ARAB COUNTRIES

Defining what countries constitute the Arab Middle East can be a treacherous and politically charged enterprise. The term Middle East defines geographical area in Asia, but it lacks predefined borders. Although Egypt is largely located in North Africa, it is often included as a Middle Eastern nation due to the Sinai Peninsula’s location in Asia and the country’s Arab-speaking population and political influence in the Middle East. Iran is also counted as a Middle Eastern nation due to its political influence in the region and its location in Asia. Here, the Arab Middle Eastern borders include Egypt, the countries that make up the Mediterranean Sea’s eastern border to Turkey (Syria, Lebanon, and the Palestinian Territories), the Red Sea’s eastern coast (Jordan and Saudi Arabia), the Gulf of Aden’s northern coast (Yemen and Oman), and the countries that abut the Persian Gulf (Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates).

Summarizing journalism in the Arab Middle East is equally difficult considering the varying political and social nuances that exist in the countries that comprise this dynamic region of the world. Journalists in some of these countries enjoy relative freedom while others operate under strict controls. As a region, however, Western watchdog organizations like Freedom House and Reporters Without Borders annually rank Middle Eastern nations among the worst in the world for press freedom.

In its 2008 annual ranking of global press freedom, Freedom House lists only three Arab countries—Kuwait, Lebanon, and Egypt—as even “partly free” while the rest are considered “not free.” Media experts in the Middle East question the validity of Western watchdog organizations’ assessments of complex foreign political systems, claiming Middle Eastern evaluators could better understand subtle social nuances and their impact on media. However, when Arab organizations like the Amman Centre for Human Rights Studies (ACHRS) rank Arab media, their rankings are fairly consistent with those of the Western groups.

In general, the primary role of media in Middle Eastern countries is to support national development. Historically, a country’s political system determines the type of journalism practiced. In the case of the Middle East, the country’s political leaders play a direct role in how journalists are able to ply their trade. Journalists work amid a panoply of restrictive laws that punish reporters and their editors with criminal charges if they should violate these laws and punish the media organizations with fines or closures. The result is that the free-flow of information to consumers is hindered by overt government censorship, willing self-censorship by journalists, and collusion by political players and media operators.

Traditionally, the Western press has been considered the enemy of closed-press systems. With the recent rise of Pan-Arab media properties (media organizations that can be seen, heard, or read throughout the Middle East and often around the world) and various Internet channels, however, a new dimension to the Middle Eastern journalistic landscape has been created. These Pan-Arab channels—like the Qatari-based Al Jazeera television channels and the London-based Al-Hayat newspaper—break the mold by aggressively criticizing Middle Eastern leaders and their governments.

Governmental Influence

Throughout the region, each country’s government has a great influence on the style of journalism practiced therein. The job of the journalist in these countries is perceived as producing news items that support national development, inform the population of activities by the country’s leaders, and promote the continuation of good relations with the
nation's allies. Unreleased information about the inner workings of government is heavily controlled. Strict laws prohibiting libel and the insult of monarchs and public figures also stifle reporters. With this overall lack of governmental transparency in its day-to-day operations, it is not surprising there is little investigative journalism or opportunity for reporters to delve deeply into social problems. It is equally not surprising that enemies of the state—the nation of Israel, for example—are wholly vilified in the media as a means of supporting the country's official political view.

Religion also plays a large part in the Arab countries' social and political landscapes. Even among Muslim nations, a split exists between the Shia and Sunni factions of Islam, which contributes to the unrest in the region. The majority of Muslims are Sunnis, but Shia are in the minority in several important countries in the region—Iraq, Bahrain, and, some say, Yemen.

Two powerful nations represent both factions—Saudi Arabia for the Sunnis and Iran for the Shia—and a competition for power exists within the region. These power struggles often erupt into sectarian violence within countries threatening civil war and unrest in the region.

Governmental licensing and oversight of journalists is common in the Middle East. A journalist cannot work unless a governmental agency (often a Ministry of Information) has approved a license. This applies to journalists working for domestic media and those working for international media organizations such as the BBC, The New York Times, or CNN. Such licensing makes it easier for the government to monitor, marginalize, or keep out critical journalists out of the country entirely. A union or association exists in some countries to act as a unified voice for reporters and editors. But these unions have limited influence and are even prohibited in some countries. Such unions are no match against governments that actively seek to stifle the work of reporters.

