

How Much Do You Trust Me? The Role of Trust and Innovation in Russian Journalism

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Abstract

Building on a theory of generalized trust, this paper discusses how trust enables institutions to function in any society by facilitating action. Traditional thinking is that the generalized trust in society allows an innovation ecosystem to prosper in countries with high levels of trust. But in regions and countries where generalized trust does not exist, innovative solutions are needed for a society to function.

Journalism as a key part of innovation ecosystems provides a sphere for different players to connect. The traditional journalistic business model fails and the functions and roles of journalism are under scrutiny in many regions worldwide. In countries where generalized trust does not exist or contributes little to the innovation ecosystem, not only does the ecosystem face special pressures but also the nature of journalism is challenged. Where trust is lacking, the ecosystem is easier distorted. Hence, for example, Russian journalism is much more vulnerable to deformation. However, these challenging settings can also breed innovation.

This paper focuses on Russian journalism as an example of an institution in which the changing business model and financial pressures provide a unique opportunity for innovation in how business is conducted. Such settings are traditionally unfit for innovation to occur, yet the results show that the players in the innovation ecosystem have found ways to interact that solve some of the challenges. The Russian innovation ecosystem faces severe challenges that have lead to rethinking the traditional journalistic principles of objectivity, fair coverage, and newsworthiness. In fact, the results indicate that innovation takes place in journalistic practices as a result of unresolved issues, such as the lack of generalized trust in Russian society. Journalism in Russia is in some ways similar to advertising, as journalists are paid not to be objective but to obey publishers' orders. Implications of such distortion as they relate to the existence of innovative ecosystem and recommendations for future studies are discussed.

1 Introduction

Tradition holds that innovation ecosystems need trust to function. Thus, countries with high levels of generalized trust can better enable the ecosystem to thrive¹. Journalism as a key part of innovation ecosystem provides a sphere for different players to connect². Today, a traditional journalistic business model fails and functions and roles of journalism are under scrutiny in many regions around the world³. But in countries where generalized trust does not exist or contributes little to the innovation ecosystem, not only does an innovation ecosystem face special pressures but also the nature of journalism gets distorted. Because it is easier to distort the ecosystem when trust is absent, Russian journalism is much more vulnerable to deformation.

The media can be considered important institutions, shaping not only public perception but economic life⁴ ⁵. The idea is that trust in institutions becomes generalized trust, as citizens make strong connections between the impartiality of institutions (e.g. the media) and the trustworthiness of society at large⁶. This makes media transparency important not only for individual cultures but for the fragile world economy at large. As individuals develop different levels of trust depending on their experience, good experiences lead to more trust while bad ones diminish trust. Societies with well functioning institutions are more likely to have higher levels of generalized trust, often correlated positively with media transparency.

Independence is the constitutive value in journalism, yet sources play an important role in leveraging media attention⁷. Freedom of the Press is linked to economic

¹ Estrin, J. (2009) *Closing the Innovation Gap. Reigniting the spark of creativity in a global economy.* McGrawHill: San Francisco.

² Nordfors, D. (2009) *Innovation Journalism, Attention Work and the Innovation Economy. A Review of the Innovation Journalism Initiative 2003-2009.* Online: <http://www.innovationjournalism.org/archive/injo-6-1.pdf>

³ Miel, P. & Faris, R. (2008). *News and Information as Digital Media come of age. Overview 2008, The Berkman Center for Internet & Society at Harvard University.* Online: http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/sites/cyber.law.harvard.edu/files/Overview_MR.pdf

⁴ Deephouse, D. (2000) Media reputation as a strategic resource: An integration of mass communication and resource-based theories, *Journal of Marketing*, 26(6), 1091-1112.

⁵ Kennedy, M. (2005) Behind the one-way mirror: Refraction in the construction of product market categories. *Poetics*, 33(2005), 201-226.

⁶ Rothstein, B., & Stolle, D. (2002, August). How political institutions create and destroy social capital: An Institutional theory of generalized trust. Paper presented at the 2002 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Boston, MA.

⁷ Gamson, W., & Meyer, D. (1996) Framing political opportunity. In D. McAdam, J. D. McCarthy, & M. N. Zald. (Eds.), *Comparative perspectives on social movements, Cambridge studies in comparative politics* (pp. 275-290). Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press.

success, as individual experiences of trustworthy practices generalize into attitudes at large. This is important, as organizational influence attempts to mold reporters' story selections⁸.

