ESSACHESS – Journal for Communication Studies

Interactions between the Practices of the „Third Estate" and the „Fourth Estate" from the Perspective of the Media Research History through the Work of Walter Lippmann

ESSACHESS –
Journal for Communication Studies
Volume 18 Issue 1(35), p. 105-123
© The Author(s) 2025
Reprints and Permission:
© ESSACHESS
https://www.essachess.com/
DOI: 10.21409/essachess.1775-352x

Cite: ANDOK, M. (2025). Interactions between the Practices of the „Third Estate" and the „Fourth Estate" from the Perspective of the Media Research History through the Work of Walter Lippmann. *ESSACHESS*. 18(35): 105-123 https://doi.org/10.21409/HJPN-QA80

Mónika ANDOK
Associate Professor PhD, Pázmány Péter Catholic University, HUNGARY
e-mail: andok.monika@btk.ppke.hu

Abstract: The essay shows how the relationship between the government, administration of justice and the media became problematic from the 1920s, mainly outlining the process through the work of Walter Lippmann. He described many phenomena related to the media, which were even more fully realized in Internet and social media. Such is selective exposure, attention control or agenda setting. The importance of his volume "Public Opinion", published in 1922, is also shown by the fact that it provoked serious scientific debates. The observations he made in the 1920s

Article received February 5, 2024. Article accepted on September 18, 2024.
Conflict of Interest: The author(s) declare(s) no conflict of interest.

on the issues of social communication, public sphere and public opinion can still be reconsidered today.

Keywords: estates of the realm, Lippmann, propaganda, public sphere, Supreme Court

***

Interactions entre les pratiques du « third estate » et du « fourth estate» du point de vue de l'histoire de la recherche sur les médias à travers les travaux de Walter Lippmann

Résumé : Cet essai montre comment la relation entre le gouvernement, l'administration de la justice et les médias est devenue problématique à partir des années 1920, en s'appuyant principalement sur les travaux de Walter Lippmann. Il a décrit de nombreux phénomènes liés aux médias, qui ont trouvé une application encore plus complète sur Internet et les réseaux sociaux. Tels sont l'exposition sélective, le contrôle de l'attention ou la définition de l'agenda. L'importance de son ouvrage « Public Opinion », publié en 1922, est également démontrée par le fait qu'il a suscité de sérieux débats scientifiques. Les observations qu'il a formulées dans les années 1920 sur les questions de communication sociale, de sphère publique et d'opinion publique peuvent encore être réexaminées aujourd'hui.

Mots-clés : domaines du royaume, Lippmann, propagande, espace public, Cour suprême

***

Introduction

One of the basic pillars of modern democracies and normative democratic functioning is the principle of separation of branches of powers. Based on this concept, the legislative, executive and judicial powers operate separately and independently from each other. The first systematic developer of the separation of the branches of power was Montesquieu, who wrote in his book *The Spirit of the Laws* (1748) that the branches of power should function independently of one another because if they merged, tyranny would result. Montesquieu's theory had a significant impact on political thinking and the development of constitutional systems. However, this idea of power sharing was expanded and supplemented by several people in the 19th and 20th centuries. Constitutional courts, prosecutors' offices, and the opposition were identified as additional branches of power. In the 20th century, journalism and the media were increasingly referred to as the fourth estate. The legitimacy of the media as the fourth estate can be derived from the normative theory of the media. In this way of thinking, the task of the media is to create a high-quality functioning of the public sphere, to spread forward-looking cultural practices. In order to fulfill this task of the media, it is necessary to control the other three estates and to keep an eye on the democratic nature of their operation. If the legislative, executive or judicial powers do not act in this way, the media informs the public sphere (Christians et al., 2010). The idea of the media as the fourth estate has received many criticisms, one of the

most significant being that, unlike the other estates, the media does not operate as an institution chosen by the citizens and is difficult to account for (McQuail, 2003).

Media studies have long been concerned with the analysis of the relationship between media and politics, but little attention has been paid to the systematic exploration of the relationship between media and justice. The relationship between media and justice can be examined from several directions in media research. By discussing issues of power, media sociology explores the independence of the justice system and the media system, or even their influence on each other (Marsh & Melville 2019, Tucker 2018, Erickson 1991, Boda-Szabó 2011). Systemic approaches show the dimensions of power in the operation of both the media and the judiciary, the issues of authority and autonomy, and their relationship to the political sphere (Schleisinger et al 1991). How the media examines public attitudes and public opinion during the trial of individual political or criminal cases has also been the focus of investigation (Fox et al 2007: 135-165). The inclusion of the question of public opinion is extremely important for the investigation of this paper, as is the fact that cases of public interest received more media attention at the beginning of the 20th century. "Although such "media trials" have occurred episodically at least since the 1920s, recent years have seen an enormous increase in their number." (Fox et al 2001: 1)

In examining the content aspects of the media, the question of the representation of the judiciary plays a prominent role. Many researches have searched for the answer to the way in which the media represents the justice system. How biased, unfair and politically influenced is the judgment (Marsh & Melville 2019, Morlearty 2009). Empirical research also revealed how the media frames and can frame high-priority criminal cases in connection with one specific case. "Starting around 1990, Americans began to repeatedly focus on lengthy, high-profile, often celebrity-centered criminal and civil trials and investigations." (Fox et al 2001:1). This period is described in the literature as the period of tabloid justice. In terms of genre, media research focused strongly on two areas, one of which is the issue of news programs, how criminal cases are represented in the news (). This line of research has many points of connection with the analysis of media violence, going all the way back to the work of George Gerbner (Gerbner 1998). Particularly important studies have been conducted on the media representations of events and criminal cases in the cross-section of popular culture and tabloid media. Fox characterizes this intensifying mode of media representation as follows: "Legal news today is dominated by a presentation style that focuses on status, personality, score-keeping, and sex/violence titillation, rather than on legal rules, institutions, processes, and context. (Fox et al 2001:1) We can mention case studies that presented the OJ Simpson case, the Pistorius case (Brown et al 1997, Hunt, & Jaworska 2019). Later, the analysis of media representations of violence against women and minorities received a lot of attention (Thacker 2017). And research on the representation of judges or prisons has also appeared (Fasano, 2019, Marsh 2009). The genre of reality shows modeling justice appeared on American television and gained widespread popularity (Harris 1993).