Reporters Without Borders calls Saudi Arabia "one of the world's biggest enemies of press freedom." No criticism of the Saudi leadership is tolerated and journalists are punished for unflattering reports about other Muslim nations. One result of this draconian treatment of journalists is that self-censorship is widely practiced by reporters. Since local news is thus often unreliable, some Saudis turn to foreign television channels and the Internet for news and information. The often critical Al Jazeera service, however, is banned in Saudi Arabia.

Reporting from the Palestinian Territories requires journalists to deal with multiple parties—the Israeli military, Hamas in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and its political opposition, Al Fatah. Newsrooms have been ransacked by all sides, Hamas disbanded the journalists union, and Fatah radio and television stations were forced off the air. One of the most prominent journalistic cases that received international coverage was the kidnapping of BBC journalist Alan Johnston by a Palestinian militant group, Army of Islam, in March 2007. Johnston was released four months later after negotiations with Hamas's leadership.

**Journalism's Varied Roles**

Journalism in the Middle East is perceived as a public service. A journalist's role is to report on and support the regime and the nation's development. To this end, media reports tend to cover daily activities of the nation's leadership, recent social or economic successes the nation has enjoyed, and noncritical reports about what allied nations are doing. Media maintain social norms by encouraging the agenda set by political figures and discouraging behavior that detracts from national development.

As a theocracy, Iran's spiritual and political leaders are one and the same so any political criticism of the system or its leaders leveled by journalists can be construed as blasphemy by the clerics and punishment can be doled out by the state. Generally, the social and political agendas are dictated by the clerics. There was an exception in the mid-1990s. During President Mohammad Khatami's reformist administration, from 1997 to 2005, the role of the press was to determine the political agenda for the nation. Khatami's belief in free expression and a strong civil society created a positive journalistic atmosphere, and the number of newspapers grew exponentially during this time. But journalists may have pushed for change too hard and too quickly. In 2000, fearing social instability, the government ordered a series of bans on press coverage and the closure of reformist newspapers. The sudden lack of the reformist press forced people to seek information from illicit leaflets, flyers, and the Internet.
In the early twenty-first century, the press remains a rigorous, but harassed, channel for political debate in Iran. Khatami’s government was succeeded by a much more conservative one that is far more hostile to press freedoms. Reformist newspapers have assumed a more moderate stance, but even that has not spared them from harassment by the Ministry of Culture. Dozens of journalists were arrested in 2006 for criticizing authorities and some were secretly imprisoned without access to lawyers. In March 2008, Iran banned nine lifestyle magazines for publishing personal details and photos of celebrities that Iran’s culture minister found offensive. Governmental closures of publications like these are usually inconsequential; journalists simply launch a new publication under a different name. Even book authors were advised by the ministry to self-censor rather than face the government’s prepublication red pencil. The government has also used its power to intimidate journalists but reporters are still routinely threatened. In July 2007, Ayse Serce, a Turkish journalist for the Euphrates News Agency who was investigating several suicides by Kurdish women, was killed by the Iranian army in the northwestern province of Azerbaijan. At first it appeared she was killed in combat with Kurdish rebels, but evidence later indicated she was killed afterward. The government refused to explain the circumstances of her death and would not return the reporter’s body to her family. In February 2007, several media outlets were ransacked by the government for insulting the architect of the 1979 Iranian Revolution, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

Due to the Iraq war (2003– ), Iraq is one of the most dangerous places to work as a journalist. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, 124 journalists and 49 media workers have died in Iraq since March 2003. One third of those killed worked for international news organizations. In 2007, 31 journalists were killed, making that year one of the deadliest for journalists in ten years. Both Iraqi and U.S. authorities have carried out violence against journalists. Although the number of journalist detentions decreased in 2007, Al Jazeera camera operator Sami Al-Haj was held in Guantanamo Bay in Cuba for six years. No charges were ever filed and he never stood trial before he was released in 2008. The United States detained Associated Press photographer Bilal Hussein for over two years in Iraq without presenting evidence against him.

### Media Operators

To ensure adherence to often strict regulations, media outlets in Middle Eastern countries are (1) operated by the government, (2) operated by competitors of and heavily funded by government subsidies, or (3) privately owned and operated. In the second and third cases, veteran journalists reinforce the stringent press laws with their supervision of reporters. As libel lawsuits often include the editor in addition to the reporter who penned the story, there is more incentive for supervisors to adhere to press regulations.