This paper focuses on Russian journalism as an example of an institution in which the changing business model and financial pressures provide an opportunity for innovation. Innovation occurs as a result of an unresolved issue, a lack of generalized trust in Russian society. The functions of Russian journalism are distorted as many media rethink the concepts of objectivity, fair coverage and newsworthiness. One way to distort these concepts is to let organizations and companies sign 'information service contracts' with the Russian media. These business contracts let the media earn money by publishing newsworthy information and publicity materials of organizations for a fixed monthly fee. Implications of such distortion, as they relate to the existence of an innovation ecosystem, and recommendations for future studies, are presented.

2 Trust and the Media

As the new media gain ground and more individuals and organizations participate in preparing news stories, the role of trust becomes more central^{9, 10}. Trust can be defined as a "bet about the future contingent actions of others"¹¹ and it is vital for survival in the increasing uncertainty of modern society, where risk is always present. Luhmann¹² explains that the clues used to form trust "do not eliminate the risk, they simply make it less... They simply serve as a springboard for the leap into uncertainty".

Media transparency is important not only for individual cultures but for the fragile world economy at large. As individuals develop different levels of trust depending on their experience, good experiences lead to more trust while bad ones diminish trust. Societies with well functioning institutions are more likely to have higher levels of generalized trust, often positively correlated with media transparency.

⁸ Kennedy, M. (2005) Behind the one-way mirror: Refraction in the construction of product market categories. *Poetics*, 33(2005), 201-226.

⁹ Holmstrom, S. (2007) Niklas Luhmann: Contingency, risk, trust and reflections. *Public Relations Review*, 33(3), pp. 255-262.

¹⁰ Webley, S. (2003). Risk, reputation and trust. *Journal of Communication Management*, 8(1), 9-12.

¹¹ Sztompka, P. (2000), *Trust. A sociological theory*. Port Chester, NJ: Cambridge University Press., p. 25.

¹² Luhmann, N. (1979). *Trust and Power*. John Wiley: New York., p.33

Independence is the constitutive value in journalism, yet sources play an important role in leveraging media attention¹³. Freedom of the Press is linked to economic success, as individual experiences of trustworthy practices generalize into attitudes at large. This is important, as organizational influence attempts to mold reporters' story selections¹⁴. This study looked at journalists' self-evaluations of media transparency in one country where generalized trust is low or non-existent (REF). On the Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index 2008¹⁵ (Transparency International, 2008) Russia was ranked 147th (out of 180 ranks).

3 Media Opacity

Media opacity is defined here as any distortion of an open and transparent exchange of information subsidies between media and public relations practitioners. If information newsworthiness, without monetary or non-monetary influence, defines media choices, media transparency is achieved¹⁶. Media transparency is hard to achieve as media outlets worldwide experience pressures from advertisers, information sources, publishers and other influential groups¹⁷. Often media, for example in Poland and the Ukraine, put pressures on information sources to pay or provide non-monetary benefits for publications¹⁸.

Russia is no exception. The practice, known as 'hidden advertising' or, using slang, *zakazukha*, or *jinsa*, (translated from Russian to English as "pay-for-publicity"¹⁹,

¹³ Gamson, W., & Meyer, D. (1996) Framing political opportunity. In D. McAdam, J. D. McCarthy, & M. N. Zald. (Eds.), *Comparative perspectives on social movements*, Cambridge studies in comparative politics (pp. 275-290). Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁴ Kennedy, M. (2005) Behind the one-way mirror: Refraction in the construction of product market categories. *Poetics*, 33(2005), 201-226.

¹⁵ Transparency International (2008). *Corruption Perception Index*. Retrieved May 2, 2009, from: http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2008

¹⁶ Tsetsura, K., & Grynko, A. (2009). An exploratory study of the media transparency in Ukraine. *Public Relations Journal*, 3(2). Retrieved April 25, 2009, from: <http://www.prsa.org/prjournal/Vol3No2/6D-030205.pdf>

¹⁷ Kruckeberg, D., & Tsetsura, K. (2003). International index of bribery for news coverage: A composite index by country of variables related to the likelihood of the existence of "cash for news coverage." *Institute for Public Relations Online: International Research*. Retrieved May 2, 2009, from http://www.instituteforpr.com/international.phtml?article_id=bribery_index

