts, unlike defenders of the traditional paradigm. Further, through his nostalgia for the New Journalism of decades past, Wolff also subtly points out that the “traditional” paradigm has not always existed unchallenged. Other models of journalism have existed throughout history, and they may have advantages over the one that is currently paradigmatic.

Beyond a dedication to powerful storytelling, Daisey was also deeply devoted to a particular activist cause. According to his critics, this priority also had a negative impact on his ability to practice journalism (Bady, 2012; Baldwin, 2012; Carr, 2012; Hayes, 2012; Silverman, 2012; Zinoman, 2012). *Washington Post* opinion writer Rachel Manteuffel describes Daisey as “terrified” of the truth: “He was terrified that the truth was what most truths are — a little messy and cloudy. That it would not be enough to get people to care” (Manteuffel, 2012). Daisey prioritized getting “people to care” over the factual details of his trip to China. Daisey comes close to admitting as much in “Retraction,” when he tells Glass, “everything I have done in

making this monologue for the theater has been toward that end – to make people care” (Glass, 2012b, p. 18).

According to the *New Inquiry* blogger Aaron Bady (2012), Daisey felt the need to elaborate on the truth because “If you tell the truth with scrupulous accuracy and breadth, people are as likely to doze off as be scandalized.” Bady argues that, like other liars, Daisey focused on the ends (his activist goals) rather than the means (the norms of the journalistic paradigm). Lying is the only way he could imagine getting his desired results. The *New York Times*’ Carr sums up this argument with one dismissive sentence: “there is another word for news and information that comes from advocates with a vested interest: propaganda” (Carr, 2012). The *Nation* journalist Chris Hayes furthers this point by pointing out that Daisey used people as tools for his own storytelling needs. According to Hayes (2012), The Chinese workers whose stories Daisey misrepresented and changed to suit his needs were his victims. He was trying to present himself as empathetic in the face of Apple’s abuses, but in altering the facts of the workers’ stories, he dehumanized them. Theater critic Zinoman (2012) says the same thing: “Daisey turned Chinese workers into abstractions, means to an end.”

Writing teacher Clark describes *TAL* as lowering its journalistic guard because it was enchanted by Daisey’s activist cause. He surmises that Glass and producers of the show wanted Daisey’s story to be true for political reasons:

They wanted it to be true primarily for good reasons, because its exposure might lead to reforms and saved lives. That purpose would link them to Daisey’s chain of intent. But they also wanted it to be true because a badly bruised Apple fits neatly into a master narrative about corporate greed in America, a story that will continue to play itself out in presidential politics. (Clark, 2012)

Clark is criticizing *TAL* for allowing its activist sympathies to diminish its desire to practice good fact-checking. Importantly, however, neither Clark nor these other commentators directly criticize Daisey or *TAL* for a lack of objectivity. In his analysis of the Janet Cooke scandal, Eason (1986) observes that most commentators on that scandal didn't directly call for renewed objectivity, but a subconscious preference towards objective news persisted beneath their critiques. This same phenomenon is observable in the Daisey commentary. By suggesting that Daisey's activism superseded his loyalty to factual accuracy, critics imply that a lack of objectivity interferes with practicing good journalism.

At the same time, however, critics seem to generally support Daisey's opinion that Americans ought to hold Apple accountable for the Chinese workers that make its products. Labor journalist Michelle Chen, for example, describes Daisey as "stupefyingly self-serving" while also criticizing "the real masterwork of fiction that Apple and other tech giants continue to peddle: the imaginary world of our gadgets, a cosmopolitan universe that pretends to connect everyone while in fact sharpening the lines between consumers and the invisible workers that enable that carefree lifestyle" (M. Chen, 2012). There is an ambivalence in the commentary. Critics agree with Daisey's opinions and simultaneously suggest that the strength of those opinions tainted his presentation of facts. This ambivalence reveals deeper uncertainties over the role of journalism in society. The commentary is grappling with competing loyalties: the loyalty to present facts to its audience and the responsibility to fight for the rights of the exploited. I will explore this question of journalism's public responsibilities more in Chapter 4.

As I have observed throughout this analysis, Daisey and his defenders interpret the disapproval toward his mixture of activism and journalism as an attempt to silence his message and protect the powerful status quo. That status quo includes the power of both Apple and

institutional journalism. Communication scholar D. Soyini Madison describes Daisey's fight against Apple as "akin to David with his slingshot in a battle against the mighty giant Goliath" (2012, p. 239). Media critic Wolff (2012) notes that many of Daisey's most vocal critics are technology reporters who are "famously conflicted by their various industry allegiances." Theater critic Walters (2012b) suggests that *TAL* may have bowed to pressure from Apple to retract the story and that *Marketplace*, Schmitz' employer, may have cozied up to Apple in discrediting Daisey. Walters further attributes the attack on Daisey to defensiveness on the part of journalists who want to protect their profession as they know it. He interprets journalists' backlash against Daisey's activism as discomfort that he was encroaching on their turf by helping Americans form opinions, which they believe should be the exclusive role of journalism.

Another misplaced priority, according to Daisey's critics, was Daisey's emphasis on personal gain at the expense of the truth, which they link to journalism's changing and precarious financial model. Technology journalist Topolsky says of Daisey, "He leaned into his lies to sell tickets to a show, to get on network TV, to make money and get famous" (Topolsky, 2012). Finance columnist Salmon (2012) agrees: "The fact is that the chief beneficiary of the success of Daisey's monologue has been Mike Daisey, much more than any group of factory workers or underground trades unionists in China." Technology journalist Hesseldahl (2012a) also points out that Daisey has been making a good deal of money through his stage work. In fact, Daisey seems to not have suffered professionally since the retraction. He claims to have years of stage work booked, and audiences still flock to see him (Sandoval, 2012d). To Daisey, the fact that his work has maintained a large audience vindicates his message and its truth (Daisey, 2012d, pp. 2–3). In his first public talk after the retraction, Daisey defended his work, and even his decision to broadcast it on *TAL*, based on the number of people his message reached: "I didn't do the right

thing, but I think having that story on the air in front of millions of people, was right” (R. J. Rosen & Daisey, 2012).

Chicago Tribune theater critic Chris Jones argues that *TAL*'s decision making was similarly commercially influenced: “It reveals the perils of what can happen to news organizations when, in the pursuit of populist storytelling or buzz-heavy names, they subcontract their reporting to artists or entertainers” (C. Jones, 2012). Jones' argument implies that journalism is desperate to attract a larger audience or more funding. Behind the criticism of Daisey and *TAL*'s desire for commercial success is a concern that the erosion of historical methods of financing journalism will be accompanied by an erosion of the truth.

The traditional paradigm's expectation of fact-checking demands time and resources, and is therefore facilitated by institutional support. Months after the retraction, Glass said in an interview that *TAL* budgeted \$60,000 for the year to hire freelance fact-checkers, in addition to the show's regular staff, with the goal of preventing another scandal like Daisey's (Gladstone, 2012). None of the commentators explicitly say this, but they subtly raise the question of whether the journalistic paradigm, and the definition of truth that it assumes, can hold up without the support of the large, traditionally-financed institutions of journalism that are undergoing change and disappearing.

Daisey's critics are defending a traditional definition of truth that prioritizes factual accuracy above all else. Daisey and his defenders, on the other hand, suggest that truth is built from a combination of facts, a well-told story, a cause that needs to be championed, and the business acumen to command a large audience. The suggestion that these other priorities are no less important than the facts is deeply frightening to Daisey's critics who are what Eason (1986) calls “conventionalists.”

Daisey's text and *TAL*'s retraction opened up a rupture in the journalistic paradigm's definition of truth. Daisey's audacious questioning of journalistic truth opened up a conversation about the rules according to which journalists produce truth. It reminded the public that any particular definition of "truth" is not inevitable or naturally superior. Much of the commentary worked hard to repair the journalistic paradigm and reject Daisey's challenge to journalism's truth production methods. This condemnation was not universal, however—Daisey's work garnered both supporters and detractors—and in this way Daisey's work achieved its aims. A number of commentators accepted Daisey's challenge to engage in a debate over how journalism should choose to define truth as it undergoes change. He inspired widespread reflection on how the journalistic paradigm might operate differently.

Because the paradigm repair in this case was less successful than most previously documented cases of journalistic repair work (Bennett et al., 1985; Reese, 1990), the Daisey scandal provides new insight into the process of paradigm repair in general. Somewhat like the Daisey case, Hindman (2005) argues that the *New York Times*' attempt at paradigm repair in the wake of the Jayson Blair scandal was not entirely successful. She points out that the scandal prompted the *New York Times* to reform some of its practices (particularly creating a "public editor" position) rather than return to business-as-usual. Hindman does not clearly explain, however, *why* Blair's breach was unable to be seamlessly repaired. She suggests that perhaps his transgressions were especially egregious. I would like to argue, by contrast, that the success or failure of paradigm repair is more a reflection of the status of the paradigm than it is a reflection of the nature of the breach.

Daisey's challenge to the journalistic paradigm was certainly shrewder and more intentional than previous breaches, which allowed him to pinpoint weaknesses in the paradigm.

More importantly, however, the journalistic paradigm was particularly vulnerable at the time of the *TAL* broadcast. American journalism was (and is) going through a period of chaos and change. In many ways, the journalistic paradigm was ripe for scandal.

Paradigm repair or paradigm change are parts of larger, ongoing processes. A single, isolated breach doesn't constitute much of a threat to a robust paradigm. The Daisey case was not easily repaired because it was not isolated, and it occurred at a particularly weak moment in the history of the traditional news paradigm. Daisey's challenge contributed to a larger trend of re-imagining the future of journalism and questioning what parts of the current paradigm will be useful in that future. The Daisey scandal revealed significant anxiety on the part of critics because the anxiety was already there. *TAL*'s retraction of Daisey's piece just provided an opportunity to express it. Future scholars of paradigm repair would do well to consider any challenge to the paradigm and resulting repair work in their larger historical contexts. Repair work not only reveals the paradigm's rules and limits; it also reveals whether the paradigm is strong or weak, and may highlight particularly weak areas. Daisey, for example, showed the paradigm's strict separation of journalism from other genres is faltering.

Paradigm repair does not work the same way in every case. It is also important for scholars examining this process to carefully articulate the paradigm in question. Paradigms change over time; the news paradigm should not be understood as a stable, invulnerable entity. Depending on the paradigm's nature, strength, and which aspect the breach attacks, the repair work will vary in technique and success.

Furthermore, paradigm repair work should be examined as a complex process carried out by many actors. Because paradigms are larger than single institutions, a single news institution can't repair a paradigm. In this case, *TAL*'s "Retraction" was not the entire extent of the repair

work. In order to understand the impact (or lack of impact) of a journalistic breach, it is important to look at the broader conversation that surrounds it.

Chapter 4: Mr. Daisey and Democracy; Journalism and its Publics

But now we have to start the conversation about Apple and Foxconn and workers' rights all over again, this time with real, verifiable facts at our command. —Arik Hesseldahl

In this chapter, I delve into a key assumption behind much of the criticism Daisey attracted: that proper journalism supports democracy. According to his critics, Daisey's journalistic transgressions damaged important democratic processes of public deliberation. I begin by explaining the theoretical link between the public sphere, journalism, and democracy, which is based on Jürgen Habermas' description of the bourgeois public sphere. I then detail two criticisms of Daisey based on that theory. First, commentators argue that, by lying, Daisey damaged important democratic processes, because critical-rational public debate requires an egalitarian access to facts. Second, critics argue that Daisey's political subject matter demands particularly rigorous factual accuracy that isn't necessary for topics that they deem unrelated to citizenship.

Daisey and his defenders reject both of these criticisms. Their texts critique the Habermasian ideal public sphere and the journalistic norms that accompany it. They point out that audiences are not drawn to traditional journalism in the same way they flocked to Daisey's text; journalism without a public cannot be supporting a public debate. Daisey's text attempted to expand the public sphere to include more types of texts, more topics, and more voices than exist within the constricting boundaries of traditional journalism. Paralleling a number of public sphere theorists' critiques of Habermas' singular public, Daisey's work suggests that conventional journalism excludes many people and many issues of importance from democratic debate, and instead circulates the truth of those already wielding power.

At the end of the chapter, I briefly survey the successes and failures of Daisey's interventions.

Journalism, Democracy, and Habermas

As I explained in the previous chapter, Daisey's critics flocked in large numbers to condemn his breach of the journalistic paradigm and explain why that paradigm is important to protect. This chapter will explore one of the key rationales behind the paradigm's defense: a strong perceived link between journalism and democracy.

