Four Icons of New Journalism

in Bourdieusian field theory
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Simon van Woerden
Groningen, January 6th 2012
“Journalism is not a profession or a trade [...] It is a cheap catch-all for fuck-off's and misfits - a false doorway to the backside of life, a filthy pus-ridden little hole nailed off by the building inspector, but just deep enough for a wino to curl up from the sidewalk and masturbate like a chimp in a zoo-cage” - Hunter S. Thompson.

This thesis investigates the phenomenon of New Journalism, a form of journalism employing literary techniques mainly popularised by several journalists and authors in the United States of America in the 1960s and 1970s. It examines the life and work of four iconic writers of New Journalism in order to clarify the revolutionary influence these figures had on journalism. In this investigation the thesis uses field theory, as elaborated by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, as a guiding framework.

This first chapter briefly introduces the research topic, the theoretical framework and the methodology that will be used before demonstrating the relevance and importance of the research. Additionally, the exact research question is introduced and elaborated into the different subquestions which will be answered in the following chapters.

1.1. The Sixties and New Journalism in the United States

The 1960s or 'Sixties' were a period of great cultural, political and social upheaval and transformation, if not revolution, in large parts of the Western world. In Europe, millions went on strikes in France and student demonstrations in which leftist student movements and neofascists often violently clashed spread across many European countries including Italy, Spain, Germany, France and Czechoslovakia. Anti-establishment movements surfaced in which free love and experimentation with drugs was advocated and many felt that it was the dawning of a new era, the 'Age of Aquarius'.

If the 1960s were a turbulent period in much of the Western world as a whole, it may be argued that this turbulence manifested itself most visibly and violently in the United States of America. The assassinations of Martin Luther King and Robert

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Kennedy, race riots in which dozens of citizens were killed, student protests against the Vietnam War resulting in the shooting of several protestors - all examples of the tense situation that prevailed in the United States in that period.¹ One of the writers that would become a prominent member of New Journalism, Hunter S. Thompson, accurately words it in his book Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas: "it seems entirely reasonable to think that every now and then the energy of a whole generation comes to a head in a long fine flash [...] There was madness in any direction, at any hour. [...] You could strike sparks anywhere. There was a fantastic universal sense that whatever we were doing was right, that we were winning." ²

This radical social, political and cultural upheaval was also a clear influence on journalists and literary writers of the time. Some fiction writers found that regular life had become so extraordinary and exceptional that fiction could hardly keep up. As English Literature scholar John Hollowell puts it: “Daily events seemed to preempt the possibilities of the novelist's imagination.”³ In this turmoil, several writers began experimenting with literary techniques in journalism, trying to create a journalism that read like fiction but rang "with the truth of reported fact".⁴ This coalescence of literature and journalism resulted in a phenomenon which writer Tom Wolfe would baptise “New Journalism” in his 1973 anthology.⁵

Several interpretations of this phenomenon have surfaced over the years. Some scholars view New Journalism as a kind of literary journalism, mostly focusing on style, whereas others consider the metajournalistic observations that are present in many examples of New Journalism to be the most definitive characteristic. Another interpretation holds that the the quintessence of New Journalism is found in the non-fiction novel, a type of book mostly popularised by Truman Capote's work In Cold Blood.⁶

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¹ Righart, De Wereldwijde Jaren Zestig, 10.
⁵ The term New Journalism technically predates his book by several decades - nevertheless, most usually “New Journalism” refers to the phenomenon from the 1960s and 1970s.
⁶ All of these interpretations will be analysed in more detail in chapter 3.4, from page 33 onwards.
1.2. Pierre Bourdieu's field theory

The objective of this thesis is to clarify the revolutionary influence that four prominent New Journalists had on American print journalism during the 1960s and 1970s - or rather, the period that is termed the Sixties, running approximately from 1957 to 1974.\textsuperscript{10} To understand how different groups of writers, journalistic organisations and institutions influence one another but also interact, struggle with and change each other, the theoretical work of one French sociologist in particular comes to mind: that of field theory, elaborated by Pierre Bourdieu.

His work is relevant for this research firstly because the theory facilitates historical and comparative analysis of the media.\textsuperscript{11} Secondly, the interactions, struggles and interrelations between different entities in different spheres of action are central concepts in Bourdieu's theory of fields.