¹⁸ Tsetsura, K. (2005). *Bribery for news coverage: Research in Poland*. Institute for Public Relations Online: International Research. Retrieved March 20, 2009, from: <http://www.instituteforpr.com/international.phtml>

¹⁹ Cassara, C., Gross, P., Kruckeberg, D., Palmer, A., & Tsetsura, K. (2004). Eastern Europe, the newly independent states of Eurasia, and Russia. In A.S. de Beer & J. C. Merrill (Eds.), *Global journalism: Topical issues and media systems* (pp. 212-256). Boston: Pearson.

was extremely common in the 1990s²⁰. Startseva²¹ (2001) revealed that selling paid news space in newspapers or accepting money for not running a particular story was so widespread and routine in Russia in the 1990s that most publications had an 'official price list,' distributed discreetly to public relations firms. For instance, the second-largest newspaper in Russia, *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, alone pulled in an estimated half million dollars from *zakazukha*, followed by *Izvestia*, *Trud*, and *Novaya Gazeta* (Startseva). Startseva claimed these newspapers together earn more than \$25 million a year through *zakazukha*.

Previous research on media opacity confirmed that the media in Eastern European countries often has three levels: interpersonal, intra-organizational and inter-organizational²². The first level, interpersonal, happens at an individual level when a journalist agrees to cover or not to cover a certain story because she/he receives a payment or non-monetary compensation from the information source, such as a public relations practitioner. The second level, intra-organizational, is present when a business agreement about publishing or not publishing material is reached between an editor or an advertising department of the media outlet and an organization or a company. An editor or director of advertising can then ask a journalist to write about the organization or company as the story is defined as 'newsworthy.' But the journalist would not know whether the coverage has been promised or paid for. Finally, the most sophisticated level is inter-organizational. Here, formal legal contracts are signed between the media and the company guaranteeing that the media will cover news and events about the organization regularly. The organization, in turn, promises to pay a certain amount for 'news service' each month and/or provide advertising to the media²³. Organizations and companies sign information-service contracts with the Russian media. These business contracts let the media earn money by publishing newsworthy information and publicity materials of organizations for a fixed monthly fee.

These contracts become a formalized, legal agreement between the media outlet and the company or organization and become more and more popular in countries like Russia, the Ukraine and China (ibid.)²⁴. Though these contracts are little publicized and yet to be examined closely, they illustrate how a lack of generalized trust in a society can lead to innovative ways of understanding how traditional

²⁰ Holmes, P. (2001, March 12). IPRA moves swiftly on Zakazukha; PRSA stays out of the Nike fray. *The Holmes Report*, 2.

²¹ Startseva, A. (2001). Russian journalism's dirty little secret [Msg]. Message posted to <http://www.freedomforum.org/templates/document.asp?documentID=14128>

²² Tsetsura, K., & Grynko, A. (2009). An exploratory study of the media transparency in Ukraine. *Public Relations Journal*, 3(2). Retrieved April 25, 2009, from: <http://www.prsa.org/prjournal/Vol3No2/6D-030205.pdf>

²³ Klyueva, A. (2008). An exploratory study of media transparency in the Ural Federal district of Russia. Unpublished Master's thesis. Norman, OK.

²⁴ Tsetsura, K., & Lin, Z. (2009, August). *Guanxi, gift-giving, or bribery: Ethical considerations of paid news in China*. Runner-up top paper to be presented at the Media Ethics Division of the AEJMC annual conference, Boston, MA.

publicity practices can be distorted to achieve ‘guaranteed’ coverage that is newsworthy and interesting to readers or viewers in Russia.

Thus, this study investigated how lack of trust contributes in determining how media-opacity practices generate innovative solutions and unethical agreements in journalism in Russia. The following research questions were put forward:

RQ 1: What influences can distort trust in the Russia media, according to Russian journalists?

RQ 2: What are Russian journalists’ understandings of contemporary, sustainable media management and business efforts able to combat media opacity?

4 Method

This section describes the study population and sampling procedures, instruments, data collection and data analysis.