John Hartley, surveying journalism from a historical perspective, argues that that journalism was instrumental in the foundation of modern democratic society, and has been pivotal ever since. Without journalism, according to Hartley, "there would be no public" (Hartley, 1996, p. 83). Kovach and Rosenstiel's influential text *The Elements of Journalism* makes the same point: "From its origins in the Greek marketplace to the colonial American taverns, journalism has always been a forum for public discourse" (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007, p. 165). Kovach and Rosenstiel also articulate the fundamental Enlightenment belief in the necessity of journalism to democratic society: "The primary purpose of journalism is to provide citizens with the information they need to be free and self-governing" (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007, p. 12). This belief underlies the journalistic paradigm I described in Chapter 3 and animates much of the criticism of Daisey.

Specifically, Jürgen Habermas' (1974, 1989) articulation of the bourgeois public sphere has been highly influential as a normative vision of the role that journalism should play in civic life. Habermas' conception of the mechanics of the relationship between journalism and democracy has also informed contemporary journalistic conventions (Allan, 1997). In Habermas' public sphere, which is an ideal based in a particular historical context—18th and 19th century

Europe— rather than a set of extant conditions, citizens develop public opinion through reasoned discourse, or “rational-critical” debate. That public opinion and debate, in turn, “put[s] the state in touch with the needs of society,” (Habermas, 1989, p. 31) which facilitates democratic control as opposed to the feudal domination of earlier eras.

In order to function properly, according to Habermas, this public sphere depends on rationality and requires facts that are unadulterated by vested interests. It also entails equality; each citizen must have an equal opportunity to participate, and power differentials must be bracketed. To illustrate by way of counterexample, Habermas is particularly disapproving of advertising and public relations as perversions of the public sphere. According to Habermas, these practices both distort facts and allow for corporate opinions to overpower those of citizens:

[T]he criteria of rationality are completely lacking in a consensus created by sophisticated opinion-molding services under the aegis of a sham public interest. Intelligent criticism of publicly discussed affairs gives way before a mood of conformity with publicly presented persons or personifications; consent coincides with good will evoked by publicity. (Habermas, 1989, p. 195)

In Habermas’ idealized public sphere, journalism, in contrast to advertising and public relations, serves as the medium of rational-critical public debate by providing the public with the information it needs to deliberate. Journalism itself also serves as a deliberative forum; public debates in the press are analogous to debates in legislatures (Hampton, 2010). The press, which Habermas calls the “the public sphere’s preeminent institution” is necessarily separate from government and special interests; it is “the fourth estate” (Allan, 1997; Habermas, 1989, p. 181). Habermas links a free press, rational-critical debate and democracy in his description of the historical turning point of the reduction of censorship in Britain in the late 17th century:

The elimination of the institution of censorship marked a new stage in the development of the public sphere. It made the influx of rational-critical arguments into the press possible and allowed the latter to evolve into an instrument with whose aid political decisions could be brought before the new forum of the public. (Habermas, 1989, p. 58)

Clearly, Habermas' conception of the public sphere aligns with the traditional journalistic paradigm that prioritizes literal truth above all else, jealously guards press freedoms, and describes itself as the "watchdog" of government. Habermasian ideals support the paradigm by declaring journalism to be the crucial link between citizens and government.

An important aspect of the bourgeois public sphere as Habermas conceives it is a distinction between public and private. Public sphere debates concern specifically political topics because the idea of the public sphere is that it "mediates between society and state" (Habermas, 1974, pp. 49–50). When it comes to journalism on "public sphere" matters, many media critics therefore see the stakes as particularly high. They criticize journalism that operates outside the dominant paradigm, such as Daisey's, as jeopardizing democracy. This criticism rests on a number of assumptions about both the superiority of the current paradigm and the operation of the democratic public sphere. This chapter's aim is to unpack these assumptions in the commentary surrounding the Daisey scandal, and to analyze Daisey's critique of them.

The Importance of Truth

Journalistic truth and rational-critical debate.

According to those who subscribe to the idea that journalism should strive to support an ideal Habermasian public sphere, journalism's civic responsibility is inextricably bound with its commitment to truth. Truth is, as Kovach and Rosenstiel put it, journalism's "first obligation"

(Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007, p. 36). The kind of rational, reasoned debate that Habermas envisions requires a notion of neutral truth that is uncoupled from power.

Daisey's critics make this link. Many of their criticisms translate Daisey's disregard for journalistic truth to a negative impact on public democratic deliberation on the issue of working conditions in Chinese factories. *Forbes* contributor Josh Barro, for example, worries that due to Daisey's misrepresentations of the numerical density of factory abuses, "the public is likely to mis-analyze the merits of Apple's operations in China" (Barro, 2012). Barro is unique among the critics in that he disagrees with Daisey's conclusion; he argues that the Chinese factories Daisey disparages are doing more good than harm. However, Barro's reasoning is consistent with that of Daisey's other critics. They all argue that journalism should facilitate a rational, fact-based debate on the merits and failings of the factories, which Daisey's text does not do. Barro's particular complaint is that Daisey's numerical exaggerations keep the public from having that debate.

In "Retraction," journalist Rob Schmitz and interpreter Cathy Lee have a conversation about the gravity of Daisey's transgressions. Initially, Lee doesn't object to Daisey's fabrications because "He is a writer. So I know what he says is only maybe half of them or less actual. But he is allowed to do that right? Because he's not a journalist. □" Schmitz concedes that Daisey is not a journalist, but protests that "his play is helping form the opinions of many Americans." It is Daisey's role in informing public opinion, suggests Schmitz in this exchange, that obliges him to tell the (journalistic) truth. In the end, Lee agrees: "As a Chinese, I think it's better if he can tell the American people the truth. I hope people know the real China. But he's a writer and he exaggerate some things. So, I think it's not so good." (Glass, 2012b, pp. 8–9) In the conversation, Schmitz convinces Lee that since Daisey's text is participating in the political

public sphere (rather than, for example, serving as mere entertainment) he should be held to truth standards that facilitate rational debate.

In his commentary in *AllThingsD* and elsewhere, technology journalist Arik Hesseldahl repeatedly refers to Daisey's work in the context of a public "discussion" about workers' rights. Daisey's work, because of its lack of factual accuracy, has not contributed to that discussion, says Hesseldahl. To the contrary, his text has confused the conversation: "And what he has ultimately done has damaged that discussion because now, we have to start all over. We have to completely recalibrate what is true and separate it from what is not (Kurtz, 2012). Hesseldahl (2012a) also describes Chinese factory working conditions as a subject "we need to discuss at length as a society" and elsewhere writes that that until Daisey entered the fray, "I think the discussion on the matter has been a healthy and engaging one for the better part of a decade" (Hesseldahl, 2012b). By "discussion," Hesseldahl means journalistic media coverage. And like others, Hesseldahl believes that literal journalistic truth is a necessary precondition for such a rational-critical discussion.

Publics theorist Warner, in discussing the features of publics and public discourse, observes that "The usual way of imagining the interactive character of public discourse is through metaphors of conversation, answering, talking back, deliberating" (Warner, 2002, pp. 62–63). Obviously Hesseldahl makes heavy use of these metaphors, which are indicative of how mainstream journalists see their role in society and how they conceptualize the workings of the public sphere. The urgency Hesseldahl projects in his criticism by using language such as "need" and "have to" is also indicative of the importance he, Habermas, and other critics ascribe to journalism in public sphere debates.

According to Kovach and Rosenstiel, journalism's deliberative function is increasingly important in the contemporary new media environment. That environment is saturated with shrill opinions and public relations spin, so journalism has an important and fundamental role: to declare what is actually true. "The job of the news media," in this environment, according to Kovach and Rosenstiel, "is to give this more complex and dynamic public what it needs to sort out the truth for itself over time" (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007, p. 26). They further explain the unique role of journalists: "In the age of new media, it is more incumbent on those providing us with journalism that they decipher the spin and lies of commercialized argument, lobbying, and political propaganda. The editorial pages of the newspaper, the opinion columnist, the talk show, and the point-of-view magazine essay, bloggers, and anyone else have every right to be opinionated. That is their mission. But if their authors want to call themselves journalists, then it follows that they should not misrepresent the facts" (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007, p. 167).

Kovach and Rosenstiel's argument echoes Habermas' criticism of advertising and public relations. It also evokes the alarm of those who fear increasing truthiness and those who argue for rigid boundaries between journalism and other genres. All of these arguments are anchored in the same belief that factual journalism is crucial for public deliberation. According to this belief, there are acceptable forums for an activist text such as Daisey's, but journalism is not one of them. As I explained in Chapter 2, a number of critics write that they would find Daisey's work perfectly acceptable in the theatrical context with a clear label that indicated its fictionalizations (Carr, 2012; O'Hehir et al., 2012). Daisey's failure was in labeling his work as journalism.

Kovach and Rosenstiel label the proliferation of agenda-driven opinion as "Argument Culture," which they see as threatening democracy. They quote Robert Berdahl who describes democracy as a compromise, and explain using Berdahl's words that the compromise "'becomes

impossible if every issue is raised to the level of a moral imperative,' simplified to fit a set of stereotypical preconceptions, or 'framed in a way to produce ultimate shock value.' This is what, however, the press typically does." (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007, p. 175) By this definition, Daisey certainly participates in argument culture. He raises the issue of inhumane Chinese factory conditions "to the level of moral imperative" in a way that shocked yet made sense to his audience. Daisey's story does not leave room for nuance, compromise, or debate. The fact that he presented such a work as journalism is at the core of his critics' objections.

According to critics, Daisey's text was too focused on results at the expense of the crucially important deliberative process. He co-opted that process for his own ends; he appropriated it into argument culture. Because his work pretended to be participating in rational deliberation but was actually only interested in a particular activist outcome, he abused and damaged the democracy that that process facilitates. As journalist Craig Silverman warns in *Poynter*, "Mike Daisey thinks his work is serving a higher cause and purpose, and that makes him exactly the kind of source who needed to be thoroughly fact checked." (Silverman, 2012) In other words, according to Silverman, Daisey believed that the ends justify the means, and the role of the editorial process is to protect the sacred yet fragile journalistic means from those who are only focused on activist ends.

Theater expert Scott Walters, a fierce defender of Daisey, disagrees. Walters (2012b) argues in the *Huffington Post* that Daisey's moral pressure on his audience was deeply important. Far from contributing to "argument culture," it was ethical accounting. Walters writes, referring to an Apple co-founder, "Steve Wozniak said, after seeing *The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs*, 'I will never be the same after seeing that show.' That should be the goal. When Ira Glass invited Mike Daisey to do an excerpt of his performance, he acknowledged the moral

significance of that goal.” Even Walters, however, doesn’t go so far as to suggest that *journalism* should create moral pressure the way Daisey’s work does. Walters is clear that Daisey’s work is not journalism, and argues that work such as Daisey’s is capable of achieving important outcomes for which journalism is unfit. Walters essentially agrees with Daisey’s critics on the location of the boundary of the journalistic genre; he just doesn’t value the work of journalism or recognize its deliberative function.

What Walters is missing is that Daisey’s work did present itself as journalism on *TAL*. In the view of a number of critics, Daisey was able to hijack the journalistic process because his audience (which includes the *TAL* staff) was so enthralled by his text. Although critics place blame on Daisey, not his audience, they suggest that audience members are easily seduced by narratives like Daisey’s. They therefore need to be protected from their own, possibly anti-democratic, preferences. The *New Inquiry* blogger Aaron Bady Bady (2012) describes a sort of media arms-race in which stories are having to become increasingly astonishing in order to attract an audience: “if a certain level of violation is required to provoke our interest, then does feeding that interest with stories that reach that threshold only reinforce the fact that a broad range of stories do *not* interest us?” According to Bady, the public’s appetite for increasing amounts of spectacle, fed by the media, means that mundane truths attract no attention.

In a related argument, a number of critics point out that Daisey’s narrative simplicity, at the expense of the messy and complex truth, was also appealing to audiences. *Marketplace* journalist and Daisey whistleblower Schmitz (2012) quotes Adam Minter, a journalist and expert in Chinese factories, who attributes some of Daisey’s success to his distilling a complicated issue down to a straightforward, emotionally attractive story: “‘People like a very simple narrative [...] Foxconn bad. iPhone bad. Sign a petition. Now you’re good,’ Minter says. ‘That’s a great simple

message and it's going to resonate with a public radio listener. It's going to resonate with the New York Times reader.'" Daisey's text, according to Minter via Schmitz, gave audiences what they wanted; it "resonated." Simultaneously, however, the features of Daisey's text that drew audience attention, such as its sensationalism and simplicity, were the very same ones that undermined the democratic truth-telling ideals of journalism. Neither Schmitz nor any of these other critics offer a viable solution. If audiences want what Daisey offers, but what he offers harms democracy, what is to be done? Commentators praise the reporting of the *New York Times* and other traditional news institutions on the same topic as appropriately complex and exhaustively researched, but note that it did not captivate audiences the same way Daisey's work did. Nieman Journalism Lab news industry analyst Ken Doctor (2012), for example, writes, "The 39-minute Daisey piece did what dozens of previous stories on Foxconn's massive manufacturing of our Apple (and other) wonders hadn't accomplished: It captured listeners' imaginations."