Another reason to choose this theory as the basis for the argument presented in this thesis is the underdevelopment within field theory of the causes of change in a field in general and on the level of an individual agent in particular. In one of his works Bourdieu does provide some clues for what he believes to be the mechanisms responsible for the change an agent can effect - in brief, the amount of power one possesses and the extent to which one has strayed or deviated from the life path that logically was laid out for him\textsuperscript{12} - but other than that very little attention has been devoted to this aspect of field theory.

1.3. Methodology: quadruple comparative case study

To analyse the causes of revolutionary influence on the level of individual agents within the scope and size constraints of this research, a selection of such agents must be made. This thesis therefore chooses to investigate the lives and works of four New Journalists, namely Hunter S. Thompson, Truman Capote, Norman Mailer and Tom Wolfe.

This number of authors is selected because within the scope of this thesis this is the highest number that can be investigated in adequate depth. At the same time, because the broadest objective of this research is to clarify the processes at work in

the change that these New Journalists caused in journalism as a whole, the choice was made to investigate multiple authors and not just focus on the work of one sole writer.

These four writers were selected for their salience, prominence and recurrence in academic literature about New Journalism. They are also chosen because they fall in pairs which moved in opposite directions; the first two started out as (mostly) journalists, moving towards literature whereas the other pair began as literary authors before venturing into journalism.¹³

Tom Wolfe is an obvious choice because he can be seen as the founding father of the phenomenon, giving it its name and attempting to delineate its borders in his aforementioned anthology. Hunter S. Thompson is a second example of a highly iconic figure which is often aligned with New Journalism - although true to his rebel and nonconformist personality, he himself has gone on record "rejecting membership into anything that Tom Wolfe created" saying he thought that the people Wolfe was fascinated with were "dull as stale dog shit."¹⁴

If Wolfe and Thompson can be characterised as being firstly journalists which moved towards literature in their work, the second pair of authors that is analysed, Truman Capote and Norman Mailer, can be seen to have moved in the opposite direction. Capote was famous for his first novel, *Other Voices, Other Rooms* before he wrote his most ambitious and most successful non-fiction novel, or 'New Book' as he termed it, in 1966.¹⁵ The same is true of Norman Mailer, who had won acclaim with his war novel *The Naked and The Dead* before writing his most famous work of New Journalism, *Armies of the Night*.¹⁶

All four writers thus have in common that they have moved between and within the fields of journalism and literature during their careers and in doing so have gained great popular and critical acclaim as well as vitriolic responses from many writers from both journalism and literature. Most importantly, all of the authors have arguably exerted a revolutionary influence on the field of journalism.

The four case studies of their life and work will be undertaken following the

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¹³ Although Joan Didion also fits these criteria, the fact that she focused more on the metajournalistic side rather than the literary journalistic side of New Journalism makes her less suitable for this research. See also chapter 3.4, page 36 and for example José van Dijck, “Cultuurkritiek en journalistiek - de discursieve strategie van New Journalism”, *Feit en Fictie* 2 (autumn 1994) 65-78, here: 70-74.


Methodology as set out by historian and methodology publicist Robert K. Yin in his standard work on case study methodology, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*.\(^{17}\) Aside from the somewhat obvious fact that a case study methodology seems appropriate for a comparative case study research design, a number of additional arguments for choosing this approach are detailed in the theoretical framework in the next chapter.

### 1.4. Relevance of research

A scientific motivation for this research was already mentioned, namely the exploration, elaboration and clarification of the causes and mechanisms at work in Bourdieusian field changes.

A second reason why this particular research is relevant stays closer to the subject matter itself. Much has been written over the years about the content and form of New Journalism, looking at both the work that several New Journalists produced and at the things they themselves said about their writing and the phenomenon in general.\(^ {18}\) Except for some sociological studies, little academic attention has been devoted however to the biographic background of the central figures in New Journalism and to the meaning of differences and similarities across these backgrounds. In order to delve deeper into the causes of change in Bourdieusian field theory at the level of individual agents, these backgrounds are of central importance.