This study shows whether, and if so, how this question was problematic in the early period of the formation of media studies, in the 1920s. The foundations are laid out in the study through the work of Walter Lippmann. After all, Lippmann was the first to comprehensively deal with the issues of public sphere, public opinion and their relationship with journalism. The paper is an analytical presentation of the fact that the institutional system of the media and the judiciary was systematically separated in the 1920s in the United States, but personal relationships and friendships make the system informally permeable. These informal relationships result in the bias that some journalists - such as Walter Lippmann presented in the study - will represent the point of view of their friends working in the justice system in their papers, and will influence public opinion accordingly. In addition, in connection with significant cases that in the 1920s in the United States meant the development of the possibilities and limits of freedom of speech. The study focuses on the outstanding decade of Lippmann's oeuvre, the 1920s.

1. Lippmann's Intellectual Sources: Politics, Journalism, Justice

Walter Lippmann was American journalist, commentator and writer. He continued his university studies at Harvard (B.A., 1909), where he was influenced by such instructors as William James and George Santayana. When in 1908, at the age of 19, Lippmann published a review of Barrett Wendell's The Privileged Classes in the columns of Harvard Illustrated, the then 65-year-old Williams James personally congratulated him. From then on, Lippmann was officially visiting the Jameses for tea on a weekly basis, on Thursdays. He later wrote to his parents that the time he spent with James was "the greatest thing that happened to me in my university life" (Simkin, 1997). Among his fellow students we find T. S. Elliot and John Reed (Shapiro, 1971, p. 142). Lippmann first wrote regularly for *The Boston Common*, starting in 1910, and in 1911 he became an assistant to Lincoln Steffens at *Everybody's Magazine* (Secretary's First Report, 1911, p.180). The young Lippmann advanced from journalist to editor in less than a year. Together with Steffens, they uncovered a corruption case in Greenwich, Connecticut, and thus created the foundations of investigative journalism. Incidentally, this is what Lippmann's first two volumes, *Preface to Politics*, published in 1913, and *Drift and Mastery*, published in 1914, are about (Lippmann, 1913, Lippmann, 2015). Even in the latter, the question of the public opinion is discussed, which Lippmann identifies as a group that can have a serious, decisive influence on governance (Shapiro, 1971, p. 145 quote from Lippmann, 1914, p.54). Holmes, the Supreme Court judge and later good friend, writes about the book: "Do you know Walter Lippmann's (Drift and Mastery) books—A Preface to Politics and (just out) Drift & Mastery? He is young—and one thinks at times proceeding on an inadequately founded faith—but Lord, how good a writer—what discernment of impalpable and enumeration of infinitesimals" (Snyder, 2012, p. 691). Although Lippmann and Steffens later drifted apart, they both looked back on their friendship with pride (Shapiro, 1971, p. 143). The Metaphysical Club, founded in 1872 in Cambridge, Massachusetts, had an early but important role in the creation

of common intellectual starting points by 1910, whose members included Charles Sanders Peirce (the father of semiotics), Oliver Wendell Holmes, William James and John Dewey. One of their main topics was truth and its knowability, that is, they revolved around epistemological problems. And this will play a role in the public writing and journalistic thinking of the students, including Walter Lippmann, as well as in the work of Holmes and Luis Brandeis at the Supreme Court. American researcher Edward White wrote about this: "The crucial element in Holmes's and Brandeis's canonization ... was the congeniality between their epistemological perspectives and those of commentators writing between the late 1920s and the early 1940s" (Snyder, 2012, p. 663 quote from White, 1995, p. 585).

During the analysis of Lippmann's work, the researchers placed the greatest emphasis on his relationship with politics and politicians. However, Lippmann maintained an equally close, even closer relationship with several key US Supreme Court judges. He and Felix Frankfurter (Supreme Court judge 1939-1962) were roommates in the 1910s and were bound by lifelong friendship. "Lippmann and Frankfurter were house-mates, and their frequent guests included not merely Holmes but Louis Brandeis, Herbert Hoover, Herbert Croly - founder of the New Republic - and the sculptor (and sometime Klansman) Gutzon Borglum, later the creator of the Mount Rushmore monument" (Snyder, 2017, p. 24). According to the American researcher Snyder, Lippmann and Frankfurter played a major role in the canonization of the work of Judge Oliver Wendell Holmes (in office 1902-32). In this period, between 1910-30, there were many Supreme Court judgements that played a role in removing the limits of freedom of speech (clear and present danger Schenck v. United States 1919, Sacco and Vanzetti case 1926) and in these cases the Lippmanns presented Holmes's position, regardless of whether it was the majority or minority position during the judgement of the nine-member Supreme Court. "Holmes's canonization began in the 1910s with his association with young progressives who lived at and frequented a Dupont Circle row house known as the House of Truth. Felix Frankfurter, Walter Lippmann, and others with ties to Harvard or the New Republic turned the row house into the nation's capital's foremost intellectual and political salon." (Snyder, 2012, p. 664.)

In 1914, Lippmann started the newspaper *The New Republic* with Herbert David Croly, of which he became deputy editor-in-chief. "The New Republic entered the breach. Two House of Truth regulars, Herbert Croly and Walter Lippmann, started the magazine in November 1914 and gravitated towards Holmes. Holmes, who did not read newspapers, was one of the magazine's first subscribers and most ardent readers. *The New Republic* became his primary source of news and the House of Truth's primary outlet for its progressive ideas (Snyder, 2012, p. 673). The relationship between Holmes and Lippmann was characterized by mutual respect and appreciation. Snyder writes about this: "Holmes's forte was law and philosophy (with literature on the side); Lippmann's was politics. They praised each other's work. Holmes delighted in Lippmann's visits. In spite of their different generational perspectives about war, Holmes admired Lippmann's next book, *The Stakes of*

Diplomacy. Lippmann sought Holmes's critique of the Atlantic Monthly article that became his most famous book, *Public Opinion*. Holmes never stopped reading Lippmann's books. ...Lippmann, in turn, idolized Holmes: "As for the greatest man I have personally ever known apart from Einstein himself, whom I have met only once for a short time, I should perhaps say Mr. Justice Holmes" (Snyder, 2012, p. 693). We can therefore see that Lippmann's principles in relation to journalism, freedom of speech and democracy were influenced more by his friends in the judiciary and justice and less by his acquaintances with politicians.