This is one of the biggest cracks that Daisey opened up in the journalistic edifice: he drew attention to the fact that audiences may not care for the journalism that critics think democracy needs. Audiences *liked* what Daisey had to offer. Though many certainly felt betrayed by the revelations in "Retraction," people continued to buy tickets to Daisey's monologue, and his work continued to find an audience. Following one of Daisey's stage performances that took place after *TAL*'s "Retraction," *CNET* journalist Greg Sandoval (2012a) writes, "Many of the people interviewed by *CNET* as they left the theater raved about Daisey's performance, and to beat all, many of them were also aware to varying degrees that Daisey may not have been telling the truth, or at least not the kind of truth based on facts." According to Sandoval, at the end of the monologue, which was Daisey's final New York performance of "The Agony and Ecstasy of

Steve Jobs,” Daisey received a standing ovation. The audience members Sandoval quotes seem to forgive Daisey’s deceptions because they enjoyed the performance so much.

A number of critics justify Daisey’s transgressions by his text’s success at gaining attention. They point out that the piece’s popularity helped further an important humanitarian cause. They also imply the converse: that the suggestion that audiences must be saved from their own desires is a losing argument. Technology entrepreneur Kevin Slavin writes in defense of Daisey,

His skill in telling the story he told is responsible for the phenomenal amount of media around Chinese factory labor practices. Not the New York Times’ China bureau. Not Bloomberg Businessweek. Show me some reporters who were able to generate the same cultural engagement with the issue, will you? Show me reporters who can match Jon Stewart’s numbers? What might account for that? (Slavin, 2012)

While acknowledging Daisey’s betrayal, technology journalist Joshua Topolsky agrees. He writes in the *Washington Post*, “until the radio broadcast Daisey took part in — and many of the follow-up interviews he gave — this problem was never discussed in a such a big, public way. Daisey’s lies inspired honest questions about the gadgets in our pockets.” Topolsky explains that Daisey’s storytelling skill made his message stick with audiences in a powerful, emotional way, which is a good thing. The question commentators debated in the wake of “Retraction” is whether that kind of “good thing” is compatible with the conventions and expectations of journalism. A fear that lurks behind the commentary is that if those two types of texts are incompatible, Daisey may be an indicator that audiences are willing to abandon journalistic truth for more desirable stories.

As news industry analyst Doctor (2012) points out, *TAL*'s retraction generated so much outrage because of the immense impact and popularity of Daisey's story. Critics felt manipulated by a story that fulfilled a number of desires and also claimed to be true. They were forced to confront the question of whether the perfect story—one which is simple, emotionally affecting, well-told, shocking, and also true—is an impossible fantasy. *Gawker* editor John Cook (2012), for example, observes that “the ordinary, regular-sized truths with which most of us live make for boring stories,” but rejects that argument as a justification for fabrications. “All nonfiction stories are shackled by the truth,” he writes. The labels “nonfiction” or “journalism” confer power, but also come with constraints that Daisey failed to respect. In the same vein, independent blogger Matthew Baldwin (2012) argues that Daisey felt the need to add impact to a (boring) truth by adding personal details. According to Baldwin, “The easiest way to make a story engaging is to personalize it, to say ‘this is something that happened to me,’” and further “personalization is the ultimate shortcut from uninteresting fact to gripping yarn.” These critics suggest that journalistic truth may be incompatible with powerful storytelling. They are arguing that mundane and complicated truths are the real substance of the world, and imply that these facts are therefore a necessary ingredient for rational public deliberation.

Poynter's journalistic writing teacher Roy Peter Clark (2012) reminds journalists, especially the *TAL* staff, that “if a story is too good to be true, it probably is.” That a “too good to be true” story first snuck through the journalistic editorial process then became widely lauded and amassed a huge audience is deeply concerning to Clark and other critics. They are concerned, because Daisey's success—and the fact that some people continue to defend him—raises doubts about the public's dedication to the deliberative process.

According to publics theorist Warner, actual people are always different from “the

public” imagined and called into existence by public address: “Public discourse itself has a kind of personality different from that of the people who make up a public” (Warner, 2002, p. 60). According to Warner, real people are interested in the sensational and are easily distracted, which is just what journalists such as Cook and Baldwin fear. Warner points out that public speech, however, does not generally address its public as if that is the case. This is especially true of journalism, which imagines a public that is rational, critical and civic-minded. The inherent tensions between “the public” evoked by journalism and the real people of the world are brought to the surface in the Daisey case. The case prompted journalists to contend with the difference between the American public they address and the increasing numbers of real Americans who are choosing not to be a part of that public. After all, Warner reminds us that publics are “constituted through mere attention” (Warner, 2002, p. 60). If people are not paying attention to journalism because they prefer stories such as Daisey’s, the “public” that journalism claims to serve does not exist.

Journalists who believe that their audience—their market—is not interested in a product that fulfills an important function in democracy are put in a difficult situation. They can either continue to practice the kind of journalism they believe best serves the public interest or they can give audiences what they want. If they insist on upholding traditional journalistic norms, journalism may become increasingly irrelevant, distant from audiences, and financially insolvent. *Guardian* media columnist Michael Wolff, who views traditional journalism as merely self-important, sheds no tears over its decline:

“Journalism today speaks to no one as passionately as it speaks to other journalists.

Fewer and fewer people believe it, feel informed or entertained by it, or find themselves

compelled to seek it out. The journalism priests would say that one reason for our ever-shrinking following is because sinners in the profession have undermined our credibility. I would say it is because journalism – calling it so is a recent and self-serving bit of professional elevation – is not our real job; writing is. And it is not Mike Daisey's factual lapses that we should be so focused on, but, rather, how he writes so well.” (Wolff, 2012)

To those who remain dedicated to the democratic function of rigorously truthful journalism, purveying the stories that audiences seem to prefer entails sacrificing what they believe to be the bedrock of democracy. On the other hand, continuing to practice the kind of journalism that they believe supports a Habermasian public sphere could possibly entail sacrificing their audience. Daisey’s text highlights this frightening trade-off, which is one of the reasons it generated so much commentary. Daisey chose to practice journalism that abdicated the Habermasian ideals; his text did not abide by literal, empirical truth standards and sought to persuade rather than to encourage rational-critical debate. At the same time, Daisey’s text achieved its goals. It attracted a very large audience and raised awareness of the inhumane conditions in Chinese factories. Daisey himself articulates this trade-off. In TAL’s “Retraction,” Daisey freely admits that his work is “not up to the standards of journalism,” meaning traditional, literal-truth journalism. He still insists, however, that the work is “true” in a different way and says, “I stand by how it makes people see and care about the situation that’s happening there” (Glass, 2012b, pp. 18–19). One of the fears behind the criticism of Daisey’s text is that its sacrifice of journalistic ideals may have been *necessary* to its success.

Truth and political subject matter.

Daisey’s story impacted more than people’s imaginations; it had real-world political effects as well. I would like to suggest that the strong reaction to the retraction was due to more

than the text's powerful pull on audiences; it was also related to its political subject matter. Daisey's ability to influence media coverage and activism about worker abuses in overseas manufacturing—and possibly even foment changes in Apple, Inc.'s practices—made the controversy about more than a fictional story claiming to be non-fiction. It was also about defining the boundary of the public sphere and journalism's perceived special responsibilities within that sphere.

Daisey's critics re-emphasize Habermas' distinction between public and private spheres. *Salon* journalist Mary Elizabeth Williams declares, "When you're speaking about real people and events, you have a responsibility to be clear how far into fantasy you're going" (O'Hehir et al., 2012). According to Williams, it is the text's *subject matter*—"real people and events"—that confers truth obligations, not only the journalistic context or the textual conventions that I examined in previous chapters. *Bloomberg Businessweek* business journalist Mark Gimein (2012) makes a similar distinction, even among various statements of Daisey's. Referring to an anecdote from another of Daisey's monologues, Gimein writes "I have no idea if the seaplane episode was precisely true. Very likely it wasn't, and that doesn't especially bother me. The stakes in this case are very different, though." He further explains, "In the monologue, Daisey says he loves his computers so much that he takes them apart and cleans them with an air blower. I didn't assume that was true. But when Daisey says he spoke to a worker whose hands shook from nerve-toxin poisoning, I took that to be true. Otherwise, what's the point?" In Gimein's calculus, the parts of Daisey's monologues that merely entertain or establish Daisey's character aren't required to be truth. The parts that have political consequences, however, must be true in order to matter.

“Retraction” and many pieces of commentary reflect this same belief that political (“public”) content should be held to a higher truth standard than other speech. Daisey’s stage monologue alternates between two story lines. One tells of Daisey’s trip to China. The other, which was not included in the *TAL* broadcast, recounts a history of the Apple corporation. The Apple-focused portions of the transcript of “The Agony and Ecstasy of Steve Jobs” are entirely unchanged in “Release 2.0” from the first version of the transcript, likely for a couple of reasons. First and most obviously, as these parts of the monologue did not appear in the *TAL* broadcast, they were not scrutinized by *TAL*’s audience or subject to the show’s retraction. Also, however, critics may hold this portion of the monologue to a different standard of truth because of its content. The Apple storyline may or may not contain inaccuracies like the ones discovered in the trip-to-China storyline, but the audience doesn’t care in the same way. Because the subject matter concerns the history of Apple’s various devices and the relationships between the public figures who founded and have run Apple, it would be quite easy to fact-check. I have found no evidence of anyone doing this. This suggests that critics do not care if Daisey mischaracterized a 1980s conversation between Steve Jobs and Xerox PARC the same way they care that he altered facts that have the power to influence a contemporary political debate.

Many commentators compare Daisey to David Sedaris, another *TAL* contributor (Baldwin, 2012; Breznican, 2012; Carr, 2012; Cook, 2012; Garfield, 2012; C. Jones, 2012; Oppenheimer, 2012). Most of Sedaris’ stories are humorous personal anecdotes, which are told as true first-person memoir. Commentators point out that Sedaris’ “truth” is just as dubious as Daisey’s, but because Sedaris’ subject matter is not political (typical topics include his family, his job history, vacations he’s taken, and stupid things he’s done) factual truth is less important. Even though Sedaris’ stories are reaching a large “public” or audience, his topics are squarely

outside the “public sphere,” which is where truth matters more, according to many critics. These critics suggest that this is because of the different scale of the consequences. Journalist Williams argues succinctly, “Doing a piece on harrowing work conditions in China is not the same as doing a piece on your stint as a Macy’s elf” (O’Hehir et al., 2012). What goes unsaid, but underlies the generalized idea of consequences and scale, is that political topics represent what journalists view as their most important mission; to provide a forum that links people and government.

Entertainment Weekly writer Anthony Breznican (2012) explains, “It’s easy to excuse a little varnish on a comedic personal story. Like what the Coen’s [sic] did with *Fargo*, there’s no harm in it. Cable news networks will not be doing an exposé about whether the late Jean Shepherd, a radio storyteller whose autobiographical tall-tales became the film *A Christmas Story*, really truly shot his eye out with a Red Ryder BB gun. Daisey was practicing a different form of storytelling—advocacy journalism.” *Grist* editor Scott Rosenberg (2012) argues that most people are tempted to “fudge” the details of personal stories and rationalize their exaggerations by asking, “if we change some details to make a better yarn, who are we hurting?” The difference with Daisey’s case is that he is hurting a tangible, real group of people: “the workers in China whose welfare he used to justify his fictions.” Other critics expand this critique; they argue that Daisey is hurting journalism in general (Pintak, 2012), audiences (Carmona, 2012; Garfield, 2012), and by implication, the democratic process.

This line of reasoning is a consistent thread throughout the commentary, and only a couple of critics protest that all stories, Sedaris’ included, should be held to literal, factual standards of truth. Media journalist Bob Garfield (2012) declares in the *Guardian* that ““I can’t even read David Sedaris anymore, because the hilarious stuff he remembers from his

idiosyncratic youth may turn out never to have, you know, happened.” Journalist Cook (2012) also proudly describes himself a “pedantic dullard” for applying “the standards of stringent truth” to Sedaris’ work. Cook rejects what he calls the “Sedaris exception,” which is the idea that the same truth standards do not apply to all “true” stories, though he recognizes that this places him in the minority. Unlike Garfield and Cook, most of the commentary doesn’t argue that truth is important for its own sake; it is valuable as a means to public conversations on matters of civic concern. That is why, according to his critics, Daisey’s lies are particularly problematic in a way that Sedaris’ are not.