This thesis therefore aims to present a comprehensive overview of the causes of revolutionary change in the backgrounds and lives of the four selected New Journalists while at the same time expanding Bourdieu's well-known theory in a hitherto underdeveloped direction. Thus, the guiding research question that will be used to structure the argument of this research is:

*To what extent can Bourdieu's field theory explain the influence Hunter S. Thompson, Truman Capote, Norman Mailer and Tom Wolfe had on the field of journalism?*

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1.5. Thesis structure

This main question can be divided into several subquestions. Firstly, the theory must be elaborated further. The second chapter of this thesis therefore explains the several elements of Pierre Bourdieu's field theory as well as some of the gaps that have been identified by scholars. The methodology will also be detailed to a greater extent. What has been written so far on the mechanisms of change in Bourdieusian field theory and how does this affect the ways in which the research question will be answered?

To have a clearer sense of the context and societal backdrop against which the investigated authors were operating, chapter three describes the social, political and cultural changes that were happening in the United States from the 1950s onwards, both in society as a whole and in the field of journalism more specifically. What was the historical scenery in which New Journalism and its practitioners would come to have such a great impact and what is the relevance of this scenery in Bourdieusian terms?

After these two contextual chapters, the core of the thesis is constructed. In four chapters, Thompson, Capote, Mailer and Wolfe will be analysed and compared following the methodology detailed in chapter two. A variety of documentation will be used in constructing a profile of each author, profiles which are then compared with one another to identify similarities and differences.

The penultimate chapter is devoted to an analysis of the movement of the four authors in the various fields they belonged to, as well as to an argument supporting the interpretation of New Journalism as a separate, more or less autonomous field.

The conclusion will summarise the most important findings of the research and answer the research question. The working hypothesis is that Bourdieu's theory can explain to a very significant extent the influence the four New Journalists had in the field of journalism. The conclusion will also contain suggestions for future research into both the topic of New Journalism and the field theory framework.
Chapter 2 - Theoretical framework: Bourdieu's theory of fields

In this chapter, a theoretical framework is constructed which relies to a great extent on field theory as elaborated by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. A number of elements in the research question (To what extent can Bourdieu's field theory explain the influence Thompson, Capote, Mailer and Wolfe had on the field of journalism?) point towards his work as the prime theoretical source. As was mentioned in the introduction, field theory is a theory which is especially useful in historical and comparative analysis of the media and the central issue in this thesis – struggle leading to change in a field – is a central tenet of Bourdieu's theory as well.

This chapter will firstly explain the basic concept of the field and discuss the specific attention that Bourdieu and other scholars (sociologists Rodney Benson and Erik Neveu in particular) have given to journalism as a Bourdieusian field. Secondly, it will elaborate the concept of struggle leading to change in a field. This concept has received little attention in relation to journalism but is of special relevance for this thesis. Thirdly, the role that different kinds of power, or capital, play in field theory is explained in relation to this concept of struggle and change. Fourthly, the concept of field autonomy is introduced and explained. Lastly, the case study methodology that was mentioned briefly in the introduction is elaborated in order to detail how and with what kinds of evidence the research question will be answered.

2.1. The general concept of the field

Bourdieu argues that reality is a social concept: to exist is to exist socially, in relation to others. What is real is relational, and everyone defines himself and the world around him by marking the differences between observed phenomena. The modern (Western) reality, according to Bourdieu, has come into being through a “process of differentiation into semiautonomous and increasingly specialized spheres of action.”

Relations of power that exist within and between these spheres structure and determine human behaviour. He calls these 'spheres' fields.

In one of his articles, Bourdieu provides the following working definition of this notion of the field: "a field is a field of forces within which the agents occupy positions that statistically determine the positions they will take with respect to the field, these position-takings being aimed either at conserving or transforming the

19 Benson, Bourdieu and the Journalistic Field, 3.
20 Ibidem, 2-3.
structure of relations of forces that is constitutive of the field." This definition may be illustrated by introducing the metaphor of a field that is used in athletic games. Imagine for example, that an individual field as defined by Bourdieu is represented by a single football pitch. On this pitch, players (agents) all occupy a position. Each position carries with it different dispositions and likely or potential courses of action for the player – a striker will attempt to score a goal and a defender will try to keep the opposition from scoring.