Lebanon remains a unique example among Arab countries. It has one of the most aggressive media operations in the region mostly because the media represent political ideologies. Unlike in many parts of the region, journalists and columnists in the country’s many press organs frequently criticize the government, but that criticism comes largely from antigovernment political press organs. However, Lebanon is also where Shia and Sunni factions vie for power, often by using the Lebanese media as their megaphones. In Lebanon political parties operate their own media outlets. Thus, media are at the center of sectarian divisions that add to the country’s instability. The newspaper Al Mustaqbal is a progovernment publication. Hezbollah, a political and paramilitary organization that opposes the government, operates the Al-Manar television channel, and Sa’ad Hariri, a Sunni political leader, owns Future Television and Radio Orient. It is not uncommon in Lebanon for government to take opposition media channels like Al-Manar off the air under the auspices of maintaining social stability.

Lebanese radio is dynamic, diverse and political. On one end of the spectrum stations like pro-Hezbollah Al-Nour broadcast political and religious messages along with a heavy amount of anti-Zionist rhetoric. On the other end are stations like Mix FM, which broadcasts dance music and sponsors concerts and beach parties that feature Arab and Western musical artists.

Lebanese television can be divided into two political camps. Hezbollah-supported Al-Manar TV, the National Broadcasting Network (NBN),
and New TV oppose the government, while Mbc Medical TV and the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation (LBC) are progovernment. LBC is a pan-Arab channel that was originally launched in 1996 by the leader of the Lebanese Forces. From its outset, LBC was intended to be the voice of Lebanese Christians, but it is now considered a progovernment channel.

Despite a law prohibiting sectarianism, Lebanon’s media are being blamed for fanning sectarian fires in the county via news and talk programs. Future TV and Al-Manar are often singled out as particularly sectarian. A recent addition, Orange TV, is a 24-hour news channel launched by Future TV and utilizes the ubiquitous color of a particular political party in its name.

In a region where most countries’ television channels are government operated or co-opted, Lebanon is an exception to the rule. Its kaleidoscope of politically tinged media outlets can be seen either as a healthy and vigorous attempt at free expression or as a means of fueling social and political instability.

Press Laws

In general, in the Middle East, one’s right to know is secondary to a person’s right to privacy. Other laws impacting journalists make it a crime to criticize or insult the ruler or other prominent persons. Such laws make reporting a political minefield for journalists. To compound the issue, most media laws in Middle Eastern countries are woefully outdated as well as extremely stringent. In many cases, errors are treated as criminal offenses where reporters and editors could face imprisonment. Although plans are underway in many of these Arab countries to update these “rules of the road” for journalists, the process is slow and politically charged.

Reforming Jordan’s strict press and publications law has been talked about several times while the government continues to keep journalists under surveillance, censor news organizations like Al Jazeera, and enforce laws that prohibit the criticism of rulers or the ruling family. The professional journalist union—the Jordan Press Association—is a progovernment body and membership is mandatory for all working journalists. The result is a cowed press corps that prefers self-censorship to governmental run-ins.

Progress in updating press laws is being made in some countries. In March 2006, the Kuwaiti parliament approved a new press law designed to better protect journalists’ basic rights. The government eased its monopoly control over issuing operating licenses for the media and established an appeal process for unsuccessful license requests. The new law also allows for new political newspapers and the expansion of the overall number of newspapers. It specifies that only judges can order imprisonment of journalists.

Creating a media-friendly atmosphere for free expression is a stated goal of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Political leaders encourage journalists to push the envelope on reporting and say that critically evaluating official institutions contributes to the UAE’s progress toward becoming a modern state. However, despite promises to do so, the government has not updated its press law since 1980 and international watchdog groups list it as one of the most restrictive in the Arab world. The UAE closely monitors journalists. Local and foreign reporters and editors cannot work unless annually licensed by the Ministry of Information. Self-censorship remains the biggest challenge facing press freedom in the UAE. Newspaper management is legally held accountable for what is published. Faced with possible imprisonment alongside their reporters, section heads and editors can on the side of journalistic conservatism rather than jeopardize their careers with critical reporting.