This trend in the commentary, that Daisey’s subject matter demands especially strict truth standards, serves to distinguish journalism’s role in the public sphere by pointing out the boundaries of both the journalistic genre and the public sphere itself; Sedaris’s content doesn’t count, but Daisey’s does. In Chapters 2 and 3, I discussed the definition of the journalistic genre in terms of context and convention. These Sedaris comparisons demarcate the boundaries of the genre in terms of subject matter, which map roughly onto Habermas’ definition of what counts as “public.”

The problem with defining journalism in this way, as rigorously factual texts that facilitate and participate in deliberation on matters of public concern, is that it excludes many texts that might benefit audiences. Of course there is journalism on myriad topics that aren’t political or controversial. There is also plenty of journalism being created in the absence of democracy. Some scholars suggest that to define journalism in such a limited way leaves out a lot of interesting and innovative work. Zelizer argues that it is crucial to ask, “How would our understanding of journalism look different were we to insist not on a unitary model of journalism — one which assumes that an elevated form of news works in prescribed ways to better the

public good across contexts — but on various kinds of journalisms with necessarily multiple facets, definitions, circumstances, and functions?” (Zelizer, 2009, p. 1) Schudson specifically points out that “the press by itself is not democracy and does not create democracy and can and has co-existed decade after decade in undemocratic, authoritarian, and repressive regimes” (Schudson, 2000, pp. 58–59). Josephi (2005) takes this point a step further in arguing that by linking democracy with the definition of journalism, the news production that occurs in much of the world does not qualify as journalism.

Daisey’s defenders, and even some of his critics, advance similar opinions. They argue that Daisey’s signature mix of storytelling skills combined with real-world consequence is something to emulate rather than condemn simply for failing to conform to a narrow definition of journalism. *Salon* journalist Mark Oppenheimer (2012), for example, writes that Daisey’s “appealing fusion of the dramatic, raconteuresque monologue and investigative journalism surely helps explain why audiences responded to Daisey as an original talent.” Oppenheimer calls this fusion “the next great art form.” By raising these questions of what counts as journalism and where the boundaries of the public sphere lie, the Daisey controversy calls for a re-examination of Habermas’ conception of the public sphere itself.

Journalism, Capitalism and Daisey’s Critique of Habermas

Habermas himself admits that the bourgeois public sphere is incompatible with the existing conditions of contemporary society, which he describes as “an industrially advanced mass democracy organized in the form of the social welfare state” (Habermas, 1974, p. 54). Habermas bases his ideal on a time and place in which not everyone made up the public; only a particular social class, which was relatively homogenous, was permitted to participate. Since that time, the “public” has become more diverse. Commercial influence has also increased, which

Habermas describes as private interests bleeding into the public sphere. These changes have meant that instead of rational discussion, there is violent conflict amongst ideas and a battle of public relations between special interests (1974, p. 54). Despite these changes, Habermas insists that the bourgeois public sphere has lessons to teach us and should still serve as an ideal. He argues that it could feasibly exist today in an altered form.

Habermas wrote his description of “today’s” problematic public sphere in 1960s Europe, but it uncannily resembles Kovach and Rosenstiel’s 2007 description of American “Argument Culture.” That the same concerns about journalism and the public sphere have persisted for some 50 years suggests that journalism’s imperfect ability to facilitate deliberation is not the result of a particular technology (e.g. the internet) or a specific political moment (e.g. the Bush administration’s endorsement of truthiness). Instead, there may be an inherent incompatibility between the type of traditional journalism that is designed to serve an ideal Habermasian democracy and the real-world conditions under which journalists practice. Habermas’ vision of the public sphere, even in an altered form, may be irreconcilable with other contemporary American values, such as inclusivity, diversity and liberal capitalism. That vision, however, still motivates a great deal of journalism. The Daisey controversy makes this conflict between American values and journalistic values visible. Daisey’s text participates in the armed battle of ideas that is antithetical to traditional journalism, but successfully tells the story of a marginalized group.

A core component of Habermas’ ideal is that journalism must be separate from government and from corporations, which allows regular people to participate in democracy and hold powerful institutions accountable. The influence of corporate forces on journalism as an obstacle to the ideal public sphere is a topic throughout this debate, and a problem with which

many critics have grappled. Where Habermas (1974) sees this commercial influence as an obstacle that can be overcome, many others argue that it is an extensive problem that requires overhauling conceptions of journalism and the public sphere entirely (Curran, 2000; Hampton, 2010). Both Daisey and his journalist critics advocate protecting journalism from undue commercial influence, but use entirely opposite tactics.

Daisey's work argues that, far from holding government and corporations accountable to the public, journalism is serving corporate interests. Both Apple and journalism subscribe to and perpetuate the dominant ideology that he is questioning, according to Daisey. In their study of the media portrayal of Occupy Wall Street (OWS), DeLuca, et al. explain that "traditional mass media organizations remain consequential in determining the presence and the reception of activist groups. Not surprisingly, they have a vested interest in preserving the world as it is, in perpetuating the status quo. As a result, activist groups advocating social change have strained relations with traditional mainstream mass media" (DeLuca et al., 2012, p. 488). DeLuca, et al. argue that the mainstream media generally trivialized or ignored the OWS protests, to the benefit of Wall Street, i.e. those already in power. Similarly, Daisey argues that the media ignored Chinese factory conditions to the benefit of Apple. Daisey embodies the "strained relations" between traditional institutions of journalism and activists. Like DeLuca, et al., Daisey suggests that non-mainstream truths demand non-mainstream journalism.

Daisey's text argues that today's journalism, despite its incantations, is not working towards a world like Habermas' ideal. Rather, it is increasingly conceding that determining truth is the privilege of the powerful. Daisey doesn't actually fight against this trend. Instead, he points out truth's symbiosis with power by exemplifying that relationship. As I explained in Chapter 2, Daisey seizes some of journalism's and power for himself in order to present a truth that counters

the narrative of mainstream journalists and the Apple corporation. Daisey does not articulate an alternative relationship between truth and power, but he does point out some vulnerabilities of traditional journalism. He exposes its weaknesses and contradictions through hacking. In particular, Daisey's text and its retraction illustrate that it is possible to make a text appear to be journalism even if it hasn't been created according to journalistic norms, which exposes journalism as a truth-determining authority instead of a neutral forum for debate. Daisey also makes a case that mainstream journalism supports existing power relationships rather than "comforting the afflicted and afflicting the comfortable," as the old journalistic adage goes.

Critics' argument that Daisey's subject matter demands a particularly strict type of truth can be seen as a defense of the status quo and of Apple's power. *Time* pop culture critic James Poniewozik (2012), again contrasting Daisey and Sedaris' work, writes that Daisey's story is high-consequence, because it is "discussing not personal matters but real-world events—the way thousands of actual people are treated and the way we get one of the most popular consumer products." *Forbes* media and technology journalist Jeff Bercovici (2012) writes, almost identically, "This isn't a cute little story about screwing around on the job or volunteering at a mental hospital. This is an account containing serious allegations of wrongdoing by one of the world's biggest companies, an account that inspired investigative reporting by *The New York Times* and ultimately forced the company to reform its practices." Poniewozik and Bercovici's respective references to "one of the most popular consumer products" and "serious allegations of wrongdoing by one of the world's biggest companies" suggest that it's not just the political nature of Daisey's topic that demands truth. It is the fact that he is challenging *Apple* specifically. Maybe average citizens such as David Sedaris' mother do not deserve rigorous fact-checking, but Apple certainly does.

This corporate exceptionalism is what Daisey implicitly rejects. Apple doesn't get to demand a different truth standard than any other subject of his monologues, which cover such topics as a road trip and raising a puppy. Daisey is "truthful" about Apple in the same way and to the same degree as he is truthful about other subjects. Like his detractor Cook, Daisey rejects the "Sedaris exception" and the line it draws between the public sphere and private matters. This argument shares commonalities with that of Habermas critic Fraser (1990), who also rejects a rigid, a priori distinction between public and private. Fraser points out that what "subaltern" people (especially women) consider matters of public concern may fall outside Habermas' narrow definition of the public sphere. What counts as "public," according to Fraser, should be a matter of debate in a diverse egalitarian society, who notes that "the bourgeois public was never *the public*" (Fraser, 1990, p. 61). Warner explains further, "When any public is taken to be *the public*, those limitations invisibly order the political world" (Warner, 2002, p. 77).

Daisey further criticizes the way that some voices are louder than others in contemporary journalism and the public sphere. In Daisey's worldview, the narratives of Apple and institutional journalism are broadcast far and wide, whereas voices of simple non-journalists and exploited hardworking Chinese factory employees must fight to be heard. Daisey casts his monologue as part of that fight. He attempts to provide a voice for those who do not usually have access to the bullhorn of media channels. In an explanation of the journalistic paradigm, Reese explains that journalists participate in the hegemonic forces that "[preserve] the larger liberal, capitalist system." According to Reese, through journalistic routines such as a heavy reliance on official sources, journalists "accept the frames imposed on events by officials and marginalize and deligitimate voices that fall outside the dominant elite circles" (Reese, 1990, pp. 394–395).

In this journalistic environment, voices of dissent have a hard time getting heard.

Daisey's response tactic is to appropriate the voice of institutional journalism; to distribute his dissent by hacking the system. "The Agony and Ecstasy of Steve Jobs," even refers to Daisey's message as a computer virus that infects his audience. Daisey tells the audience, referring to his viral message about Chinese workers, "by the third scene, it had jumped your firewalls and it's been leaping from protected memory to protected memory all night long. It's been re-writing your code from the inside out and I'm letting you know now, you will never be rid of it" (Daisey, 2012a, p. 60). Daisey's "virus" infects the minds of his audience, and the vector through which it spreads is journalism. The virus replicates itself through *TAL*, through each of Daisey's media appearances, then eventually through the journalism of others who report on Chinese factories once the topic becomes part of the national media agenda. The virus, however, will always be an outsider in the system of institutional journalism, and intends to damage the system itself. Many journalists, predictably, reacted with anxiety at the attack of Daisey's "virus." They defended their Habermasian worldview and corresponding journalistic methods with the techniques of paradigm repair, as I showed in Chapter 3.

Kovach and Rosenstiel, while advocating an approach that is the opposite of Daisey's, also warn of increasing corporate influences on journalism. They write of journalism that "the profession may face its greatest threat at the beginning of the twenty-first century. We are seeing for the first time the rise of a market-based journalism increasingly divorced from the idea of civic responsibility" (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007, p. 27). They quote media magnate Rupert Murdoch praising the authoritarian state of Singapore and express alarm that "the notion of a modern publisher's advocating capitalism without democracy has no meaningful precedent in American journalism history" (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007, p. 28).

Daisey is fighting against this same trend. He views most journalism as complicit in a

world economy that supports China's own version of capitalism without democracy. In the original transcript of "The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs," Daisey mocks journalists' reliance on Apple as a source of information, which has a vested interest in misrepresenting the conditions in Foxconn factories: "And when the press would ask Steve Jobs, 'Steve, what's up with Foxconn? What's it like?' and Steve Jobs would say, 'Gosh, it's a factory, but it's not like any factory we've ever seen. It has swimming pools and movie theaters—it's amazing'" (Daisey, 2012a, p. 59).

Daisey and his fiercest critics claim to be addressing the same problems; they just advocate antithetical solutions. Kovach and Rosenstiel view the increasingly cozy relationship between journalism and capitalism as a call for a renewed dedication to the type of strictly fact-based journalism that supports a Habermasian democratic public sphere. *Chicago Tribune* theater critic Chris Jones writes in support of traditional journalism, "Shortly after Daisey's show started drawing attention to the workers, the *New York Times* launched its own investigation. It used its own reporters who told their own, fact-based story and reached fact-based conclusions. Real-world changes at Apple and Foxconn were the result. Investigative journalism was working" (C. Jones, 2012).

Daisey's intervention, by contrast, rejects the Habermasian public sphere entirely. His text argues that the democratic process that Daisey's critics defend doesn't function as intended in the actual conditions of the world, as evidenced by the fact that journalists weren't facilitating a discussion about Chinese workers' rights until Daisey's popularity forced them to. Daisey's response to his dissatisfaction with journalism is to eschew the (failing) democratic deliberative process and focus instead on democratic *results* by whatever means necessary.

Daisey's draws attention to the impracticability of the Habermasian public sphere in a way that again resonates with the arguments of Fraser. One of Fraser's critiques of the Habermasian public sphere is that it is entirely impossible to set aside power differentials, which results in "deliberative processes tainted by the effects of dominance and subordination" (Fraser, 1990, p. 73). Fraser argues that multiple "publics" is a more inclusive and more democratic model than Habermas' monolithic public. A model of multiple competing and overlapping publics, according to Fraser, allows participation from a wider variety of people and recognizes that societal inequalities exist. In contrast with Habermas' conception, the ultimate horizon for Fraser's publics is not total consensus. Conflict is an inherent feature of a diverse society, and should not be unwelcome, according to Fraser. There will always be competing interests, and probably always inequality. "Argument Culture," from Fraser's viewpoint, can simply be seen as vibrant debate that accepts a wider variety of topics and voices than the traditional public sphere and its partner, traditional journalism.