Now, these positions that the agents occupy in the field are determined by a number of things. Firstly, there is what Bourdieu calls 'habitus', or "a structuring structure, which organizes practices and the perception of practices" for all agents. Bourdieu introduced this principle, that exercises a constraining influence on the choices people make, as a “reaction to and a break with the theory of rational agency of the homo oeconomicus", which holds that all human behaviour is a result of objective rational considerations. Rather, Bourdieu contends that human behaviour is to a certain extent constrained – by habitus, among other things. He also calls habitus a “socialized subjectivity", meaning that every individual's personal history, preferences and dispositions, placed in the context of the surrounding social reality, form a structure that, to a certain extent, predetermine that individual's potential courses of action.

Social class, education, upbringing, as well as an individual's past choices all form part of this structure, and determine in part the behaviour of an agent in the field. In the football metaphor, a player's behaviour is analogously structured by, for example, his previous training and his physical condition, as well as by the quality of his football kit and his tactical prowess at playing the game.

A second structuring principle in the theory of fields is 'doxa', which Bourdieu defines as the “universe of tacit presuppositions that organize action within the field" - the 'rules of the game', so to speak. Like habitus, these rules exercise a limiting influence on the potential courses of action for the agents in that field. Agents in the same field will tend to share a set of rules, a common doxa, insofar as they

22 Ibidem, 3.
24 Ibidem, 126.
25 Bourdieu, "The Political Field, the Social Science Field, and the Journalistic Field, 37.
share an involvement in the game, a sense that it is worth playing. This sense of being involved and invested in the game is what Bourdieu calls 'illusio'. Obviously, in the football analogy the same applies: the players agree on a specific set of rules that determine, for example, that only goalkeepers can touch the ball with their hands, because they agree that the game is worth playing.

However, agents in the same field do not always agree on the doxa or rules of the game. In his definition of fields, Bourdieu also says that agents occupy positions "aimed at either conserving or transforming the structure of relations of forces in a field". This means that the agents who take positions aimed at transforming the power relations will try to change the rules of the game to their own benefit whereas the conservative agents attempt to neutralise their efforts. Bourdieu argues that even if changes occur, however, they never destroy the field or the game that is played itself.

2.2. Struggle and change: cultural versus economic, old versus new

The struggle between different agents and the change that this may cause is a central concept in Bourdieu's field theory. Whether change will actually occur depends to a large extent on the amount of power the competing agents can mobilise. Bourdieu argues that individuals in a society are grouped into social classes, depending on the amount of overall capital these individuals or agents can mobilise. The agents who possess large amounts of capital together make up the dominant class – or the 'field of power' – whereas the lower classes (middle class, working classes) are relatively deprived of the different forms of power.

To Bourdieu, the concepts of 'power' and 'capital' are closely related, in fact synonymous for all intents and purposes. He defines capital as "accumulated labor" or "the set of actually usable resources and powers"; it is the force which is

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29 Ibidem, 115 and 128-129.
31 Ibidem, 47.
needed to effect change and which at the same time defines the social 'games' that are played in society.\textsuperscript{33}

Bourdieu argues there are three fundamental kinds of capital: economic, cultural and social capital. Briefly put, economic capital is money or resources directly convertible into money, cultural capital is power from information, be it diplomas, books or simply memorised knowledge, and social capital is power deriving from a network of social contacts.\textsuperscript{34} Bourdieu also mentions a fourth category, symbolic capital, but this form does not exist independently of the other three: it is rather any other form of capital imbued with a symbolical meaning\textsuperscript{35} – such as a football player with the reputation of a top scorer, which can be seen as a proxy of monetary value and thus economic capital in symbolic guise.

According to Benson, in the struggle going on in fields there is a dichotomy between cultural and economic capital. He argues that although cultural power is usually viewed as sacred and pure, and economic power is considered visceral and profane,\textsuperscript{36} the latter on the whole is more powerful. He also argues, in line with Bourdieu, that fields with a high proportion of cultural capital are inherently dominated whereas fields with a high proportion of economic capital tend to be dominant.\textsuperscript{37} Nonetheless, in the field a continuous struggle takes place between the two opposing sides of this spectrum: for example, agents with mainly 'pure' cultural capital will look down upon the efforts and personae of the 'profane' agents whose power is predominantly economic – and attempt to devalue them in favor of their own work and position.