4.1 Instrument

This study adopted a survey from previous research on media transparency in Poland²⁵, adjusting several questions for relevance to Russian journalists. The final survey, translated from English to Russian and back, translated for accuracy by the researcher and a graduate research assistant, had a total of 67 Likert-scale and open-ended questions. Questions required journalists to share their perceptions of media-transparency practices, such as payments for news coverage, advertising departments’ and editors’ pressures on journalists. Media professionals were also asked whether they perceive Russian media to be credible and trustworthy. Participants could share personal experiences and thoughts on the role of trust and credibility in contemporary Russian journalism. For the purpose of this study, only responses to questions about trust and credibility of the media and of news information, primary sources and public relations practitioners were used in the data analysis.

4.2 Sampling and Data Collection

Surveys were used to collect the data from 1,095 Russian journalists, members of the Russian Union of Journalists, who participated in the annual conference of the Russian Union of Journalists in October of 2007 in Sochi, Russia. All registered conference participants were invited to participate in the study by filling out a survey. The researcher distributed surveys in person to journalists who attended keynote speeches, panels, workshops and other conference events during all five days of the conference. Participants could choose to answer questions in person or

²⁵ Tsetsura, K. (2005). Bribery for news coverage: Research in Poland. Institute for Public Relations Online: International Research. Retrieved March 20, 2009, from:<http://www.instituteforpr.com/international.phtml>

take a survey, complete it and return it to the researcher directly or put it in a collection box at the conference information desk. The researcher continuously reminded conference participants to complete and return the survey and contact the researcher for a follow-up interview if they chose to share additional information.

4.3 Data Analysis

Numeric data were analyzed using SPSS software. To answer RQ 1, the researcher posed questions on whether it was still possible to trust media outlets even if they are controlled by the government, news sources, advertisers and publishers (or corporate owners), on a Likert-type scale (1 being not possible to trust at all to 5, being completely possible to trust). Questions about credibility and trust of the Russian media compared to similar media of other countries were evaluated on the Likert scale, 1 being lowest level of trust to 5 being highest level of trust.

Open-ended responses were transcribed, translated into English, then back-translated for accuracy. The data were analyzed using three-step data analysis²⁶. The analysis is similar to a thematic analysis technique: it identifies recurring themes within the data and scrutinizes them against the participants' explanations²⁷. This analysis is particularly useful in qualitative research when recurring themes might lead to a grounded-theory approach to further understand participants' narratives and systematically analyze the reasons behind these narratives²⁸.

5 Findings

Ninety-seven usable surveys were collected from the Russian journalists in five days of the annual professional conference, yielding an 8.8% response rate. Though low, this response rate was better than expected as Russian journalists are often reluctant to complete surveys or have little time to do so^{29, 30}.

The findings confirmed that the culture of trust and personal experiences matter to the practice of media transparency and more importantly, to journalists' understanding of how lack of trust and credibility lead to innovation in the Russian media. The following section is organized as follows: first, findings from questions about general media trust are discussed; then, results demonstrate whether Russian

²⁶ Lindlof, T. R. (1995). *Qualitative communication research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

²⁷ Strauss, A. L., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research*. London: Sage.

²⁸ Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Chicago: Aldine.

²⁹ Klyueva, A. (2008). *An exploratory study of media transparency in the Ural Federal district of Russia*. Unpublished Master's thesis. Norman, OK.

³⁰ Pasti, S. (2005). Two generations of contemporary Russian journalists. *European Journal of Communication*, 20, 89-114.

journalists perceive contemporary media management and business efforts as sustainable and able to combat media opacity; and finally, the discovered journalism innovation practices are presented and scrutinized.

RQ 1: What influences can distort the trust the Russia media, according to Russian journalists?

The first research question asked whether, according to Russian journalists, the Russian media can be trusted even if the media are controlled by government, advertisers, publishers, or news sources. The results demonstrated that surveyed Russian journalists were most inclined to still trust the media outlets even if they were to be controlled by the government ($M=2.87$, $SD=1.132$), followed by news sources ($M=2.72$, $SD=1.031$), corporate owners ($M=2.66$, $SD=1.269$), then advertisers ($M= 2.21$, $SD=1.250$). Interestingly, this sample of Russian journalists reported that they trust government-controlled media most and advertiser-controlled media least, opposite to the majority opinion of Western journalists. Perhaps light can be shed on these results through additional open-ended responses. *Because the media have long been under governmental pressures and played the role of a servant to the Soviet government, today, Russian journalists do not see a difference between dependence on the government and dependence on advertisers or publishers.* Some openly pointed out that the media, especially local and regional, are “completely dependent upon advertising money *so new, innovative ways of making the money*” are welcomed by editors and publishers. Never mind that these new business ideas displace journalistic integrity. One journalist summed up the frustration experienced by many: “the media have always been of service: in the past to government and now to publishers.”