Fraser's vision shares Daisey's impulses. Both reject journalistic deliberation on the grounds that it doesn't represent everyone, and instead favor a more combative approach. Both Fraser and Daisey's ideas also gesture towards criticism of journalists as an elite class with the power to arbitrate truth and determine what counts as appropriate debate, as the result is journalism that reproduces dominant ideology and perpetuates existing power differentials. In order for maximum equality, journalists cannot be "gatekeepers."

From a different angle, DeLuca and Peebles (2002) critique the focus on rationality and the privileging of face-to-face communication in the traditional Habermasian conception of the public sphere, particularly in the 21st century technological context. They suggest the supplemental concept of the "public screen," which allows for the rhetoric of non-rational

images in addition to rational discourse. As DeLuca and Peebles explain it, one of the benefits of the public screen, as opposed to the public sphere, is that it is accessible to less-powerful activists in addition to the corporate interests that unduly influence the media.

DeLuca et al. (2012) expand this hopeful vision in their description of “public screen” journalism in which a wider range of topics, opinions, and voices exist. They do not invoke Fraser, but do describe a situation of distinct “publics” associated with left-leaning versus right-leaning blogs. The blogs they analyze represent a much broader range of opinions than the ones expressed in mainstream news outlets. While mainstream journalism neglected and dismissed the Occupy Wall Street movement, they argue, bloggers across the political spectrum took the protests seriously and framed them in a wider variety of ways.

Daisey’s text is an attempt to expand the public sphere, and the journalism that serves it, beyond a single, exclusive notion of “the public.” The text also advances an argument that is not based strictly on facts, which is well suited to the age of the public screen.

Daisey’s Successes and Failures

As I described in Chapter 2, Daisey’s text displayed a belief that truth is a product of power. Daisey argued that the truth circulating in the media before his intervention was controlled by Apple and institutional journalism, which worked to the detriment of Chinese factory employees. Daisey contested that control using all the tools available to him and presented the public with an alternate version of the truth. In many ways this was successful. As a number of commentators have pointed out, Daisey effectively brought attention to the issue he cared about. After the broadcast of “Mr. Daisey and the Apple Factory,” journalists and regular Americans were asking: who makes our electronic devices and under what conditions? This was Daisey’s goal.

Daisey also persuasively argued that objective truth is imaginary and that journalists who pretend to simply report unbiased facts are deluded and/or unethical because they are unknowingly or secretly supporting the truths of the powerful. Daisey managed to open up a conversation about how truth is produced by denaturalizing the rules and norms of journalism. He also showed that the truth-production system is vulnerable to hackers and viruses, post hoc paradigm repair notwithstanding.

Finally, Daisey interrogated the Habermasian public sphere that journalism traditionally seeks to support. His monologue's success drew attention to the difference between journalism's imagined public and real audiences. His text also demonstrated the harm done by a fixed and rigid public/private distinction.

At the same time, however, Daisey's intervention was deeply cynical, because his text utilized the same techniques it critiques. He replaced the content of Apple's and journalist's truth with his own, but he used the same tactics as Apple and "truthy" politicians. Daisey understood how to accumulate power through narrative techniques and journalistic channels. He then utilized that power to disseminate the particular truth he wanted to advance. Daisey's text doesn't display any hope that truth and power might be separated. Further, despite its critique of professional journalism, the text doesn't actually suggest doing away with traditional journalistic institutions, as Daisey finds them useful pathways for spreading his message.

Daisey's critics point out his cynicism indirectly by arguing that Daisey was self-serving in the same way that Apple and traditional journalism are self-serving. Where Apple's truth benefits its corporate bottom line and journalistic truth reinforces the profession's importance, Daisey's truth benefitted his career and his self-image as a compassionate crusader. A number of commentators also note that Daisey presented himself as the American "savior" of helpless

Chinese people. They compare Daisey's text to another problematic piece of media circulating around the same time: the online video "Kony 2012." That video, which quickly reached an enormous audience, was widely criticized for its ethnocentric and oversimplified portrayal of an African conflict. Critics note that Daisey's narrative did the same thing. Reuters finance blogger Felix Salmon, for example, writes,

"The fact is that the chief beneficiary of the success of Daisey's monologue has been Mike Daisey, much more than any group of factory workers or underground trades unionists in China. Similarly, the chief beneficiary of the success of Kony 2012 has been Invisible Children, a US non-profit which spends its money mostly on making movies. [...] Daisey has managed to convince himself that his interests are perfectly aligned with those of the workers at Foxconn." (Salmon, 2012)

Others criticize Daisey's sole focus on the factories that make products specifically destined for the U.S. (Barro, 2012; Yglesias, 2012). This narrowness makes Daisey's story more about himself and his audience, as lovers of Apple devices, than about China or its people. In many ways, then, Daisey simply reproduced the problems he criticizes.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Breaches in the journalistic paradigm tend to be quickly isolated and condemned, as I explained in Chapter 3. Despite that isolation and condemnation, however, breaches have repeatedly occurred. Mike Daisey's transgressions are hardly the first journalistic transgression that involves defying truth standards, and the harsh criticism he received is unlikely to stop future breaches from occurring. Large and small examples are easy to find:

In 1981, the *Washington Post* had to forfeit a Pulitzer Prize for its reporter Janet Cooke's piece "Jimmy's World," when it was discovered that "Jimmy," the 8-year-old heroin addict who was the piece's central character, did not exist (Eason, 1986).

In 1998, the *New Republic* told its readers that its reporter Stephen Glass had fabricated significant amounts of journalism. The publication identified three stories as "entirely or nearly entirely made up" and discovered inaccuracies in numerous others ("The New Republic," 1998a, "The New Republic," 1998b).

In 2002, the *New York Times* discovered that its reporter Jayson Blair had falsified many stories he had written for the paper throughout a four year career there. He fabricated quotations, scenes, and lied about his whereabouts (Barry et al., 2003).

In 2004, to less fanfare, readers pointed out that Lewis Lapham's *Harper's* column describing the Republican National Convention was published before the convention had taken place (Carr, 2004).

In 2006, the *Smoking Gun* reported that in James Frey's wildly popular memoir *A Million Little Pieces*, which Oprah Winfrey's powerful book club had made famous, Frey had "wholly fabricated or wildly embellished details of his purported criminal career" ("A million little lies," 2006). After the *Smoking Gun's* revelations, Winfrey confronted Frey on her television show and

accused him of emotionally defrauding his audience through his graphic and personal, yet falsified tale of alcoholism, drug addiction and crime. In comments that resonate with many Daisey critiques, Oprah told Frey, “I feel that you betrayed millions of readers [...] I don’t know what is true and I don’t know what isn’t” (Winfrey, 2006).

In 2011, similar questions arose about Greg Mortenson’s memoir *Three Cups of Tea*. Mortenson had invented some of the memoir’s most affecting anecdotes. According to the memoir, Mortenson became inspired to build schools in rural Afghanistan and Pakistan when he stumbled lost, alone and dirty into a tiny village during a mountaineering descent. According to journalist Jon Krakauer’s fact checking, Mortenson’s moving experience in that village never happened, and neither did a number of his other stories. Journalists also accused Mortenson of mismanaging his charity, which benefitted greatly from the memoir’s popularity (Kroft, 2011).

In 2012, during the same timeframe as Daisey’s scandal, reporters and investigators gradually exposed a number of ethical lapses in the work of science writer Jonah Lehrer. Lehrer recycled material from his own previously published work, plagiarized others’ material, misquoted people, and presented incorrect facts (Seife, 2012).

What all of these transgressions have in common is that they pushed at the boundaries of journalism; they tried to expand what its “truth” includes. Their reasons for pushing those boundaries vary, and are best judged individually. Some have been generally forgiven for their poetic license and others shunned as unscrupulous or lazy careerists. Nevertheless, they all represent a chafing at the restrictions and boundaries of traditional journalism. Journalism’s norms and ethics describe a profession and delineate what journalism is. Conversely, they exclude content that falls outside their boundaries, such as content that isn’t considered worthy of the public sphere, content produced by people who aren’t regarded as “professionals,” and

work that makes points far outside the mainstream. And most importantly, they exclude truths that are not made according to specific process requirements.

As the Daisey case demonstrates, the rules, norms and boundaries of journalism have weaknesses; they are subject to ruptures. The ruptures—the scandals—highlight these weaknesses in the traditional paradigm. Some of the scandals are easy to dismiss as unavoidable anomalies caused by “determined liars,” to use the words of David Carr (2012). Glass and Lehrer probably fit into this category. Others, the Daisey case chief among them, are the extreme indicators of larger currents. They point to where cultural and societal trends rub up against the paradigm’s built-in weaknesses. Daisey’s case highlights trends towards increasing numbers of nonprofessional journalists, more mixing of journalism and activism, a greater emphasis on powerful storytelling, and increasingly diverse multicultural perspectives on the world that may not be entirely compatible with traditional journalistic norms and standards of “truth.”

These changes currently occurring in journalism are not small. Indeed, many have argued that the journalistic paradigm is undergoing a radical shift. In this light, Daisey’s yawning breach in the traditional paradigm can be seen as one more growing pain during this time of change and uncertainty, which explains why traditional journalists’ attempts at paradigm repair weren’t successful. Journalism scholar Lowrey argues that U.S. journalism, while often resistant to change, is in an unusual period of self-reflection: “the current uncertainties and changes that are rocking institutional foundations may be nudging the news media toward a level of wide-awake, rational assessment not seen before” (Lowrey, 2011, p. 137).

Taking a broad look at recent changes in American media, Williams and Delli Carpini (2011) argue that there have been a number of “media regimes” throughout the history of the United States, which are approximately analogous to what I am calling paradigms. They suggest

that the U.S. media has left the most recent media regime, what they call “the age of broadcast news,” and is currently in a chaotic period of political struggle and self-examination to determine what comes next.

Williams and Delli Carpini take pains to point out that these regimes do not come into being naturally or by default; they are the historical products of intention and conflicts of power. For this reason, it is important for people with stakes in the media regime—including journalists and citizens, among others—to participate in an intentional process of defining any new regime. This is what Daisey is doing. It is also what the journalist-commentators are doing. Many commentators, whose careers and worldviews are entrenched in the traditional paradigm, are understandably defensive of it. They simultaneously realize, however, that it may no longer be viable, and are muddling through the question of where journalism should go from here.

The Daisey case served as a spark for this very important discussion. Daisey’s piece illuminated some of the novel possibilities that result from the old regime’s decline, and simultaneously brought to life some of journalists’ greatest fears related to that same decline. In the age of broadcast news, according to Williams and Delli Carpini, society delegated enormous authority to professional journalists. Journalists were gatekeepers, and the audience was assumed to be a singular mass public of passive consumers. During this era, there was also rigorous separation of news from entertainment, and of fact from opinion. As I have demonstrated throughout this thesis, Daisey questioned all of these definitions and distinctions in ways that commentators perceived to be, by turns, innovative and disturbing. Daisey was a proud non-journalist. He didn’t assume a unitary public. He took audience engagement seriously. He didn’t pretend to separate his opinions from objective facts. He disregarded conventions of “truth” altogether.

In general, all of the trends Daisey embodies can be summarized as a movement towards a looser, more expansive and less authoritative “journalism.” Recognizing this movement, not to mention observing the shutdown of numerous traditional institutions of journalism, some critics have forecast the end of the traditional journalist as such. Jeffrey Jones explains, using Foucault’s concept of a “regime of truth,” that “news’s place at the center of the regime of truth in public life is under siege” (J. P. Jones, 2009, p. 129).

John Hartley optimistically predicts that journalism will “massively expand” until it “is dissolved” (Hartley, 2000, pp. 44–45). Hartley describes journalism as becoming increasingly “redactional.” In the redactional society, as Hartley imagines it, journalists are no longer gatekeepers or agenda setters as democracy/journalism becomes less representational and more direct. Journalists are editors—redactors—and everyone is potentially a writer. There is so much information available, and so many opportunities for audiences to articulate exactly what they want, that the role of the journalist is no longer one of authority; instead, the journalist is an aggregator, a distributor. Audiences no longer need to delegate trust to journalists, because journalists are no longer the arbiters of truth. The redactional role of journalists is vital in organizing information in ways that are useful to audiences, but audience members no longer have to defer to journalists on which topics are important, what lessons emerge from the news, and where the truth lies.