In October 2007, UAE journalists adopted a code of ethics that recognizes the press’s responsibility to inform the public. In March 2008, the UAE Vice President and ruler of Dubai signed an order that limited a person suing for libel to suits against media organizations, not individual journalists, as had long been customary. Official orders like this in support of a freer press are viewed by journalists as hopeful signs of change.

In April 2008, a rise in sectarian violence in Bahrain brought media regulation front and center. Despite government orders for press organs to practice responsible journalism and calls from political societies and other organizations for journalists to refrain from fueling sectarian views through their reporting, the government claims that media websites that feature political blogs instigate unrest. Websites were not covered in the 2002 press law and are thus considered immune
from potential lawsuits. In May 2008 Bahrain took steps to amend that law by decriminalizing press offenses and lifting preprint censorship on local (but not foreign) publications, and the Bahrain Journalists Association is considering a code of ethics to guide reporters. Lawmakers fear an updated press law may grant too many special privileges to journalists, but journalists hope parliament will abide by the wishes of the king to amend the law.

The overall workforce in Qatar—and this includes the press corps—largely consists of expatriates. Since permission for foreigners to live and work in the country is dependent on a governmental-issued visa, reporters are often conscious of falling afoul of the law and facing expulsion. Journalists also face fines and detention for violating the numerous articles in Qatar’s strict press law, further intensifying the pressure to self-censor. Qatar law prohibits the formation of professional associations (such as a journalist’s union) by non-Qatars, making it difficult for journalists to present a unified front on press freedom issues when dealing with the government. Paradoxically, Qatar has housed and nurtured Al Jazeera, one of the most provocative media organizations in the region. As one of the first pan-Arab satellite channels, Al Jazeera has helped redefine Arab journalism by challenging actions of regional leaders and encouraging its journalists to report freely instead of self-censoring their stories. Al Jazeera is owned by a member of Qatar’s ruling family and, maybe not surprisingly, appears less critical of the Qatari ruling family and of social, political, and economic development in Qatar.

Censorship and Self-Censorship
Outdated press laws, shifting rules about what information can and cannot be reported, the cautionary tales of jailed colleagues, and fickle government leaders understandably contribute to uncertainty among journalists. Add to this outright governmental censorship in some countries and it becomes clear why self-censorship is common among the Arab press corps.

In Egypt, a news editor of a local tabloid was sentenced to six months in prison in March 2008 for publishing a story on President Hosni Mubarak’s health. The journalist was freed on bail, but the report caused an economic panic among international investors that adversely impacted Egypt’s economy. In a separate case, using the social networking website Facebook, one political dissident, who came to be known as “Facebook Girl,” organized a protest rally against the Mubarak administration. Though the rally didn’t attract large numbers, the “Facebook Girl” was imprisoned for a time by Egyptian authorities. Her Facebook group calling for the protest claimed to have about 75,000 members, an example of the issue of outside media organizations impacting internal politics.

Pan-Arab Journalism
In general, domestic radio and television in the Middle East suffer from lack of originality and poor production values. With a few exceptions, commercial domestic radio still targets a general audience. Although topical hours may be set aside for target audiences like children or the elderly, narrowcasting to specific demographics and format-based programming have yet to catch on in these Arab countries. The exceptions here largely originate in Lebanon. Radio stations that program formats like rhythm and blues, pop, and hip-hop music exist and help promote Lebanon’s thriving music industry.

Commercial television features political and entertainment talk shows, game shows, a few live, call-in shows, and movies. Entertainment television originating from Lebanon has become a force for attracting the younger audience. Star Academy, an ongoing talent contest that pits people from various parts of the Arab world against one another, has become a fan favorite and a source of national pride among viewers. The holy month of Ramadan is a cherished television viewing period as it usually features a fresh line-up of programs for the family to watch. In general, domestic television news in Arab countries lacks investigative journalism and its content usually spotlights national development and the actions of government leaders.