When the journalists were asked about Russian media credibility compared to similar media in other countries, they responded that, on average, they believe Russian local and regional daily newspapers are more credible and trustworthy than similar local newspapers in other countries ($M=2.66$, $SD=1.436$) whereas the trustworthiness of Russian national newspapers was perceived to be significantly lower than that of similar media in other countries ($M=1.92$, $SD=1.904$, $t=-3.787$, $p<.000$). One journalist explained it: “Local media are easier to call on for irresponsible practices. We do not have legal departments and we meet our readers in the streets daily. That is why we clearly identify the source, advertising, etc. in our materials.”

RQ 2: What are Russian journalists’ understandings of contemporary, sustainable media management and business efforts able to combat media opacity?

To answer this question, an analysis of open-ended responses was conducted. The findings follow. The results showed that participating journalists were critical and distrustful of both local and national media. The *main problem for distrust was labeled as “business-driven existence of the media.”* Several journalists expressed concerns that modern Russian media often cover events, publish articles or even write news pieces only if these materials are paid for by the news sources in advance. “This practice is very problematic as it minimizes the credibility of the media.” Another journalist echoed: “We are paid not for being professionals but for obeying the publisher’s orders.” Finally, the results showed that, similar to

previous studies, the problems with paid materials that appear in the media go beyond a simple inter-personal level and reach intra-organizational and even inter-organizational levels. Here are two illustrative quotations:

“Sometimes, advertising and politico-promotional materials are inserted into our news programs on TV under ‘the sanctions of the administration.’ Often, we are not even aware of these materials ahead of time so we try to identify them and, if possible, ‘hide’ them in less noticeable time slots in our TV news briefs.”

“An actual journalist or correspondent often does not know and can only guess that certain material that he [*sic*] writes as part of his editorial assignment was paid for or requested by the publisher. As a result, this journalist is put in a position to violate professional codes of ethics, including the ones put forward by the Russian Union of Journalists.”

Other journalists indicated that this is “a normal of way running the business” and that paid publications have long become a norm in the Russian media:

“On regional TV, even socially responsible projects are not covered if they are not paid for. I think that advertising needs to be presented as a journalist’s article so that this material will attract more attention to a product or a service. It is interesting to read when something is ‘tested on myself’.”

“I have an experience working in a local daily newspaper. Here, we rarely identify the material as ‘paid for’ because such material will automatically attract less attention and be less credible as we know that our readers have this stereotype to distrust paid materials.”

“Often any sign that a material has been paid for is missing from commercially-oriented materials. However, any respectable media outlet always indicates whether the material has been paid for.”

Journalists who participated in this study generally agreed that there is a general distrust of the media in Russia, especially when it comes to paid materials published in the media. However, they seem to accept this fact as a given without critically assessing why this distrust exists in the first place. The paradox was clear: on one hand, these journalists were genuinely concerned about public distrust of the media; on the other hand, they were sincerely surprised at why paid material cannot be trusted if it is good and newsworthy material:

“An advertising department head just says to our editor that this paid news material should go to the news front page. So this paid material is put in place of non-paid news article.”

“If material is good and readable, it is practically impossible to figure out whether it was paid for or not. Plus, if someone pays for material and the newspaper does not lose anything, why not to try this [business model]?”

As U.S. newspapers across the country are trying to find new ways to run the business and re-invent their business models, journalists and publics should be aware that the level of generalized trust can be lowered if similar business models of payments for news coverage are adopted. The United States already saw this dilemma when on April 9, 2009, the *Los Angeles Times*, one of the nation's most respected newspapers, published an advertisement on the front page that looked like a regular article. The article promoted the latest NBC show and had a typical news-article structure. It did have a border around it and the word "advertisement" above the headline. But many critics found this frivolous publication of paid material on the front page appalling. At the same time, if one asked Russian journalists who participated in this study, they would be surprised that this was considered so inappropriate.