In response to alarmist accounts of the death of journalism (Robert McChesney’s (2003) “The problem of journalism: a political economic contribution to an explanation of the crisis in contemporary US journalism” comes to mind) *New York* magazine writer Frank Rich recently made the related point that the public can do its own fact checking:

The digital revolution by definition has undermined the very notion of omniscient news organizations. We can mine information far more deeply than we ever could before, contrasting, comparing, and testing countless news sources all along the way as we become our own editors, trying to discriminate between the real and the spurious. Given the time most Americans devote to comparison shopping (much of it online) for cars or even toaster ovens, this does not seem like a tremendous burden of citizenship. (Rich, 2013)

In the worldview Rich and Hartley represent, in contrast to the viewpoint of most of the commentators on the Daisey case, the trend Daisey typifies is not cause for alarm. He is a symptom of changes in journalism, but those changes are generally positive: they allow more voices a platform and put more power and responsibility directly in the hands publics. In the future of journalism as Rich and Hartley imagine it, the division of labor in creating accounts of the world might look something like this: First, there will be storytellers, like Daisey, who make truth however they want. No monolithic set of rules will govern the production of truth. Next will be the publics who demand a broad range of stories and then judge and filter the truth for themselves according to their own definitions and fact-checking standards. Journalists, as Hartley suggests, will curate, select and edit journalism as demanded by publics, but will no longer claim to be authoritative. In such a future, the idea of a journalistic truth scandal doesn't make much sense. Publics, doing their own fact-checking, will quickly reject content that doesn't meet their truth standards. Further, those standards will not be universal.

Jones (2009) acknowledges the democratic power of this trend towards redaction, but also warns against its darker side, which includes numerous examples of "believable fictions" and "truth-in-essence," such as the Swift Boat Veterans for Truth, Conservapedia (which is what

you think it is), and Michael Moore's film *Fahrenheit 9/11*. Certainly Daisey's critics would place his work in this same category of "truthy" texts. Hartley and Rich might point out that members of the redactional society, as they envision it, do not quietly trust questionable and politically motivated truths such as Daisey's and the ones Jones mentions. In the redactional society, the power of the audience is not merely in generating truths according to unregulated methods, but also in questioning accounts and creating accountability for discourse.

Through this lens, the Daisey story and scandal exemplify the redactional society. Daisey produced a story according to his own truth standards and worldview. Because of a breakdown of traditional journalistic fact-checking to gatekeep the truth, the story entered public circulation. Members of the story's audience then determined the story's importance, fact-checked its details, and debated its worth, truth and meaning. The commentary didn't make definitive judgments, but rather deeply explored the questions about Daisey's story in a way that encouraged citizen-audience members to make their own informed decisions about how to interpret and act upon Daisey's discourse.

It is important to note that Hartley's "redactional" society might exist in the future, but it is not an entirely accurate account of our current transition period. We must not forget that the audience members who questioned Daisey's piece and started the conversation about it were mostly professional journalists and professional critics. They served an important role that went beyond organizing the writing public's texts. It is possible that without the work of these conventional professionals, Daisey's audience would still be incorrectly assuming that his work was produced according to the norms of the traditional journalistic paradigm. Certainly, professional journalists are not obsolete. Their role in this scandal was that of referees, somewhere in between the simple redactors (as Hartley describes them) and the all-powerful

determiners of truth. As journalism continues to change and expand, the role of “professional” journalists will be an ongoing and important question to negotiate.

This period of transition between paradigms or media regimes seems particularly vulnerable to breaches. The previous traditional paradigm’s weaknesses are especially accessible and obvious, while its conventions are still powerful and evoke rigid audience expectations. Daisey took advantage of this vulnerability. He abandoned aspects of the journalistic paradigm that are no longer relevant to audiences, which made his piece compelling and current. At the same time, the piece exploited still-strong journalistic conventions of truth that credulous audiences accepted at face value.

TAL’s retraction and the ensuing scandal served to re-align Daisey’s audience’s understanding of how his piece was produced. Once they understood the nature of Daisey’s work and no longer felt manipulated into believing it was strictly factual journalism, audiences were eager to forgive Daisey. In hindsight, the scandal was a mere blip in Mike Daisey’s career. As I noted earlier, Daisey continued to perform “The Agony and Ecstasy of Steve Jobs” throughout 2012. Other actors are *still* performing their own versions of the monologue. And Daisey has since written and performed new monologues, which continue to draw new audiences. His work hasn’t really changed; it is still in the liminal zone between traditional journalism and fiction. The program of his latest monologue states, “*The management also wishes to remind you that this is a true story, and like every story being told in every medium, all stories are fiction*” (Kugiya, 2013). Daisey’s work also continues to be political. He is currently performing a monologue that discusses, among other topics, Occupy Wall Street. Further, he is planning an upcoming trip to garment factories in Bangladesh. I imagine he aims for the trip to generate a project similar to

“The Agony and Ecstasy of Steve Jobs,” which, despite the scandal it caused, was highly successful as a piece of theater and activism.

It seems clear that if Daisey has learned anything from the scandal, it is that he doesn't need to smuggle his work into an audience's attention under the guise of journalism. The false journalistic veneer of “Mr. Daisey and the Apple Factory,” the lie that so many objected to, wasn't needed to make his point and to get Americans to care about the working conditions of those who manufacture our Apple devices. Audiences, it turns out, respect Daisey's work when they know it isn't "true in the traditional way," to use *TAL* host Ira Glass's words (Glass, 2012b, p. 15). As journalist Hugo Kugiya observed recently, Daisey learned not to pretend that his work was traditional journalism, and just went back to doing what he does best (Kugiya, 2013). I suspect that Daisey's dispatch from Bangladesh will be no more rigorously factual than “The Agony and Ecstasy of Steve Jobs,” but it is likely to generate no uproar, because Daisey will not misrepresent it and audiences now understand the standards according to which he constructs truth.

Daisey told Kugiya, “Losing this imaginary authority is liberating [...] I'm just a storyteller. We have wonderful devices now and can look up a lot of factual data for ourselves. Intelligent people will do that anyway” (Kugiya, 2013). In this statement, Daisey is articulating a vision of the mediated world that is similar to Rich and Hartley's in which storytellers can construct truth as they see fit. They are not beholden to specific journalistic factual standards, because audiences are empowered to do their own fact-checking and apply their own truth standards.

In this chaotic time of paradigm overhaul, the distinction between journalism and other genres is dissolving. Williams and Delli Carpini (2011) point out that the line between news and

entertainment has always been arbitrary and is increasingly meaningless. Where Daisey insists that his art should not be held to the rigorous standards of traditional journalism, Williams and Delli Carpini make the converse point. They argue that all “politically relevant” media content, certainly including theater and activism, has increased ethical responsibilities to society as it increasingly assumes a role in public life that was previously cordoned off for journalism.

This way of looking at the relationship between Daisey’s piece and journalism changes the questions we as a society must consider as we go about defining a new paradigm. The most important questions may no longer concern what journalism should look like, where its boundaries lie and what standards of truth we can expect from it. Instead, the more relevant questions might be: What should be the ethics of people like Mike Daisey—storytellers, activists, entertainers? What is their role in the evolving public sphere?

References

- A million little lies. (2006, January 4). *The Smoking Gun*. Retrieved April 11, 2013, from <http://www.thesmokinggun.com/documents/celebrity/million-little-lies>
- About our radio show. (n.d.). *This American Life*. Retrieved January 14, 2013, from <http://www.thisamericanlife.org/about/about-our-radio-show>
- About us. (n.d.). *This American Life*. Retrieved January 10, 2013, from <http://www.thisamericanlife.org/about>
- Allan, S. (1997). News and the public sphere: towards a history of objectivity and impartiality. In M. Bromley & T. O'Malley (Eds.), *A journalism reader* (pp. 296–329). London; New York: Routledge.
- Allen, S. (2008). The cultural politics of news discourse. In M. Ryan (Ed.), *Cultural studies: An anthology* (pp. 936–957). Malden, MA; Oxford: Blackwell Pub.
- Avant-Mier, R., & Hasian, M. A. (2008). Communicating “truth”: Testimonio, vernacular voices, and the Rigoberta Menchú controversy. *The Communication Review*, 11(4), 323–345. doi:10.1080/10714420802511192
- Bady, A. (2012, March 19). The Jimmy McNulty gambit. *The New Inquiry*. Retrieved from <http://thenewinquiry.com/blogs/zunguzungu/the-jimmy-mcnulty-gambit/>
- Baldwin, M. (2012, March 18). Putting the I in story. *defective yeti*. Retrieved from <http://defectiveyeti.com/2012/03/18/putting-the-i-in-story/>
- Barnhurst, K. G., & Nerone, J. (2009). Journalism history. In K. Wahl-Jorgensen & T. Hanitzsch (Eds.), *The handbook of journalism studies* (pp. 17–28). New York: Routledge.

- Barro, J. (2012, March 17). Why didn't Apple sue Mike Daisey? *Forbes*. Retrieved January 29, 2013, from <http://www.forbes.com/sites/joshbarro/2012/03/17/why-didnt-apple-sue-mike-daisey/>
- Barry, D., Barstow, D., Glater, J., Liptak, A., & Steinberg, J. (2003, May 11). Correcting the record; Times reporter who resigned leaves long trail of deception. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/05/11/us/correcting-the-record-times-reporter-who-resigned-leaves-long-trail-of-deception.html?pagewanted=all&src=pm>
- Bennett, W. L., Gressett, L. A., & Haltom, W. (1985). Repairing the news: A case study of the news paradigm. *Journal of Communication*, 35(2), 50–68. doi:10.1111/j.1460-2466.1985.tb02233.x
- Bercovici, J. (2012, March 16). How “This American Life” let itself get burned by an Apple fabulist. *Forbes*. Retrieved January 9, 2013, from <http://www.forbes.com/sites/jeffbercovici/2012/03/16/how-this-american-life-let-itself-get-burned-by-an-apple-fabulist/>
- Biesecker, B. A. (1992). Michel Foucault and the question of rhetoric. *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, 25(4), 351–364. doi:10.2307/40237735
- Biesecker, B. A. (1997). *Addressing postmodernity*: Kenneth Burke, rhetoric, and a theory of social change. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.
- Blodget, H. (2012, March 16). “This American Life” throws Mike Daisey under bus for fabricated Apple story. *Business Insider*. Retrieved January 9, 2013, from <http://www.businessinsider.com/this-american-life-is-throwing-mike-daisey-under-bus-for-fabricated-apple-story-but-they-have-some-serious-explaining-to-do-2012-3>

- Bresloff, A. (2013, January 18). The agony and the ecstasy of Steve Jobs. *Around the Town Chicago*. Retrieved March 18, 2013, from <http://www.aroundthetownchicago.com/theatre-reviews/the-agony-and-the-ecstasy-of-steve-jobs/>
- Breznican, A. (2012, March 21). Opinion: Mike Daisey, “This American Life”, and the invention of “counterfeit truth.” *EW.com*. Retrieved January 9, 2013, from <http://popwatch.ew.com/2012/03/21/mike-daisey-this-american-life-counterfeit-truth/>
- Broersma, M. (2010). The unbearable limitations of journalism: On press critique and journalism’s claim to truth. *International Communication Gazette*, 72(1), 21–33.
doi:10.1177/1748048509350336
- Campbell, K. K., & Jamieson, K. H. (1978). *Form and genre: shaping rhetorical action*. Falls Church, VA: Speech Communication Association.
- Carmona, C. (2012, March 18). Busted: Mike Daisey caught red-handed. *Huffington Post*. Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/chelsea-carmona/mike-daisey-retraction_b_1355983.html
- Carr, D. (2004, August 30). MediaTalk; Been there, done that... beforehand. *New York Times*. Retrieved April 11, 2013, from <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/08/30/business/mediatalk-been-there-done-that-beforehand.html>
- Carr, D. (2012, March 18). Theater, disguised as real journalism. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/19/business/media/theater-disguised-up-as-real-journalism.html>
- Cavendish, D. (2012, August 23). Edinburgh 2012: The agony and ecstasy of Steve Jobs, gilded balloon, review. *Telegraph*. Retrieved from

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/theatre/edinburgh-festival-reviews/9494716/Edinburgh-2012-The-Agony-and-Ecstasy-of-Steve-Jobs-Gilded-Balloon-review.html>

Chen, A. (2012, March 19). How I was duped by Mike Daisey's lies. *Gawker*. Retrieved January 29, 2013, from <http://gawker.com/5894216/how-i-was-duped-by-mike-daiseys-lies>

Chen, M. (2012, March 26). Even with Daisey's lies peeled away, Apple's rotten core exposed. *Huffington Post*. Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/michelle-chen/mike-daisey-this-american-life_b_1375209.html

Clark, R. P. (2012, March 19). The Ira Glass retraction: Half full or half empty? *Poynter*. Retrieved May 31, 2012, from <http://www.poynter.org/how-tos/newsgathering-storytelling/writing-tools/167058/the-ira-glass-retraction-half-full-or-half-empty/>

Coddington, M. (2012, March 23). This week in review: Mike Daisey and truth in journalism, and the tech giants' news grab. *Nieman Journalism Lab*. Retrieved April 23, 2012, from <http://www.niemanlab.org/2012/03/this-week-in-review-mike-daisey-and-truth-in-journalism-and-the-tech-giants-news-grab/>

Cook, J. (2012, March 21). There is no such thing as a "larger truth": This American Life's rich history of embellishment. *Gawker*. Retrieved May 31, 2012, from <http://gawker.com/5894913/there-is-no-such-thing-as-a-larger-truth-this-american-lifes-rich-history-of-embellishment>

Curran, J. (2000). Rethinking media and democracy. In M. Gurevitch & J. Curran (Eds.), *Mass media and society* (pp. 120–154). London: Arnold.