Aside from the dichotomy between cultural and economic power that exists in fields, there is also an opposition between the old and the new. This too can be a cause for struggle within the field, says Bourdieu. If new agents that are entering into the field differ sufficiently in background from those already occupying positions, a dynamic struggle ensues between the newcomers, who mostly will want transformation, and the older, established agents, who generally will fight for conservation of the structure of power relations.\textsuperscript{38}

In addition, depending on the habitus of the newcomers, they can be more or less likely to adopt strategies aimed at transformation. Bourdieu argues that this

\textsuperscript{33} Bourdieu, 'The forms of capital', 46.
\textsuperscript{34} This is elaborated in more detail in chapter 2.3 below (page 15).
\textsuperscript{35} Bourdieu, 'The forms of capital', 56.
\textsuperscript{36} Benson, Bourdieu and the Journalistic Field, 4.
\textsuperscript{37} Idem.
\textsuperscript{38} Ibidem, 5-6.
depends on the “objective gap between their individual trajectory and the modal trajectory of their group of origin, in other words, between the slope of their actual trajectory and the modal slope of the probable career that remains inscribed in the deepest regions of a person's habitus.”\textsuperscript{39} Agents that follow a 'deviant' trajectory, that enter into a different field than their group of origin or move in a deviant manner within their field, are also more likely to adopt strategies aimed at transformation of that field.\textsuperscript{40}

Again, returning to the analogy, one can imagine a group of new players advocating a change of rules to abolish, say, the off-side rule, to improve their chances in the game. To support their idea, or as Bourdieu calls it, turn it into an “idée-force” (an idea with the capacity to mobilise people by 'seeing things your way')\textsuperscript{41}, they will have to mobilise their capital – economic, cultural, social and/or symbolic. If they argue from an economic point of view, they might assert that abolishing the off-side rule will make football more popular and interesting to watch, leading to more money for the players and other agents involved. From a cultural point of view, they could lay claim to the historical heritage of football, that in its purest, most original form did not have the off-side rule either. Social capital could be mobilised if the players have a large network of supporters, and symbolic capital might be exemplified if an official organisation with a respectable reputation, such as the FIFA, endorses the point of view of the abolitionists.

Bourdieu frames this dichotomy and potential struggle between old and new in terms of a confrontation over the doxa. The established agents then favour orthodoxy, or the old rules, while the subversive 'heretics' favour heterodoxy, or a change of the doxa:

“Degenen die, gegeven een bepaalde krachtsverhouding, een (min of meer volkomen) monopolie bezitten op het specifieke kapitaal (...) [van] een bepaald veld, neigen naar conservatieve strategieën (...) terwijl de minder bedeelden (vaak ook de nieuwhomers, dus meestal de jongeren) overhellen naar subversieve strategieën – gericht op ketterij. Het is de ketterij, de heterodoxie, als kritische breuk met de doxa (vaak het gevolg van een crisis), die het zwijgen van de heersende groep verbreekt en haar dwingt tot het defensieve vertoog van

\textsuperscript{39} Bourdieu, \textit{The state nobility}, 185.
\textsuperscript{40} Ibidem, 186.
\textsuperscript{41} Bourdieu, "The Political Field, the Social Science Field, and the Journalistic Field", 39.
As mentioned before, Bourdieu also emphasises that these subversive heretics that claim a return to the source\(^\text{43}\) (to the 'real', or 'true' forms of journalism in the case of the field of journalism) and these partial revolutions do not destroy the fundamental goals on which the game in the field is based – the football players in our metaphor are still trying to score in order to win, only each team is bending the rules, and even in some cases attempting to formally change them, to their own benefit.