2. The Early Stage of Media and Propaganda Research, the 1920s

Like many other American public intellectuals and media researchers, who worked on propaganda during World War I, Lippmann was also concerned with the relationship between public opinion and democracy. In the 1920s, the problem of representative democracy was touched upon by many public intellectuals in their journalistic writings and books. In other words, in the decade of *Public Opinion*'s publication, democratic functioning, mass democracy, public sphere, public opinion, and persuasion were considered the most important topics. But who exactly were the most important opinion makers on the above question? We must mention the name of Edward Bernays, who, like Lippmann, worked in the office of the Committee on Public Information during World War I. Although today Bernays is considered "the father of (political) PR", in the 1920s he published several books on the subject of democracy, public opinion and persuasion. *Crystallizing Public Opinion* was published in 1923, followed by *Propaganda* in 1928 (Bernays, 1923; 2005/1928). In addition to Bernays, several members of the Chicago school studied the functioning of the media and propaganda. One of the best known is Harold D. Lasswell's *Propaganda Technique in the World War* (Lasswell, 1927).

In 1920, together with his colleague Charles Merz, Lippmann examined (today we would call their method content analysis) how *The New York Times* reported on the Russian Revolution between 1917 and 1920. Overall, it was concluded that the news did not show what actually happened in Russia, but what was intended to support the expectations of American newspaper editors. According to their summation, professional journalism worked disastrously with regard to the Russian Revolution, and the news service was misleading. At the same time, they also write that the solution to the problems would be to raise the standard of journalism, to lay down the rules of news editing and news writing, which rules are scientifically demanding and can be mastered during serious education (Lippmann & Merz, 1920, p. 41).

In the same year, Lippmann published a volume entitled *Liberty and the News*, in which he argued that the current crisis in democracy was the result of a crisis in journalism that could not adequately perform its duties (Lippmann, 1920). Democracy, democratic decision-making and judging can only rest on the reliability of the news, the good newspaper is also a public service institution. In terms of its importance, it occupies a position in the public sector such as education, the church

or the government or the judiciary. At the same time, it has the right to criticize other institutions, but it can also be subject to criticism (Lippmann & Merz, 1920, p. 4). *Liberty and the News* contained three essays, "Journalism and the higher law," "What modern liberty means" and "Liberty and the news," identical to the volume. Already in these writings, the idea that journalism, through news, has an unavoidable role in providing information appears. But collecting the news and presenting the facts is not a self-evident or simple task. News is complex, so its truth cannot be measured by the standard of mathematical truth. At the same time, Lippmann emphasizes that telling the truth and the truth of news content is no longer just a question of the professional moral and ethical behavior of journalists (Lippmann, 1920). It is not because modernity has brought us a world where personal, journalistic experience is no longer feasible in terms of the totality of news content.

This line of thought, the limitations of knowledge and personal experience, will also come to the fore later in the volume *Public Opinion*. In addition, Lippmann also mentions the problematic nature of journalist training, because according to him, curricula should not follow the cynicism of trade schools, but should aim at the preparation of scientists and professionals (Lippmann, 1920). In other words, it is here that we encounter the idea that later leads to the trend of scientific journalism. Overall, we can see that the American press experienced its first major crisis of credibility in the years before (and after) the publication of *Public Opinion* (Bybee, 1999, p. 31). Pariser writes about this a century later: "The small, aristocratic public was transforming into a general public. The middle class was growing, and because middle-class people had both a day-to-day stake in the life of the nation and the time and money to spend on entertainment, they were hungry for news and spectacle. … After World War I, tensions about what role the newspaper should play boiled over, becoming a matter of great debate among two of the leading intellectual lights of the time, Walter Lippmann and John Dewey" (Pariser, 2011, p. 21).

3. Democracy, Journalism, Public Opinion, Justice in Lippmann's Work

In August 1921, Lippmann submitted the manuscript of Public Opinion to his publisher and set off on a longer European trip with his wife. This was partly a vacation, and partly an opportunity to examine first-hand the situation of the European nations in the post-war period. When they returned from the trip in January 1922, Lippmann took up his new post as editor-in-chief of the New York World (Bybee 1999, 41). Then his volume was published by the Harcourt and Brace publisher.

„The analyst of public opinion must begin then, by recognizing the triangular relationship between the scene of action, the human picture of that scene, and the human response to that picture working itself out upon the scene of action. It is like a play suggested to the actors by their own experience, in which the plot is transacted in the real lives of the actors, and not merely in their stage parts" (Lippmann, 1922, p. 7). If we take a closer look at the logical path that he takes as an author in his book Public Opinion, we see that he approaches the question of public opinion in a

functionalist way. In a normative sense, the function of public opinion would be to give the government, during state decision-making, a fact-based, well-founded, mature and carefully considered proposal for action. Judgment appears primarily in the text as a personal judgment. However, the volume does not consist of anything other than proving why public opinion is not suitable ab ovo for all this, for making the correct judgment. Lippmann's argument also touches on epistemological issues. It is not possible for citizens to get to know the world around them, more precisely, it requires the help of the press. At this point, according to Lippmann, we encounter two problems, one of which is that the citizens who make up public opinion will not become "omnicompetent citizens" even as a result of consuming news. The other is that the operation of the press, news editing, and newspapers in the 1920s was not suitable for unbiased reporting on world events. Lippmann sees the latter problem as solvable if the standard of journalism is raised and turned into a scientific one.