Dahlgren, P. (1992). Introduction. In P. Dahlgren & C. Sparks (Eds.), *Journalism and popular culture* (pp. 1–23). London; Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage Publications.

- Dahmen, N. S. (2010). Construction of the truth and deconstruction of “A Million Little Pieces.” *Journalism Studies*, 11(1), 115–130. doi:10.1080/14616700903172080
- Daisey, M. (2012a, February 21). The agony and ecstasy of Steve Jobs 1.0. Retrieved from <http://mikedaisey.blogspot.com/p/monologues.html>
- Daisey, M. (2012b, March 16). Mike Daisey: statement on TAL. *Mike Daisey*. Retrieved from <http://mikedaisey.blogspot.com/2012/03/statement-on-tal.html>
- Daisey, M. (2012c, March 19). Reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated. *Mike Daisey*. Retrieved from <http://mikedaisey.blogspot.com/2012/03/reports-of-my-death-have-been-greatly.html>
- Daisey, M. (2012d, September 21). The agony and ecstasy of Steve Jobs 2.0. Retrieved from <http://mikedaisey.blogspot.com/p/monologues.html>
- Daisey, M. (n.d.). Mike Daisey: Monologues. *Mike Daisey*. Retrieved June 4, 2013, from <http://mikedaisey.blogspot.com/p/monologues.html>
- DeLuca, K., Lawson, S., & Sun, Y. (2012). Occupy Wall Street on the public screens of social media: The many framings of the birth of a protest movement. *Communication, Culture & Critique*, 5(4), 483–509. doi:10.1111/j.1753-9137.2012.01141.x
- DeLuca, K., & Peeples, J. (2002). From public sphere to public screen: democracy, activism, and the “violence” of Seattle. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 19(2), 125. doi:10.1080/07393180216559
- Diaz, J. (2012, March 18). Why Mike Daisey lied about Foxconn according to Mike Daisey. *Gizmodo*. Retrieved January 9, 2013, from <http://gizmodo.com/5894297/why-did-mike-daisey-lie-about-foxconn-according-to-mike-daisy>

- Doctor, K. (2012, March 20). The newsonomics of Mr. Daisey's media blur. *Nieman Journalism Lab*. Retrieved April 23, 2012, from <http://www.niemanlab.org/2012/03/the-newsonomics-of-mr-daiseys-media-blur/>
- Duhigg, C., & Bradsher, K. (2012, January 21). Apple, America and a squeezed middle class. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/22/business/apple-america-and-a-squeezed-middle-class.html>
- Eason, D. L. (1986). On journalistic authority: The Janet Cooke scandal. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 3(4), 429–447. doi:10.1080/15295038609366674
- Emerson, R. (2012, January 31). Mark Shields' petition calls For Apple to "Protect workers making iPhones In Chinese factories." *Huffington Post*. Retrieved May 1, 2013, from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/01/31/mark-shields-petition-apple_n_1244388.html
- Engber, D. (2012, March 19). Mike Daisey was wrong about Apple in China. *Slate*. Retrieved April 23, 2012, from http://www.slate.com/blogs/browbeat/2012/03/19/apple_in_china_mike_daisey_was_substantially_wrong.html
- Ericson, R. V., Baranek, P. M., & Chan, J. B. L. (1987). *Visualizing deviance: a study of news organization*. Toronto; Buffalo: University of Toronto Press.
- Fallows, J. (2012, March 17). The sad and infuriating Mike Daisey case. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/03/the-sad-and-infuriating-mike-daisey-case/254661/>
- Fisher, Marc. (1999). It's a wonderful life. *American Journalism Review*, 21(6), 40–45.
- Fisher, Max. (2012, March 16). Worse than Kony2012: The tragedy of Mike Daisey's lies about China. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved May 30, 2012, from

<http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/03/worse-than-kony2012-the-tragedy-of-mike-daiseys-lies-about-china/254640/>

Fishman, M. (1980). *Manufacturing the news*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Foucault, M. (1972). The discourse on language. In A. Sheridan (Trans.), *The archaeology of knowledge* (1st American ed., pp. 215–237). New York: Pantheon Books.

Foucault, M. (1977). A preface to transgression. In D. F. Bouchard & S. Simon (Eds.), *Language, counter-memory, practice: selected essays and interviews* (pp. 29–52). Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.

Foucault, M. (1984). Nietzsche, genealogy, history. In P. Rabinow (Ed.), *The Foucault Reader* (1st ed., pp. 76–100). New York: Pantheon Books.

Foucault, M. (2001). Truth and power. In M. Lynch (Ed.), *The nature of truth classic and contemporary perspectives* (pp. 317–319). Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Fraser, N. (1990). Rethinking the public sphere: A contribution to the critique of actually existing democracy. *Social text*, (25/26), 56–80. doi:10.2307/466240

G., E. (2012, March 20). Attacking the press. *The Economist - Democracy in America*. Retrieved from <http://www.economist.com/blogs/democracyinamerica/2012/03/mike-daisey>

Garfield, B. (2012, March 16). Mike Daisey's betrayal of This American Life's truth – and my trust. *Guardian*. Retrieved from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/cifamerica/2012/mar/17/mike-daisey-this-american-life>

Gimein, M. (2012, March 16). Mike Daisey's Apple explanation is ... awkward. *Bloomberg BusinessWeek*. Retrieved from <http://www.businessweek.com/articles/2012-03-16/mike-daiseys-apple-explanation-is-dot-dot-dot-awkward>

Gladstone, B. (2012, September 21). Checking in on fact checking transcript. *On The Media*.

Retrieved from

http://www.onthemediamedia.org/2012/sep/21/checking_fact_checking/transcript/?utm_source=sharedUrl&utm_medium=metatag&utm_campaign=sharedUrl

Glass, I. (2012a, January 6). Mr. Daisey and the Apple factory. *This American Life*. Chicago:

WBEZ. Retrieved from <http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/454/transcript>

Glass, I. (2012b, March 16). Retraction. *This American Life*. Chicago: WBEZ. Retrieved from

<http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/460/retraction>

Habermas, J. (1974). The public sphere: An encyclopedia article (1964). (S. Lennox & F.

Lennox, Trans.) *New German Critique*, (3), 49–55.

Habermas, J. (1984). *The theory of communicative action* (Vol. 1). Boston: Beacon Press.

Habermas, J. (1989). *The structural transformation of the public sphere: an inquiry into a category of bourgeois society*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Hallin, D. (2000). Commercialism and professionalism in the American news media. In J. Curran & M. Gurevitch (Eds.), *Mass media and society* (pp. 218–237). London: Arnold.

Hampton, M. (2010). The fourth estate ideal in journalism history. In S. Allan (Ed.), *The Routledge companion to news and journalism* (pp. 3–12). New York, NY: Routledge.

Hartley, J. (1996). *Popular reality: journalism, modernity, popular culture*. London; New York: St. Martin's Press.

Hartley, J. (2000). Communicative democracy in a redactional society: the future of journalism studies. *Journalism*, 1(1), 39–48. doi:10.1177/146488490000100107

- Hartley, J. (2008). Heliography: journalism and the visualization of truth. In M. Ryan (Ed.), *Cultural studies: an anthology* (pp. 917–935). Malden MA; Oxford: Blackwell Pub.
- Hayes, C. (2012, March 27). Truth and consequences: On Mike Daisey. *The Nation*. Retrieved January 30, 2013, from <http://www.thenation.com/blog/167068/truth-and-consequences-mike-daisey#>
- Hesseldahl, A. (2012a, March 18). The failures and fallacies of Mike Daisey’s Apple attack and the media. *AllThingsD*. Retrieved January 30, 2013, from <http://allthingsd.com/20120318/the-failures-and-fallacies-of-mike-daiseys-apple-attack-and-the-media/>
- Hesseldahl, A. (2012b, March 19). Lying Apple gadfly Mike Daisey still doesn’t get it. *AllThingsD*. Retrieved May 31, 2012, from <http://allthingsd.com/20120319/lying-apple-gadfly-mike-daisey-still-doesnt-get-it/>
- Hindman, E. B. (2005). Jayson Blair, the New York Times, and paradigm repair. *Journal of Communication*, 55(2), 225–241. doi:10.1093/joc/55.2.225
- Isherwood, C. (2012, March 18). Defending “This American Life” and its Mike Daisey retraction. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/19/theater/defending-this-american-life-and-its-mike-daisey-retraction.html>
- Janensch, P. (2012, April 4). Only agony for radio journalist after reporting on Apple factory conditions discussed in stage show, “The agony and ecstasy of Steve Jobs.” *TCPalm*. Retrieved February 13, 2013, from <http://www.tcpalm.com/news/2012/apr/04/paul-janensch-only-agony-for-radio-journalist-on/?print=1>

- Jarvis, J. (2012, March 17). Lies. *BuzzMachine*. Retrieved from <http://buzzmachine.com/2012/03/17/lies/>
- Jones, C. (2012, March 17). Pulling the plug on Mike Daisey: When entertainment meets journalism. *Chicago Tribune*. Chicago. Retrieved from <http://www.chicagotribune.com/entertainment/theater/theaterloop/ct-oped-0318-daisey-20120316,0,7667548.column>
- Jones, J. P. (2009). Believable fictions: redactional culture and the will to truthiness. In B. Zelizer (Ed.), *The changing faces of journalism: tabloidization, technology and truthiness* (pp. 127–143). Routledge.
- Joseph, B. (2005). Journalism in the global age: Between normative and empirical. *International Communication Gazette*, 67(6), 575–590. doi:10.1177/0016549205057564
- Kovach, B., & Rosenstiel, T. (2007). *The elements of journalism: what newspeople should know and the public should expect*. New York: Three Rivers Press.
- Kroft, S. (2011, April 17). Questions over Greg Mortenson's stories. *CBS News*. Retrieved April 11, 2013, from http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-18560_162-57455559/questions-over-greg-mortensons-stories/
- Kugiya, H. (2013, May 6). Mike Daisey comes back to Seattle smarter than ever. *Crosscut.com*. Retrieved May 11, 2013, from http://crosscut.com/2013/05/06/theatre/114314/mike-daisey-bouncing-back-seattle/?utm_source=Crosscut+Daily+Newsletter&utm_campaign=e46a4b9b20-Crosscut_Daily_Newsletter_5_6_20135_6_2013&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_efe7a35aed-e46a4b9b20-278706221

- Kurtz, H. (2012, March 18). "This American Life's" blunder. *CNN Reliable Sources*. Retrieved from <http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/1203/18/rs.01.html>
- Larris, R. J. (2012, March 17). Mike Daisey insults both theater and journalism. *Newscat*. Retrieved from <http://bitchkittie.blogspot.com/2012/03/mike-daisey-insults-both-theater-and.html>
- Liebllich, J. (2012, March 21). Remember, journalists: The facts matter. *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved January 30, 2013, from <http://articles.latimes.com/2012/mar/21/opinion/la-oe-liebllich-daisey-fact-bosnia-20120321>
- Lowrey, W. (2011). News: once and future institution? In W. Lowrey & P. J. Gade (Eds.), *Changing the news: the forces shaping journalism in uncertain times* (pp. 136–158). New York: Routledge.
- Lubitow, A. (2013, January 30). Theater review: Peeling the apple. *City Newspaper*. Retrieved March 18, 2013, from <http://www.rochestercitynewspaper.com/rochester/theater-review-peeling-the-apple/Content?oid=2182530>
- Madison, D. S. (2012). The Mike Daisey affair: Labor and performance. *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*, 9(2), 234–240. doi:10.1080/14791420.2012.687900
- Manteuffel, R. (2012, March 23). Mike Daisey and the price of deceit. *Washington Post*. Retrieved from http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2012-03-23/opinions/35448528_1_mike-daisey-onstage-episode
- Matthews, A. (2012, March 29). China: Bloody factories, toxic chemicals. *Pulitzer Center*. Retrieved January 30, 2013, from <http://pulitzercenter.org/reporting/china-electronics-factories-injuries-labor-rights-foxconn-wintek-mike-daisey>