Although the above conditions do contribute to a climate of transformation or even revolution in a field, Bourdieu holds that more is needed for a real revolution. He argues that revolutions only occur if and when the field is subject to 'external pressures', or radical changes in different parts of society. These may take the form of “new political orders (...), dramatic changes in the overall legal or economic policy environment, as well as specific media regulations, social and cultural movements, and economic crises.”\(^\text{44}\) In the context of the social upheaval that is characteristic of the period of analysis of this thesis, especially the social and cultural movements are highly relevant concepts.\(^\text{45}\)

Bourdieu argues that for a transformation to take place, for a 'heretical subversion' against the established order to occur and succeed, an objective crisis is necessary.\(^\text{46}\) By this he means a disruption of the dominant vision of the social world, the vision which had until then been imposed as the 'natural' status quo of the social world. Instead, the heretical subversion reveals this dominant vision to be arbitrary, destroying the belief in its objective truth\(^\text{47}\) while at the same time offering an alternate vision, an alternate 'common sense'. If this alternate vision of the heretics is valid.

\(^{42}\) Bourdieu, ‘Enkele eigenschappen van velden’, 173. Translation: “Those who, given a certain balance of power, have a (more or less complete) monopoly of the specific capital (...) of a certain field, tend to conservative strategies (...) whereas the less well-endowed agents (often the newcomers, thus mostly the youths) tend to employ subversive strategies – aimed at heresy. It is this heresy, this heterodoxy, as a critical rupture from the doxa (often as the consequence of a crisis) that breaks the silence of the ruling group and forces them into the defensive argument of orthodoxy (...) aimed at reinstating the equivalent of the silent acceptance of the doxa.”


\(^{45}\) These are elaborated in chapter 3.


\(^{47}\) Ibidem, 277 note 8.
collectively recognised by the public, it obtains legitimacy and thereby achieves dominance.48

This also indicates the ultimate goal of the struggles going on in every field, the World Cup of Bourdieusian agents. Bourdieu argues that ultimately, in every field "the power to transform the field of forces"49 is at stake. The agents that have the upper hand in the ongoing struggle get to decide the way in which the specific capital in that field is distributed and accorded value – they obtain the monopoly to exercise what Bourdieu calls the 'symbolic violence' characteristic of that specific field.50

In fields where agents' main occupation is the production of discourses, as Bourdieu argues is the case in the journalistic (but also e.g. in the political field), this capital consists of the "legitimate categories of construction of the social world."51 All the agents in such fields are struggling to impose their construction of the social world as the legitimate one – even if they do not (consciously) wish to participate in this struggle.52 For the journalistic field, Boudieu also points to several concrete examples of capital which are at stake in the struggle: "there is permanent competition to appropriate the readership, (...) the earliest access to news, the "scoop," exclusive information and also distinctive rarity."53

2.3. Four categories of capital

It was argued that in these struggles to transform the way in which capital is distributed and valorised, the dichotomy between economic and cultural capital plays a central role.54 These two categories will therefore be elaborated a little more here. Because social capital as the third fundamental kind of power has received much less academic attention than the other two, this section pays special attention to its relevance for field theory in general and this research in particular.

48 Ibidem, 129.
49 Bourdieu, 44.
51 Bourdieu, Bourdieu and the Journalistic Field, 37.
52 Ibidem, 40. Bourdieu mentions sociologists as an example, who sometimes by virtue of their utterances become a party to a conflict against their will.
53 Ibidem, 44.
54 Ibidem, 4.
Economic capital

Bourdieu defines economic capital as capital “which is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of property rights”.[55] In the football metaphor, the property deeds to a football club an owner may hold are an example of such institutionalised economic capital. Fields with high proportions of economic capital and high overall levels of capital are fields within the industrial and commercial private sector. Agriculture is an example of a sector which has a high proportion of economic capital, but low overall levels of capital.[56]

Economic capital, according to Bourdieu, “is at the root of all the other types of capital”[57]. All the other forms of capital are “transformed, disguised forms of economic capital”[58] - even though this transformation does change the character of the capital, making it impossible to simply reduce it to its economic form. In our football analogy this might be represented by a football fan who, by virtue of buying football paraphernalia, becomes part of the fan group and thus gains social capital. None of the fans will likely see this membership as a result of a purely economic investment on his side – to all of them it is a matter of a true group feeling.