On the other hand, he sees the consequences of the citizens' lack of specialist knowledge as being preventable from the point of view of the functioning of democracy, if the government does not rely on public opinion, but on the advice of experts. According to Lippmann, this is the only way to imagine correct and effective governance. The intellectual challenge, writes American media sociologist Schudson, is not to invent democracy without experts, but to find a way to use experts for a legitimate democratic function. In fact, this is exactly what Walter Lippmann wanted (Schudson, 2008, p. 1046). The experts - whose knowledge is well-founded in a specific area and disinterested - were not supposed to replace the public, but the experts were supposed to provide an alternative source of knowledge and politics for the parties and pressure groups (Schudson, 2008, p. 1045). Because of all this, we have to agree with the scholar Regalzi's position, who believes that the issue of democracy and not public opinion, propaganda or communication is at the centre of these 1920s debates (Regalzi, 2012). "Over the next decade, Lippmann advanced his line of thought. Public opinion, Lippmann concluded, was too malleable—people were easily manipulated and led by false information. In 1925, he wrote The Phantom Public, an attempt to dismantle the illusion of a rational, informed population once and for all. Lippmann argued against the prevailing democratic mythology, in which informed citizens capably made decisions about the major issues of the day. The "omnicompetent citizens" that such a system required were nowhere to be found. At best, ordinary citizens could be trusted to vote out the party that was in power if it was doing too poorly; the real work of governance, Lippmann argued, should be entrusted to insider experts who had education and expertise to see what was really going on ” writes Pariser (Pariser, 2011, p. 21).

But let's go in line! Let us first look at the problem of experiences as discussed by Lippmann. " And so before we involve ourselves in the jungle of obscurities about the innate differences of men, we shall do well to fix our attention upon the extraordinary differences in what men know of the world.” (Lippmann, 1922, p. 10). Using the works of Graham Wallas and Sigmund Freud, Lippmann presented in his book the characteristics of a multitude of pseudo-environments different from the real outside

world. People find it difficult to understand the complexity of the world, and because of this they use stereotypes. Most of the time, Lippmann explained, it is not the case that we see something for the first time and then define it, but rather that we define something first, and then we see and identify the phenomenon with the definition. "We shall assume that what each man does is based not on direct and certain knowledge, but on pictures made by himself or given to him." (Lippmann, 1022, p. 10). In his book, he quotes Dewey's How we Think (1910) in an agreeable way to illustrate the differences between the thinking of laymen and experts (we find the example of chemists in the text) (Lippmann, 1922, p. 32-33). Lippmann insists that "everyone is an outsider to all but a few aspects of modern life" and therefore has "no time, attention, interest, or equipment for concrete judgment" in these areas (Lippmann, 0922, p. 40). For this reason, Lippmann expressed doubts as to whether there could be an authentic public opinion, consisting of people well informed and interested in public affairs. The community of omnicompetent citizens could be the custodian of credible public opinion and could make well-founded judgments in public affairs. This is what Rousseau and the founding fathers of the United States of America believed in, but it is not possible to build on this in mass democracies, according to Lippmann's view. At the same time, the press informs people about the invisible environment with words and pictures (Lippmann, 1922, p. 25-26).

The American media historian Czitrom summarizes it as follows: Lippmann criticized the traditional theory of democracy related to public opinion and the concept of a "citizen competent in everything". He claimed that modern communication creates ubiquitous "pseudo-environments" and thus prevents ordinary citizens from achieving fact-based political decision-making. [Lippmann] He trusted in the interposition of experts between the public and the citizens, the decision-makers (Czitrom, 1982, p. 110). Lippmann really characterizes the voters as those who do not have the omnicompetence with which responsible decisions can be made. But he does not claim that they are completely incompetent. Rather, it is that, according to Lippmann, we must reject a view of democracy based on the "omnicompetente citizens". On the other hand, experts do not rule in Lippmann's model. Their job is not to serve special interests, but to enable elected decision-makers to act in response to the facts of the world, which would be invisible if only political parties and interest groups were empowered to represent the world. For Lippmann, "insiders" and "outsiders" are not actually social types, but social locations, according to Schudson, who analyzes his work (Schudson, 2008, p. 1036). Lippmann characterizes public opinion itself with terms such as: it is based on misunderstandings rather than real knowledge, it is based on prejudices, it is based on stereotypes, and it is characterized by non-homogeneous, variously refracted, selective exposure (Lippmann, 1922, p. 31, 32, 39). The world is vast, the situations that concern us are intricate, the messages are few, and the biggest part of opinion must be constructed in the imagination (Lippmann, 1922, p. 27). In other words, it is not based on facts or knowledge. Public opinion does not act - its agency is merely secondary or indirect. If we want to quote Lippmann by definition, the following lines are worth considering: „Those features of the world outside which have to do with the behavior of other human beings, in so

far as that behavior crosses ours, is dependent upon us, or is interesting to us, we call roughly public affairs. The pictures inside the heads of these human beings, the pictures of themselves, of others, of their needs, purposes, and relationship, are their public opinions. Those pictures which are acted upon by groups of people, or by individuals acting in the name of groups, are Public Opinion with capital letters." (Lippmann, 1922, p. 12). Lippmann believed that the essential questions of politics are not for the public. The public has a say in the work of insiders from the outside. The public judgment of a case is based on a small sample of knowledge of the relevant facts. The public actually judges whether the actors participating in the debate are following an established rule of behavior or their own arbitrary desires. In other words, the judgement of public opinion is based on the external aspects of the decision-makers' behavior. Moreover, the public is not directly responsible for its opinion (Lippmann, 1925, p. 38). According to Pariser: "Thanks to critics like Lippmann, the present system has a sense of ethics and public responsibility baked in, however imperfectly. But although it's playing some of the same roles, the filter bubble does not" (Pariser, 2011, p.21).