Over-the-air broadcasting in most Arab countries is controlled by the government and features government-owned channels. Cable television, with its pay-TV and commercial stations, has never reached a critical mass in this part of the world. However, satellite television has gained a
foothold. Experts say nearly one in four Middle Eastern households uses home satellite dishes, making this method the primary way that viewers access commercial television in the region. Pan-Arab satellite channels—the most well known being Al Jazeera (Arabic and English), Al Arabiya, the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation (LBC), Future TV, and MBC—have become increasingly popular for both news and entertainment. Two of these enterprises (LBC and MBC) are overseen by Saudi Arabia. Al Jazeera, which is owned by the ruling family in Qatar, is considered one of the few Arab broadcasters beyond the influence of Saudi Arabia, and it has often produced critical stories about the two most influential Arab countries—Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

Since Al Jazeera burst onto the world stage during the opening days of the 2002 war in Afghanistan other countries have launched their own pan-Arab satellite channels and news operations. A few examples include Nourmedia in Jordan, One TV Dubai in the UAE, and Bahrain TV. However, these channels generally lack Al Jazeera’s glitz production values and confrontational style, preferring to more closely reflect the governmentally compliant nature of their country’s journalism. Domestic politicians consider satellite television a sign of modernization and therefore support its development and even tolerate their own Pan-Arab channels as a national symbol of progress within the region. However, channels that are critical of regional regimes, like Al Jazeera, which boasts a viewership of about 35 million people, have been threatened with censorship or closure by Arab leaders who permit the channels to broadcast within their borders via an agreement among Arab states.

In February 2007, information ministers of the 22-member League of Arab States adopted a satellite broadcasting charter ostensibly meant to counter Western cultural influence and reinforce “Arab solidarity,” but that also placed more governmental control over private Arab satellite channels like Al Jazeera. According to the amended charter, satellite stations that broadcast material that jeopardizes “social peace, national unity, public order and general propriety” or that threatens “Pan-Arab cooperation and integration” could face suspension or license revocation by their host governments. Western media watchdog groups like the Committee to Protect Journalists decried the charter as an attempt to further limit free expression, while the Egyptian minister of information promised his country would be one of the first to implement it. By early 2008, the Egyptian government had closed three stations—Al Baraa’, Al Hikma, and UK-based Al-Hurra—known for their critical coverage of Arab governments and raided the offices of the Cairo News Company, one of the largest suppliers of breaking news in the region.

The success of pan-Arab satellite channels in reaching Middle Eastern audiences has prompted Western media organizations and governments to respond with their own satellite channels in order to reach, and hopefully influence, the Arab viewer. In March 2008 the British Broadcasting Corporation launched its BBC Arabic news channel. The earlier US-government-funded Al Hurra television and radio stations like Radio Sawa and Radio Farda present Middle Eastern news through an American lens in an attempt to counter criticisms from other Arab channels. The French, Russians, and Germans have followed suit with their own Arabic-language news channels. All of these have had limited success at attracting viewers but seek to engage the Arab audience with Western political ideologies.

Experts think Al Jazeera’s significance has less to do with its actual audience size and more with the impact it has had on other regional media. For example, Pan-Arab channels in Jordan, the UAE, and Egypt have adopted Al Jazeera’s onscreen appearance and have adopted similar news program formats. Al Jazeera’s reputation in the West has generally been as a mouthpiece of Arab anti-Western ideals. However, recent research indicates the launch of Al Jazeera’s English channel has improved the image of the Al Jazeera brand in the Western world. In time, Westerners may come to view Al Jazeera in a more positive way, increasing its global credibility, strengthening its position in the region, and easing the way for newer media to gain a journalistic foothold in the Middle East.

Newer Media

Newer media, including Internet-based newspapers, blogs, text message alerts, and social networking websites like Facebook, YouTube, and MySpace promise to broaden information...
discrimination and challenge the status quo in the Middle East by creating homegrown channels for discussion, debate, and dissent. However, since these websites can be viewed by anyone, the impact of a local journalistic decision can have international repercussions like the above example of an economic downturn caused by a report in a local newspaper about Egyptian President Mubarak’s health. In an attempt to control their global, regional, and local images, Middle Eastern governments are trying to stem the flow of information through monitoring and filtering software.

Yet governments accustomed to controlling traditional media information are finding it harder to control digital information highways. Sophisticated filtering and monitoring software—developed, ironically enough, by such countries as the United States—is simplifying their task. In addition, monopolistic, government-licensed, and government-supported ownership of such systems as mobile phones allows tighter control of the news content via text messaging and identification of people sending and receiving messages. However, as global pressure to deregulate telecommunication increases, such links may become more like satellite communication—difficult to control and ubiquitous within society.