- McChesney, R. W. (2003). The problem of journalism: a political economic contribution to an explanation of the crisis in contemporary US journalism. *Journalism Studies*, 4(3), 299–329. doi:10.1080/14616700306492
- McKerrow, R. E. (1989). Critical rhetoric: Theory and praxis. *Communication Monographs*, 56(2), 91–111. doi:10.1080/03637758909390253
- Miller, C. R. (1984). Genre as social action. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 70(2), 151–167. doi:10.1080/00335638409383686
- Mindich, D. T. Z. (1998). *Just the facts: how “objectivity” came to define American journalism*. New York: New York University Press.
- Mosher, D. (2012, March 17). Largely unaltered show goes on for fact-challenged Apple monologist. *Wired*. Retrieved from <http://www.wired.com/gadgetlab/2012/03/show-goes-on-daisey/>
- Myers, S., & Silverman, C. (2012, March 20). The unanswered questions about “This American Life” and journalism. *Poynter*. Retrieved May 31, 2012, from <http://www.poynter.org/latest-news/top-stories/166997/the-questions-ira-glass-didnt-answer-in-this-american-life-retraction/>
- O’Hehir, A., Williams, M. E., & Miller, L. (2012, March 19). The trial of Mike Daisey. *Salon*. Retrieved April 27, 2012, from http://www.salon.com/2012/03/19/the_trial_of_mike_daisey/
- Oppenheimer, M. (2012, March 19). Mike Daisey and the inconvenient truth. *Salon*. Retrieved April 27, 2012, from http://www.salon.com/2012/03/19/mike_daisey_and_the_inconvenient_truth/

- Osnos, E. (2012, March 17). Apple, China, and the truth. *New Yorker Blogs*. Retrieved from <http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/evanosnos/2012/03/mike-daiseys-mistakes-in-china.html>
- Pintak, L. (2012, March 20). Ira Glass's Casablanca moment with Mike Daisey. *Columbia Journalism Review - Behind the News*. Retrieved from http://www.cjr.org/behind_the_news/ira_glasss_casablanca_moment_w.php
- Plaisance, P. L., & Skewes, E. A. (2003). Personal and professional dimensions of news work: Exploring the link between journalists' values and roles. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 80(4), 833. doi:10.1177/107769900308000406
- Poniewozik, J. (2012, March 16). This American Life's Apple retraction: The danger of truthiness. *Time*. Retrieved from <http://entertainment.time.com/2012/03/16/this-american-lifes-apple-retraction-the-danger-of-truthiness/>
- Reese, S. D. (1990). The news paradigm and the ideology of objectivity: A socialist at the Wall Street Journal. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 7(4), 390. doi:10.1080/15295039009360187
- Retracting "Mr. Daisey and the Apple Factory." (2012, March 16). *This American Life Blog*. Retrieved from <http://www.thisamericanlife.org/blog/2012/03/retracting-mr-daisey-and-the-apple-factory>
- Rich, F. (2013, April 7). Inky tears. *New York*. Retrieved April 10, 2013, from <http://nymag.com/news/frank-rich/news-media-2013-4/>
- Rosen, J. (2012a, March 17). Master manipulator with nerves of steel. *Quote and Comment*. Retrieved from <http://jayrosen.tumblr.com/post/19457888533/master-manipulator-with-nerves-of-steel-i-cannot>

- Rosen, J. (2012b, March 18). Miguelmacias asked: ... *Quote and Comment*. Retrieved from <http://jayrosen.tumblr.com/post/19542833150/mr-rosen-listening-tals-retraction-episode-i-had-the>
- Rosen, R. J. (2012, March 16). “This American Life” retracts Its Apple story. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved February 6, 2013, from <http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2012/03/this-american-life-retracts-its-apple-story/254636/>
- Rosen, R. J., & Daisey, M. (2012, March 20). Mike Daisey’s first public talk after the “This American Life” retraction. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved May 31, 2012, from <http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/12/03/mike-daiseys-first-public-talk-after-the-this-american-life-retraction/254799/>
- Rosenberg, S. (2012, March 17). Mr. Daisey and the fact factory. *Grist editor’s blog*. Retrieved from <http://grist.org/media/mr-daisey-and-the-fact-factory/>
- Ryfe, D. M. (2006). The nature of news rules. *Political Communication*, 23(2), 203–214. doi:10.1080/10584600600629810
- S., M. (2012, March 19). Lying to lots of people is very risky. *The Economist - Democracy in America*. Retrieved from <http://www.economist.com/blogs/democracyinamerica/2012/03/apple-china>
- Salmon, F. (2012, March 17). Fabulous journalism. *Reuters Blogs - Felix Salmon*. Retrieved from <http://blogs.reuters.com/felix-salmon/2012/03/17/fabulous-journalism/>
- Sandoval, G. (2012a, March 18). Mike Daisey gets standing ovation at last N.Y. performance. *CNET*. Retrieved May 31, 2012, from http://news.cnet.com/8301-27076_3-57399650-248/mike-daisey-gets-standing-ovation-at-last-n.y-performance/

- Sandoval, G. (2012b, March 19). Woz supports Mike Daisey's message and says you should too. *CNET*. Retrieved May 31, 2012, from http://news.cnet.com/8301-13579_3-57400104-37/woz-supports-mike-daiseys-message-and-says-you-should-too/
- Sandoval, G. (2012c, March 26). Group seeks recall of Daisey-inspired petition on iPad labor. *CNET*. Retrieved May 31, 2012, from http://news.cnet.com/8301-13579_3-57404390-37/group-seeks-recall-of-daisey-inspired-petition-on-ipad-labor/
- Sandoval, G. (2012d, May 3). Apple critic Mike Daisey is as hot as ever. *CNET*. Retrieved May 31, 2012, from http://news.cnet.com/8301-13579_3-57426193-37/apple-critic-mike-daisey-is-as-hot-as-ever/
- Schmitz, R. (2012, March 16). An acclaimed Apple critic made up the details. *Marketplace*. Retrieved May 31, 2012, from <http://www.marketplace.org/topics/life/apple-economy/acclaimed-apple-critic-made-details>
- Schudson, M. (1995). *The power of news*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Schudson, M. (2000). The domain of journalism studies around the globe. *Journalism*, 1(1), 55–59. doi:10.1177/146488490000100110
- Schudson, M. (2001). The objectivity norm in American journalism. *Journalism*, 2(2), 149–170. doi:10.1177/146488490100200201
- Schudson, M. (2009). Factual knowledge in the age of truthiness. In B. Zelizer (Ed.), *The changing faces of journalism: tabloidization, technology and truthiness* (pp. 104–113). Routledge.
- Seife, C. (2012, August 31). Jonah Lehrer's journalistic misdeeds at Wired.com. *Slate*. Retrieved from http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/science/2012/08/jonah_lehrer_plagiaris

m_in_wired_com_an_investigation_into_plagiarism_quotes_and_factual_inaccuracies_ingle.html

Shafer, J. (2012, March 16). Busting Mr. Daisey. *Reuters Blogs - Jack Shafer*. Retrieved from <http://blogs.reuters.com/jackshafer/2012/03/16/busting-mr-daisey/>

Shields, M. (n.d.). Apple: Protect workers making iPhones in Chinese factories. *Change.org*. Retrieved May 1, 2013, from <http://www.change.org/petitions/apple-protect-workers-making-iphones-in-chinese-factories-3>

Silverman, C. (2012, March 19). 4 important truths about Mike Daisey's lies & the way "This American Life" told them. *Poynter*. Retrieved May 31, 2012, from <http://www.poynter.org/latest-news/regret-the-error/166880/4-important-truths-about-mike-daisey-lies-and-the-way-this-american-life-told-them/>

Sims, N. (2007). *True stories: a century of literary journalism*. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press.

Slavin, K. (2012, March 16). "What makes this a little complicated..." *Fresser*. Retrieved from <http://slavin.tumblr.com/post/19425517938/what-makes-this-a-little-complicated-is-that-the>

Stelter, B. (2012, March 16). "This American Life" retracts episode on Apple's suppliers in China. *Media Decoder Blog - The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://mediadecoder.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/03/16/this-american-life-retracts-episode-on-apples-suppliers-in-china/>

Su, Y., & He, X. (2012, March 20). Don't overlook Mike Daisey's bigger point about Apple. *CNN Opinion*. Retrieved May 31, 2012, from <http://www.cnn.com/2012/03/19/opinion/su-he-apple/index.html>

Suskind, R. (2004, October 17). Faith, certainty and the presidency of George W. Bush. *New York Times*. Retrieved from

<http://www.nytimes.com/2004/10/17/magazine/17BUSH.html>

The editors: to our readers. (1998a, June 1). *New Republic*.

To our readers: A report. (1998b, June 29). *The New Republic*.

Topolsky, J. (2012, March 21). Why Mike Daisey had to lie to tell the truth about Apple.

Washington Post. Retrieved from http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2012-03-21/business/35446980_1_mike-daisey-foxconn-factories-underage-workers

Truthiness voted 2005 word of the year American Dialect Society. (2006, January 6). *American Dialect Society*. Retrieved October 29, 2012, from

http://www.americandialect.org/truthiness_voted_2005_word_of_the_year

Tullis Owen, J. A., McRae, C., Adams, T. E., & Vitale, A. (2008). Truth troubles. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 15(1), 178–200. doi:10.1177/1077800408318316

Ulanoff, L. (2012, March 16). ABC's Foxconn reporter couldn't verify Daisey's claims.

Mashable. Retrieved January 30, 2013, from <http://mashable.com/2012/03/16/abc-foxconn-reporter-daiseys-claims/>

Van Dijk, T. A. (2009). News, discourse, and ideology. In K. Wahl-Jorgensen & T. Hanitzsch (Eds.), *The handbook of journalism studies* (pp. 191–204). New York: Routledge.

Vire, K. (2013, January 17). The agony and the ecstasy of Steve Jobs at 16th Street Theater.

Time Out Chicago. Retrieved March 18, 2013, from <http://timeoutchicago.com/arts-culture/theater/15997481/the-agony-and-the-ecstasy-of-steve-jobs-at-16th-street-theater-theater>

- Wain, D. (2012, March 17). One thought re: Mike Daisey. *David Wain's Blog*. Retrieved from <http://www.davidwain.com/blog/2012/03/17/one-thought-re-mike-daisey/>
- Walters, S. (2012a, April 3). Defending Mr. Daisey. *Huffington Post*. Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/scott-walters/mike-daisey-this-american-life_b_1399707.html
- Walters, S. (2012b, April 17). Defending Mr. Daisey, part 2: Big fact, little fact. *Huffington Post*. Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/scott-walters/mike-daisey-foxconn_b_1424629.html
- Wang, S. (2012, April 14). Some truth amid the fiction about Shenzhen's Apple factory. *South China Morning Post*, p. 6.
- Warner, M. (2002). Publics and counterpublics. *Public culture*, 14(1), 49–90.
doi:10.1215/08992363-14-1-49
- Weprin, A. (2012, March 16). After “This American Life” fabrication revealed, will TV news outlets correct? *TVNewser*. Retrieved January 9, 2013, from http://www.mediabistro.com/tvnewser/after-this-american-life-fabrication-revealed-will-tv-news-outlets-correct_b116696
- Williams, B. A., & Delli Carpini, M. X. (2011). *After broadcast news: media regimes, democracy, and the new information environment*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Winfrey, O. (2006, January 26). Oprah's questions for James. *Oprah.com*. Retrieved May 1, 2013, from <http://www.oprah.com/oprahshow/Oprahs-Questions-for-James>
- Wolff, M. (2012, March 19). In defence of Mike Daisey: never mind the facts, focus on the writing. *Guardian - Comment is free: Michael Wolff on media and modern life*. Retrieved

from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/cifamerica/2012/mar/19/mike-daisey-this-american-life-facts>

Word of the year 2006. (n.d.). *Merriam-Webster Online*. Retrieved October 29, 2012, from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/info/06words.htm>

Yglesias, M. (2012, March 16). The real story is everywhere in China where they're not making Apple stuff. *Slate Moneybox*. Retrieved from http://www.slate.com/blogs/moneybox/2012/03/16/the_real_story_is_everywhere_in_china_where_they_re_not_making_apple_stuff.html

Zelizer, B. (2004). *Taking journalism seriously: news and the academy*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage.

Zelizer, B. (Ed.). (2009). *The changing faces of journalism: tabloidization, technology and truthiness*. Routledge.

Zinoman, J. (2006, October 11). Telling tales about the past, and maybe fudging facts. *New York Times*. Retrieved June 4, 2013, from http://theater.nytimes.com/2006/10/11/theater/reviews/11trut.html?_r=2&ref=theater&oref=slogin&

Zinoman, J. (2012, March 19). A sad story. *Slate*. Retrieved from http://www.slate.com/articles/arts/curtain_call/2012/03/mike_daisey_s_the_agony_and_the_ecstasy_of_steve_jobs_how_the_storyteller_betrayed_his_art_.single.html