In the normative understanding of the American author, an opinion on public affairs could only be formed on the basis of a comprehensive knowledge of the facts. But the acquisition of this comprehensive factual knowledge is limited by several factors: „Under this heading we shall consider first the chief factors which limit their access to the facts. They are the artificial censorships, the limitations of social contact, the comparatively meager time available in each day for paying attention to public affairs, the distortion arising because events have to be compressed into very short messages, the difficulty of making a small vocabulary express a complicated world, and finally the fear of facing those facts which would seem to threaten the established routine of men's lives" (Lippmann, 1922, p. 12). The press informs people about the invisible environment. But journalists are forced to be selective, they cannot report on every event in the world. In addition, the selection has no scientifically based rules and laws. The work of journalists is governed by the conventions learned in newsrooms (Lippmann, 1922, p. 132). However, he is also aware that press reports are not the same as the truth. "…news and truth are not the same thing, and must be clearly distinguished. The function of news is to signalize an event, the function of truth is to bring to light the hidden facts, to set them into relation with each other, and make a picture of reality on which men can act." (Lippmann, 1922, p. 140). Lippmann's position and viewpoint are described as elitist, anti-democratic, skeptical, disillusioned, post-war, and pessimistic. At the same time, according to Italian media researcher Regalzi: Lippmann did not really attack democracy, rather he was a true democrat who argued for the need to think beyond the classical formulation of democratic theory (Regalzi, 2012). Michael Schudson called this the "democratic realism" that emerged in the 1920s and this "democratic realism" found its most prominent spokesman in Walter Lippmann (Schudson, 1998, 2003, 2008).

4. Lippmann-Dewey Debate or Parallel Thinking

John Dewey, the defining American scientist of the first half of the 20th century, the father of pragmatism, was born in 1859. At the center of his work was the phenomenon of democracy, be it politics, education, press or communication. Regarding the relationship between Dewey and Lippmann, we can say that they were paying attention to each other's work since the 1910s. Lippmann's writings and articles published in 1910 often drew from Dewey, and Lippmann wrote an appreciative review of Dewey's book *Democracy and Education*, published in 1916, in *The New Republic* (Bybee, 1999, p. 34). Dewey also wrote a review of *Public Opinion* in *The New Republic* a few months after the book was published. In summary, he wrote: The presentation is so objective and projective that one almost finishes the book without realizing that it is perhaps the strongest indictment of democracy as currently conceived." Dewey wrote that "Lippmann provides a ruthless and realistic analysis of the limitations of the images in our heads and our environment" (Dewey, 1922, p. 337). While Lippmann considered the press to be inappropriate for the task of informing, enlightening and guiding the public, Dewey argued against him that the press should continue to act as a link between the government and the people. Dewey believes that many of Lippmann's criticisms of the press do hold up (Dewey, 1927, p. 158). But this means that it is the press that needs reform and not public opinion. On the other hand, he agrees with Lippmann's description of omnicompetent citizens - knowledge of the framework of political affairs, the ability to calculate wide-ranging consequences. Of course, Dewey himself expressed his views in his 1927 volume *The Public and Its Problems*. Its contents can be read as a long, optimistic response to Lippmann's theory of democracy and public opinion (Regalzi, 2012). During the decade of the debate, Lippmann was in his thirties, while Dewey was in his mid-sixties. In their proposals, the new, more "realistic" democracy is governed by a form of knowledge that, according to Lippmann's belief, rises above subjectivity and politics: and this is none other than science. For Dewey, the crisis of individual subjectivity and the crisis of democracy cannot be solved with the help of science alone. Mathematical and physical sciences have great prestige, writes Dewey. But distinction must be made between those facts which are independent of human desire and endeavor, and those which are to some extent of human interest and purpose, and which alter with the change of the latter. The more honestly we refer to facts, the more important is the distinction between the facts that determine human activity and the facts produced by human activity. To the extent that we ignore this difference, social science becomes a pseudoscience. The problems of democracy arise from bureaucratization and depersonalization caused by industrial society. The solution to these problems would not be the creation of a new scientific power class, but the resurrection of the public sphere (Bybee, 1999, p.32). After all, part of the problems arise from the nature of the public sphere, another part from the news itself, and partly from the organizational structure of the news service. Each of the latter (news production and news service) is economically embedded, and so is the problem arising from it. Dewey probably understood that Lippmann never turned away from democracy, only from the utopian aspirations of the public sphere by finding a way

to overcome the subjectivism of human opinion - based on the limitations of individual experience. In Pariser's formulation: "While they disagreed on the contours of the solution, Dewey and Lippmann did fundamentally agree that news making was a fundamentally political and ethical enterprise—and that publishers had to handle their immense responsibility with great care. And because the newspapers of the time were making money hand over fist, they could afford to listen. At Lippmann's urging, the more credible papers built a wall between the business portion of their papers and the reporting side. They began to champion objectivity and decry tilted reporting. It's this ethical model—one in which newspapers have a responsibility to both neutrally inform and convene the public—which guided the aspirations of journalistic endeavors for the last half century" (Pariser, 2011, p. 21).

The writings of the two authors, which occasionally reflected on each other, were only much later discussed by American researchers, and James Carey, an American media scholar and developer of the ritual model of communication, played a major role in this (Schudson, 2008). The so-called Lippmann-Dewey debate was analysed in numerous publications by representatives of American media and communication science in the 1980s and 1990s. The research mostly agreed with Dewey's position and insights, while Lippmann was blamed for his elitism. Michael Schudson, an American media sociologist who reviewed the history of the debates of the mentioned era, believes that the discussion was greatly influenced by the position of James Carey, who, according to him, misunderstood Lippmann. According to Schudson, Lippmann's elitism did not make his views anti-democratic, on the contrary, he wanted to develop them to a higher level by integrating scientific knowledge. The "Lippmann-Dewey debate" was actually never a real debate, an exchange of ideas (Schudson, 2008, p.1031). Moreover, according to Schudson, it is unlikely that Lippmann ever thought he was in dialogue or debate with Dewey, despite Dewey's *The Public and Its Problems* reflecting on Lippmann. Rather, the debate consisted of book reviews that Dewey wrote for *The New Republic* of Lippmann's volume *Public Opinion* in 1922 and *The Phantom Public* in 1925. Dewey subsequently gave lectures at Kenyon College in 1926, which were published *as The New Republic* of Lippmann. In contrast, Lippmann never responded to Dewey's volume *The Public and Its Problems*. According to Schudson, this quasi-discourse was turned into a "debate" in the 1980s and 1990s, mostly by liberal intellectuals (Schudson, 2008, p.1032). But let's return to James Carey!