Cultural capital

In Bourdieu's definition, cultural capital is closely related to education, both formal and informal. In fact, according to Bourdieu, cultural capital should be called 'informational capital'.[59] Learning in general, and learning about culture in particular, as a nurturing process, leads to the accumulation of cultural capital.[60]

Cultural capital can exist in three different forms or states: the embodied state, the objectified state and the institutionalised state. The first one refers to education and learning as internalised into “long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body”[61], such as memorised knowledge or the ability of aesthetic judgement. This is the most fundamental state of cultural capital.

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55 Bourdieu, ‘The forms of capital’, 47.
56 Bourdieu, Distinction, 128-129.
57 Bourdieu, ‘The forms of capital’, 54.
58 Idem.
60 Bourdieu, Distinction, 53-54.
61 Bourdieu, ‘The forms of capital’, 47.
Secondly, cultural capital can exist in an objectified state. This refers to cultural goods, such as paintings, books or even machines, all of which incarnate cultural capital. To make adequate use of this form of cultural capital usually an amount of embodied cultural capital is also required. For example, if one possesses a machine (objectified cultural capital) but not the appropriate knowledge (embodied cultural capital) to operate it correctly, one's ownership will be of little use.

Thirdly, cultural capital can be institutionalised. This last state refers to education and knowledge as represented by degrees and other official documents, which, by a sort of collective magic, bestow the objective recognition of an educational institution upon the cultural capital an individual possesses. An agent may choose to invest economic capital in a formal education in the hope that the so gained cultural capital will be of more profitable use.

Social capital
The third kind of capital, social capital, has received relatively little attention in relation with the journalistic field specifically, but also within field theory in general – even though Bourdieu argues it is one of the three fundamental kinds of capital. In the most important work on journalism and field theory, Bourdieu and the journalistic field by sociologists Rodney Benson and Erik Neveu, the concept is mentioned only very briefly in the introduction. German sociologist Steffen Albrecht even calls social capital the stepchild of field theory.

Even so, the concept has received considerable attention in the wider disciplines of sociology and political science. Sociologists Bourdieu, James Coleman and political scientist Robert Putnam are considered the three most influential authors on the subject. Coleman's writing can be classified as belonging to rational choice theory. Because we follow Bourdieu's more structuralist approach by and large, which holds that any individual's actions are constrained by certain structures,

63 Benson, Bourdieu and the Journalistic Field, 4.
66 Edwards, Foley and Diani, Beyond Tocqueville, 8.
Coleman is of limited interest to our research – although we will see one aspect of social capital on which Coleman argues the same point as the other two. The socio-political side of social capital which is illustrated by Putnam, and the way he distinguishes between two different forms of social capital are of greater use, as will be demonstrated.

Bourdieu himself defines social capital as the capital which is linked to the “possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group.”67 This membership allows individuals to make use of the collective capital of the group. For example, a football player from a prestigious team, by virtue of his membership of that group, may be let into exclusive night clubs, whereas players from amateur teams are refused or have to wait in line for hours.

According to Bourdieu, social capital differs from the economic and cultural types in a number of ways. Firstly, it functions as a type of multiplier of the other kinds of capital; it causes different actors to “obtain very unequal profits from virtually equivalent (cultural or economic) capital, depending on the extent to which they can mobilize by proxy the capital of a group”68. The size of this multiplier effect depends on the amount of capital that the members of that group possess. Obviously, membership in a well-endowed group is 'worth more', i.e. provides an actor with more social capital, than membership in a group with scarce economic and cultural capital.

Secondly, social capital is always intangible, since it is located in relationships between actors. Economic and cultural capital can be objectified in e.g. money or books: social capital lacks these material manifestations. Because it is necessarily immaterial in kind, social capital according to Bourdieu also by definition is symbolic.69 This means that it only exists as long as it is recognised as legitimate social capital by other actors. If one possesses a house (economic capital), this house is real regardless of what another person may think of it. However, a friendship (social capital) only exists as long as both actors recognise one another as a friend.