User-generated content from and about Arab nations on websites like YouTube and Facebook is on the rise. Political pressure groups, nongovernmental organizations, and ordinary citizens use these social networking channels to disseminate their messages. Mainstream media often use these materials as examples of voices within their respective countries. Although these newer interactive media tools give voice to the voiceless by empowering citizens as journalists, it also puts the onus of verifying the accuracy of the information on traditional media outlets that use it. Reporters are well aware that many such providers have political agendas to advance and thus their stories must be carefully vetted to ensure the mainstream media do not become inadvertent advocates for a cause.

In April 2008, Queen Rania of Jordan launched a YouTube channel for users to contribute questions, voice opinions, and address common stereotypes about Muslims and Arabs in an attempt for the world to better understand Islam. This example of informal governmental usage of the Internet is an exception, however; most Arab governments are discouraging Internet use for discussion and debate.

Some governments block opposing views on the Internet altogether. In March 2007, authorities in Yemen blocked access to opposition websites and banned news sent via text messaging. In Syria the government’s policy of blocking websites and the jailing of cyber-dissidents is considered by Western watchdog organizations to be the worst in the Middle East. The country’s Kurdish minority is a particularly taboo subject in Syria. Censorship of websites takes different forms. In Saudi Arabia, the government substitutes the user’s desired webpage for another saying the website has been blocked by the authorities. In other countries, including the UAE, sensitive websites suffer from recurring “technical problems” or carry a similar webpage warning that the content on the site does not conform to the country’s cultural sensitivities. In the UAE, users at Internet cafes must register before they can sign on.

Blogging is extremely vulnerable to government harassment and therefore self-censorship rather than have their sites shut down. In Egypt bloggers have been arrested and their websites blocked. In 2007, one Egyptian blogger was sentenced to four years in prison for criticizing the President and commenting about religious control of the country’s universities.

Blogs use different methods to skirt governmental censors. Ex-patriate bloggers may criticize their home country’s policies while operating outside its borders. If a blog is blocked in one part of the world, another site can be started with ease and the new site address relayed to loyal readers. Users can also download a software work-around to access the blocked site via a new path to the same information. As text messaging becomes globally ubiquitous it will become more difficult for censors to wade through the millions of messages that are sent every day.

Although Arab journalism in the Middle East is far from free, progress is being made. Arab media organizations are reaching larger audiences, and technology is making information delivery harder to censor. One result may be greater Arab news media freedom, but it could also mean more harassment of the Messenger by desperate leaders
trying to hold back the flood of information that challenges the status quo.

David P. Bates

See also Africa; Native Al Arabiya; Al Jazeera; Al-Manara; Censorship; Comparative Models of Journalism; Developmental Journalism; Free Flow of Information; Globalization; Coverage of International Journalism; Internet Impact on Media; Issues; U.S. International Communications; Violence Against Journalists.

Further Readings


Arab Media in the Information Age. Papers from the Tenth Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research (ECSSR) Annual Conference, Abu Dhabi: The Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research, 2006.

Human Rights Watch (Middle East). http://www.hrw.org/doc/?module=docs


ARCHIVES AND MUSEUMS

Across the world, a vast number of museums and archives hold material relevant to journalism. There are two distinct categories of this material: news media content and the means of producing that content. The first includes newspapers, newsreels, radio recordings, television news footage, photographs, and, most recently, websites. And the second includes objects representing the technology involved in producing and delivering journalism, such as printing presses, cameras, radio, and television sets, and computers.

The importance of collecting, preserving, and interpreting both categories for the benefit of present and future generations cannot be overstated. It may be a hole to describe journalism as "the first draft of history." Nevertheless, much of what journalists produce—whether print, film, or electronic—does constitute an important record of events, trends, and opinions and is therefore an invaluable resource for students of many disciplines. Moreover, everyone recognizes the pervasive influence—whether it be positive or negative—which the news media exercises over public opinion. Therefore, an informed understanding of how news is put together is itself a worthwhile subject for study.

Attempting to categorize and label the museums and archives engaged in this work across the world is a tricky exercise. In almost every area of mesological and archival activity, there is rarely an overarching logic explaining why certain collections are held in given institutions. Historical accident, government initiatives, philanthropic whims and fancies, and any number of other factors have produced the museums and collections we have today. Nevertheless, a few broad conclusions can be drawn about both museums and archives relevant to journalism and about how the Internet and the World Wide Web have brought a new dimension to the subject.

Museum Types

Though they are relatively few, there are some museums that deal exclusively in the business of news. They are concerned with the process of journalism as an area of human activity and are interested in