James Carey criticized Lippmann for questioning the competence of mass public participation in democracy and for considering mass communication research to fall under the umbrella of quantitative studies. Although Carey began writing about John Dewey as early as 1975, he did not comment on the relationship between Dewey and Lippmann until 1982 (Carey, 1975/2009, p. 13-36). According to Schudson, who is familiar with Carey's work from a close, working relationship, Carey first spoke critically about Lippmann in the 1980s. In 1986, he gave a lecture at the conference of the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions in Santa Barbara, and then in a publication born from the lecture in 1987 (Schudson, 2008, p. 1034). In it, Carey states

that from the twenties, the public was conceptually evacuated and the decline of the public sphere began (Carey, 1987, p. 5-6). Moreover, during this period, not only the intellectual work on the public sphere, but also the public itself disappeared. Carey also blames Lippmann for this, characterizing his views as an anti-democratic elitist approach when he says: "Lippmann actually took the public out of politics, and politics out of public life" (Schudson, 2008, p. 1035 quote from Carey, 1995, p. 390).

According to Carey, Lippmann believed that the public could not be effectively informed and thus could not control events. And the only hope lies in taking the weight off the shoulders of the public, realizing that the average citizen has neither the capacity nor the interest and competence to manage society. The acquisition of relevant knowledge can only be achieved through a class of experts and - in the new order of "samurai" - those who shape public consciousness: men and women who are committed to making democracy work for the benefit of the masses, whether the masses want it or not (Seyb, 2022). The parallel thinking between Dewey and Lippmann basically revolved around their opposing views on human nature and democracy and its social function. Lippmann posited human nature as passive and fundamentally irrational. According to his view, citizens do not actively participate in democratic processes, but passively - becoming spectators rather than participants. In contrast, Dewey emphasizes that human nature is active, experiential, and rational. But they also have different opinions about the nature of democracy. While Lippmann considered democracy only as a means to the aim (primarily for a stable and peaceful political and social order), Dewey understood democracy as a means and an aim itself, emphasizing its socio-psychological and normative aspects (Whipple, 2005).

5. The Relationship between Journalism and Power from the Perspective of Democracy

Lippmann and Carey agree that the most important function of journalism is to serve democracy. But they see the way of this in a radically different way. According to Lippmann, democratic functioning can be achieved with correct and efficient governance, the government is assisted by expert advisers in decision-making (and not by the opinion of the public). The role of the press is to convince voters that the government is on the right track. That is why it is no coincidence that his ideas are compared to the operation of propaganda. However, those who do so forget Lippmann's ultimate goal. But how does he himself write about this in *Public Opinion*? "Therefore, on the whole, the quality of the news about modern society is an index of its social organization. The better the institutions, the more all interests concerned are formally represented, the more issues are disentangled, the more objective criteria are introduced, the more perfectly an affair can be presented as news. At its best the press is a servant and guardian of institutions; at its worst it is a means by which a few exploit social disorganization to their own ends" (Lippmann, 1922, p. 142). By rooting public opinion in social psychology, Lippmann gives a depoliticized picture of the mass media. He pays relatively little attention to how the state and the

market distort the production of news, focusing instead on the ways in which reporters' own limited training, hopes, and fears make reporting vulnerable to them. According to Carey, however, journalism and democracy are two names for the same thing. Without the institutions of democracy, journalists are reduced to propagandists or entertainment workers. Without good quality journalism, there is no democracy; but in the same way, if there is no democracy, there is no journalism. The developers of the ritual theory of communication believe that the media exercises political power by organizing, shaping and interpreting the communicative practices of society and aligning them with widely shared social mythologies. This interpretation provides a radically different approach than the ideologically based one. It also supports the fact that ritual analysis should be interpreted as a version of cultural studies. But an important difference is that the ritual theory accepts a kind of symbolism that forms the basis of social solidarity (the idea of nation, the concept of homeland), while the critical theory approaches all of this as a rational practice. The ritual model of communication therefore looks at journalism as a building block of democracy, while it describes news as a cultural form (Carey, 1987).

With regard to Lippmann, we find not only analyzes that criticize Public Opinion, but also those that question Lippmann's perception of the role of a journalist and the way he behaved as a journalist. These criticisms have a close thematic connection to the issues of the relationship between journalism and power. During Lippmann's journalistic activity, the analyzes say, he did not maintain a critical distance from power, as he was an adviser to many presidents, and had access to the inner circles of government decision-making as well as to the judiciary (see his relationship with Roosevelt, Wilson, Holmes). It also happened in 1961 that he edited a small part of John F. Kennedy's inauguration speech, and later praised this speech as a journalist. Analysts of his work see that in Lippmann's time the boundary between politicians and journalists was not so sharp, it was much more porous. There is no doubt that Lippmann never thought of himself as a reporter, but rather as an analyst, a political philosopher, a "public intellectual". But what was not particularly deviant in the first half of the 1900s is no longer acceptable from the 1960s and 70s. Many people voiced this, for example Carey wrote about this in 1987 that Lippmann lived his life as a spouse of the powerful and an adviser to heads of state (Carey, 1987, p. 7). In the following, I would like to highlight two important critics, Tom Wolfe is one and Noam Chomsky is the other.

Born in 1930, Tom Wolfe is credited with creating the *New Journalism* trend in the United States, which started in the 1960s. They believed that journalism cannot be objective, and terms such as truth, reality, and objectivity are meaningless. Their journalistic principle is narration instead of information transmission, intuition instead of analysis, people instead of things, style instead of statistics. It is therefore clearly visible that they not only distanced themselves from the ideal of objectivity, which Lippmann stated as a standard, but also directly denied its feasibility. It is no coincidence that Tom Wolfe, who reviewed Lippmann's work in 1972, did not find his journalistic style sympathetic and worth following. He wrote in *New York*

Magazine that the only form of reporting he can recall about Lippmann in the past 35 years is nothing more than a few red-carpet appearances at the president's, where he sat in soft armchairs and personally swallowed the politicians' lies instead of reading them in the *New York Times* (Wolfe, 1972). Lippmann himself did not remain in debt either, he once said of Wolfe that "Tom Wolfe is an incompetent ass" (Kilday, 1969, Wolfe, 2008). It is also characteristic that Wolfe proudly distributed this.