This example is a great illustration of the original premise of this study: the level of generalized trust in a society will often determine what conduct is appropriate or inappropriate in many situations, including ones associated with professional journalism. It seems that Russian journalists, products of the society with generally low or almost non-existent level of trust, create innovative business models to sustain their media without thinking twice about how these innovations can affect the traditional trust between the media and the public. No long-range planning is included, nor understanding of the effects of these practices to society at large. Simply, there is no need to worry about destroying public's trust in the media as little or no trust exists. On the other hand, in the case of the *Los Angeles Times*, the trust expectations were violated, leading to strong criticism of the newspaper by professionals, journalists and publics alike. More broadly, the high level of generalized trust in U.S. society assigns specific roles for the U.S. media and journalists. Thus trust has also set expectations and defined the relationship between the public and the media, which can at times be limiting.

Thus, while in some countries like Russia innovative business models to sustain the media (e.g. media opacity practices at three levels, interpersonal, intra-organizational, and inter-organizational) based on general societal distrust can thrive, in other countries where the level of generalized trust is high (e.g. Finland, Sweden, the United States, etc.) these innovative solutions may lead to distress, confusion and, most importantly, to lowering the level of trust between the media and the public.

6 Conclusion

An Ecosystem, where different players meet to achieve new, innovative solutions, can function only under the right conditions. Countries with high levels of generalized trust can better enable the ecosystem to thrive³¹. But in countries where generalized trust does not exist (or in countries with extremely low levels of trust),

³¹ Estrin, J. (2009) *Closing the Innovation Gap. Reigniting the spark of creativity in a global economy*. McGrawHill: San Francisco.

innovative solutions are needed for a society to function. Because it is easier to distort the ecosystem when trust is not present and because the system is out of balance, the roles and functions of journalism and media sustainability in such countries can often be rethought and are often misused.

This study examined how journalists in Russia, a country with low or almost non-existing level of generalized trust, generate new, innovative business solutions that enable them to sustain the Russian media system, which lost its economic stability with the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The results of this study demonstrated that Russian media practices, specifically media-opacity practices, cannot be separated from the culture of trust within which journalists operate. It may hence be of little value to share with journalists from certain countries the Russian innovative business models that presume the non-existence of trust in society, and, at the same time, to educate Russian journalists on the ethical matters regarding media transparency. That would simply be ‘putting a bandage on a broken foot’ and yield a false sense of healing. Moreover, the way journalists in countries like Russia feel may or may not be linked directly to what they do in practice to survive. Thus, the innovative business models of sustaining the Russian media, by practicing media opacity at three levels—interpersonal, intra-organizational and inter-organizational—may be a functional if not useful way for the Russian media to survive.

We suggest that the idea of an ‘innovation ecosystem’ requires an addition of the impact of culture. The traditional Western idea of democracy may never take hold in certain areas of the world, but this is not to say these areas need be un-innovative. In fact, such challenging settings may be the breeding ground for innovations, as individuals and organizations try to survive, as demonstrated by Russian journalists creating new, innovative ways to continue media operations. The media business model evolves in the lack of generalized trust in the environment.

The conclusions to be drawn from this study are that an innovation ecosystem cannot be separated from its surrounding culture. Moreover, ethical principles need to be established first in the daily lives of the members of each society, and their professional experiences. Trust in the journalistic processes cannot be expected if trust has not been generalized in the surrounding economy. Drawing up codes of ethics and policies are a good start, but to be efficient, change must happen at the practical level of daily media practices. Individual journalists may, however, contribute greatly to this change by doing right according to their means and cultivating good, trustworthy relationships with their publics.

About the Authors

Katerina Tsetsura is an assistant professor of Strategic Communication at the Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication at University of Oklahoma. She holds a PhD from Purdue University, and her research interests include international and global strategic communication, global media and public relations ethics, and public affairs and issues management in countries with transitional economies. She is the author of several book chapters and has published in journals such as *Asian Communication Research*, *Research Reports of Siberian Regional Filial of the Russian Academy of Sciences*, and *Women and Language*. As one of the two leading researchers of the landmark Global Media Transparency project, supported by the Institute for Public Relations (USA), the International Public Relations Association, the International Federation of Journalists, and the International Press Institute, Dr. Tsetsura is currently collecting the data on media practices in the USA and around the world for a forthcoming book, *Truth and Global Media Transparency* (together with Dr. Dean Kruckeberg, University of North Carolina-Charlotte). Tsetsura has also worked as a journalist, advertiser, and public relations manager in Russia and the USA for several years.

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