Another significant critic of Lippmann is American linguist and left-wing political activist Noam Chomsky. Chomsky willingly borrowed the term *manufacturing consent* from Lippmann, but rejected its technique. And as a critic of the American media system, he described the operation of the "consensus machine" (Herman & Chomsky, 1988). Researchers and analysts of public opinion, propaganda and the political preconditions necessary for social order have long recognized the special importance of propaganda in the phenomenon that Walter Lippmann called the "consensus machine". Writing at the beginning of the 1920s, Lippmann himself claimed that: propaganda has now become a regular tool of popular government, and its sophistication and importance are developing strongly (Lippmann, 1922, p. 158). At Lippmann, we can read that the production of consensus can be increased almost to perfection and that anyone who understands the process can take advantage of the possibility of manipulation. In 1988, Chomsky wrote together with Edward S. Herman, *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media* a propaganda model of how the media works was described. They argue and prove with numerous examples that the news entering the American news media must pass through five filters. These are (1) media ownership structure and profit orientation, (2) compliance with the advertising market, (3) scarcity of news sources and reliance on official news sources, (4) discrediting, and finally (5) ideology (Herman & Chomsky, 1988). And the latter, the ideological analysis, receives a particularly strong emphasis in the volume. Lippmann did not find the operation of propaganda to be objectionable, since "public interests remain almost completely invisible to public opinion and can only be managed by a specialized class whose personal interests exceed their own narrow environment" (Lippmann, 1922) Lippmann was more concerned about the inevitable bias of the press it can lead this specialized class as well as the public astray. Thus, the question became how decision-making elites can get correct information. In Lippmann's opinion, this can be ensured through the creation of independent expert bodies that are able to provide unbiased advice to the government. In a later writing, Chomsky also criticized Lippmann for his journalistic approach to the expert class and to the elite (Chomsky, 1991). But he also sees that in the decade since Public Opinion was published, this attitude was not only characteristic of Lippmann. He writes that Lippmann's thoughts on these issues come from shortly after World War I, when he impressed the liberal intellectual community by serving as "a faithful and helpful interpreter in the greatest mission ever undertaken by an American president." (*The New Republic*). The undertaking was none other than Woodrow Wilson's "peace without victory" program. The president, with the help of liberal intellectuals, imposed his will on a reluctant or indifferent majority (Chomsky, 1991).

In the later stages of his career, Lippmann reconsidered the relationship between journalists and those in power. By the late 1950s, he already believed that journalists should provide citizens with the information they need to decide how they want to be governed. "This is our work ... We have a right to be proud of it and to be happy that it is our work." - he said in 1959, in his speech at the National Press Club organized for his 70th birthday (Petrou, 2018a). In 1964 he said the following in a television interview: There are certain rules in the relationship between journalists and high-ranking officials that must be observed... There must always be a certain distance between high-ranking public officials and journalists. I wouldn't say a wall or a fence, but an airspace, that's very necessary (Petrou, 2018b).

Conclusion

The study showed how the idea of separation of branches of power appeared in the early period of media research, in the work of Walter Lippmann between the two world wars. We have seen that Lippmann does not consider the classical mode of operation of democracy, according to which the executive power should rely on public opinion in decision-making and management, to be adequate. He believes that the electorate are not "omnicompetentt" people, they do not have knowledge of all topics to be discussed. But not only is there a lack of competence, but they also only get access to a significant part of the information through the media. The media provides them with information regarding the unseen environment, and they form their opinions based on this. However public opinion is based more on prejudices and the assessment of the credibility (believability) of political behavior and not on facts. Lippmann saw the solution to the problem in the creation of a new advisory class and in raising the standard of journalism and journalist training. While he matured his insights as a public intellectual, as a political journalist he maintained a fairly close and friendly relationship with leading politicians and was even an adviser to several presidents of the United States. What is even more important from the point of view of the present topic is that not only did he not find such a close relationship between the government and the media worrisome, but also the relationship between the media and the judiciary. He maintained personal, lifelong friendships with several Supreme Court justices, Holmes and Frankfurter. From the evaluation of the era and Lippmann's oeuvre, it can be seen that this closeness and relationship between the key representatives of the branches of power in the period 1920-50 was not considered problematic by the press or the other branches of power. Its problematic nature was only highlighted in media research from the 1960s, both from the side of media sociology and from the side of cultural studies.

References

Bernays, E. L. (2005/1928). *Propaganda*. New York: Ig publishing.

Bernays, E. L. (1923) *Crystallizing Public Opinion*. New York: Liveright PublishingCorporation Publishers.

Boda, Z., & Szabó, G. (2011). The media and attitudes towards crime and the justicesystem: A qualitative approach. *European journal of criminology*, *8*(4), 329-342.

Brown, W. J., Duane, J. J., & Fraser, B. P. (1997). Media coverage and public opinion of the OJ Simpson trial: Implications for the criminal justice system. *Communication Law and Policy*, *2*(2), 261-287.

Bybee, C. (1999). Can democracy survive in the post-factual age?: A return to the

Lippmann-Dewey debate about the politics of news. *Journalism & Communication Monographs*, *1*(1), 28-66.

Carey, J. W. (2009) *Communication as Culture. Essays on Media and Society*. Revised edition New York – London, Routledge,

Carey, J. W. (2002). Political ritual on television: Episodes in the history of shame,

degradation and excommunication. In *Media, ritual and identity* (pp. 42-70). London – New York: Routledge.

Carey, J. W. (2000). 'Journalism and democracy are names for the same thing'. *Nieman reports*, *54*(2), 67.

Carey, J. W. (1997) The Culture in Question. In.: Munson, E. S., & Warren, C. A.

(Eds.). (1997). *James Carey: A critical reader*. Minneapolis. U of Minnesota Press. 308-341.

Carey, J. W. (1996) The Chicago School and Mass Media Research. In.: Dennis, Everette E. – Wartella, Ellen (eds.): *American Communication Research:The Remembered History.* Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. pp 21-38.

Carey, J. W. (1987). The press and the public discourse. *Center Magazine*, *20*(2), 4-16.

Chomsky, N. (1991). *Force & Opinion*. Sky Is Revolution.

Christians, C. G., Glasser, T., McQuail, D., Nordenstreng, K., & White, R. A.

(2010). *Normative theories of the media: Journalism in democratic societies*. University of Illinois Press.

Czitrom, D. J. (1982). *Media and the American mind: from Morse to McLuhan*.

Chapell Hill: Univ of North Carolina Press.

Dewey, J., & Rogers, M. L. (1928/ 2012). *The public and its problems: An essay in political inquiry*. Pennsylvania: Penn State Press.

Erickson, R. V. (1991). Mass media, crime, law, and justice: An institutional approach. *The British Journal of Criminology*, *31*(3), 219-249.

Fasano, T. (2019). The Effect Media has on Juror Bias. Online

https://digitalcommons.pace.edu/honorscollege_theses/337/

Fox, R. L., Van Sickel, R. W., & Steiger, T. L. (2001). *Tabloid justice: Criminal justice in an age of media frenzy* (pp. 53-54). L. Rienner.

Gerbner, G. (1998). Stories of violence and the public interest. *The Media in Question: popular cultures and public interests. London, California, New Delhi: Sage Publications*.

Harris, D. A. (1993). Appearance of Justice: Court TV, Conventional Television, and Public Understanding of the Criminal Justice System, The. *Ariz. L. Rev.*, *35*, 785.

Herman, E. S., & Chomsky, N. (2010). *Manufacturing consent: The political economy of the mass media*. New York: Random House.

Hunt, S., & Jaworska, S. (2019). Intersections of nationality, gender, race and crime

in news reporting: the case of Oscar Pistorius–Olympian and murderer. *Discourse, Context & Media*, *30*, 100299.

Kilday, G. J. (1969) Tom Wolfe. *The Harvard Crimson*.

Lasswell, H. D. (1927) *Propaganda technique in the world war*. London: Kegan Paul Trench Trubner

Lippmann, W. (1925) *The Phantom Public.* New York: Harcourt, Brace,

Lippmann, W. (1922) *Public Opinion.* New York: Harcourt, Brace,

Lippmann, W. (1920). *Liberty and the news*. New York: Brace and Howe.

Lippmann, W. (2015). *Drift and mastery: An attempt to diagnose the current unrest*.

University of Wisconsin Pres.

Lippmann, W. (1913). *A preface to politics*. New York: M. Kennerley.

Lippmann, W. & Merz, Ch. (1920) A Test of the News. An examination of the news reports in the New York Times on aspects of the Russian Revolution of special importance to Americans. March 1917-March 1920. Supplement to *The New Republic*, August 4

Marsh, I. (2009). Representations of prisons in the British media–or are we being fair to holiday camps?. *Criminal Justice Studies*, *22*(3), 367-374.

Marsh, I., & Melville, G. (2019). *Crime, justice and the media*. Routledge.

McQuail, D. (2003). *Media accountability and freedom of publication*. Oxford

University Press, USA.

Moriearty, P. L. (2009). Framing justice: Media, bias, and legal decisionmaking. *Md. L. Rev.*, *69*, 849.

Pariser, E. (2011). *The filter bubble: How the new personalized web is changing what we read and how we think*. London: Penguin.

Petrou, M. (2018a). Re-examining Lippmann's Legacy. *Nieman Reports* 2018.

Summer – Fall. 2018a. PETROU, Michael: Should Journalists Be Insiders? *The Atlantic* September 19, 2018.

Petrou, M. (2018b). Should Journalists Be Insiders? *The Atlantic* September 19, 2018

Regalzi, F. (2012). Democracy and Its Discontents: Walter Lippmann and the Crisis of Politics (1919-1938). *E-rea. Revue électronique D'études sur le Monde Anglophone*, (9.2).

Schlesinger, P., Tumber, H., & Murdock, G. (1991). The media politics of crime and criminal justice. *British Journal of Sociology*, 397-420.

Schudson, M. (2016). Walter Lippmann's Ghost: An Interview with Michael Schudson. *Mass Communication and Society*, *19*(3), 221-229.

Schudson, M. (2008). The" Lippmann-Dewey Debate" and the Invention of Walter

Lippmann as an Anti-Democrat 1985-1996. *International Journal of communication*, *2*, 12.

Schudson, M. (2003) *The Sociology of News.* New York, London, W.W. Norton,

Schudson, M. (1998) *The Power of News*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, London: Harvard University Press,

Secretary's First Report: Harvard College, Class of 1911. 1911 Cambridge: Crimson Printing Co.

Seyb, R. P. (2022). The Shimmer in the Twilight: Walter Lippmann's Public Opinion and the Journalist's Way of Knowledge. *Journalism History*, *48*(2), 157-177.

Shapiro, H. (1971). Steffens, Lippmann, and Reed: The Muckraker and His

Protégés. *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, *62*(4), 142-150.

Simkin, J. (1997) Walter Lippmann.

https://spartacus-educational.com/USAlippmann.htm

Snyder, B. (2012). The House That Built Holmes. *Law and History Review*, *30*(3), 661-721.

Snyder, Brad. (2017). *The house of truth: a Washington political salon and the foundations of American liberalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Thacker, L. K. (2017). Rape culture, victim blaming, and the role of media in the criminal justice system. *Kentucky Journal of Undergraduate Scholarship*, *1*(1), 8.

Tucker, D. (2018). Modern Hegemony-Implicit Bias, Media, and the Criminal Justice

System. *Tenn. J. Race Gender & Soc. Just.*, *7*, 125.

Whipple, M. (2005). The Dewey-Lippmann Debate today: Communication distortions, reflective agency, and participatory democracy. *Sociological Theory*, *23*(2), 156-178.

Whitman, A. (1974) Walter Lippmann, Political Analyst, Dead at 85. *The New York Times*. Dec. 15,

Wolfe, T. (2008) A City Built of Clay. *New York Magazin*.

Wolfe, T. (1972) The Birth of 'The New Journalism'; Eyewitness Report by Tom Wolfe. *New York Magazine*. February 14.