Because social capital is always symbolic, it must be less open and transparent than economic capital about its origins and nature in order to be effective – which is an attribute it shares with cultural capital. Economic capital is at the root of both other

67 Bourdieu, 'The forms of capital', 51.
68 Bourdieu, 'The forms of capital', 56.
69 Ibidem, 57 note 17.
kinds of capital, because labour-time must be sacrificed or rather invested to accumulate them.\textsuperscript{70} But an actor, when attempting to accumulate either social or cultural capital, must appear to do so for disinterested reasons, for some inherent value that the process of accumulation contains in his eyes – for example, knowledge or friendship. Analogously, a football player openly stating that the only reason he joined a particular team is that he hopes to transfer to a bigger club, will most likely be shunned by the other players and thus will not be able to make effective use of the collective capital of the group. The group needs to recognise the player as a member if he is to effectively use the social capital present in the relationship.

Reciprocity thus plays an important role in Bourdieu's definition of social capital – although this does not become explicit in the examined literature. Reciprocity does figure explicitly and prominently in Putnam's and Coleman's accounts of social capital and there it is closely related to the concept of trust. Coleman calls specific instances of trust and trustworthiness forms of social capital: “if A does something for B and trusts B to reciprocate in the future, this establishes an expectation in A and an obligation on the part of B to keep the trust.”\textsuperscript{71} This fits well with Bourdieu's definition, since the expectation and obligation constitute a relationship that allows A access to (some of) B's capital – in the form of a 'returned favor'.

Putnam distinguishes between specific reciprocity ("I'll do this for you if you do that for me") and the “even more valuable (...) norm of generalized reciprocity: I'll do this for you without expecting anything specific back from you, in the confident expectation that someone else will do something for me down the road.”\textsuperscript{72} According to Putnam, generalised reciprocity allows much more to be accomplished in society than distrust\textsuperscript{73} and even is essential for the functioning of a modern democracy.\textsuperscript{74} Generalised reciprocity within a group thus amounts to an increase in social capital.

Another useful addition Putnam makes to Bourdieu's definition of social capital is the distinction between two different kinds of social capital. Putnam argues that the norms of trust and reciprocity which generate social capital can be either

\textsuperscript{70} Ibidem, 54.
\textsuperscript{73} Ibidem, 21.
\textsuperscript{74} Edwards, \textit{Beyond Tocqueville}, 10.
inward looking and exclusive, reinforcing ties between a relatively homogeneous group, or outward looking and inclusive, reaching out to diverse individuals that make up a relatively heterogeneous group. The first kind of social capital is called bonding and is “good for undergirding specific reciprocity and mobilizing solidarity.” The second kind is called bridging, and can be used for “linkage to external assets and for information diffusion”. Putnam attaches greater value – for the functioning of a democracy – to bridging social capital, or at the very least to a certain balance between the two. Strong bonding social capital without accompanying bridging capital may lead to exclusion of others and intolerance, he argues.

Employing our football metaphor, the difference between bonding and bridging capital may be clarified by comparing two different groups of football supporters: firstly, supporters of a league team which come from the same city and social milieu, thus creating a close-knit group with mainly bonding social capital. Secondly, a group of supporters of the national team which consists of supporters which at the league level support many different teams, forming a more diverse, less socially homogeneous group – also possessing an important amount of bridging capital.

Within the journalistic field, bridging social capital may have special value in that it facilitates the diffusion of information – which is central to the functioning of journalism in general. A journalist that is not able to get his work published because he lacks the proper social network will not be able to make use of his cultural and economic capital, nor be able to increase the amounts he has. So, any actor or group of actors which possesses a large amount of bridging social capital will be more powerfully able to divulge their vision of the social reality in their journalism, leading to greater influence in the field.

**Symbolic capital**

As was mentioned before, in addition to these three fundamental forms of capital, Bourdieu mentions symbolic capital as a fourth kind. He also specifies that it is not an independent form: “Symbolic capital, that is to say, capital – in whatever form – insofar as it is represented, i.e. apprehended symbolically (...)” Bourdieu says that

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77 Bourdieu, "The forms of capital", 56.
symbolic capital “is the form assumed by these different kinds of capital when they are perceived and recognized as legitimate”\textsuperscript{78} and that symbolic capital is predisposed “to be unrecognized as capital and recognized as legitimate competence, as authority exerting an effect of (mis)recognition”\textsuperscript{79}. By this he means that actors – even the one possessing the capital himself – do not see cultural, economic and social capital as capital at all when it is in a symbolic state. The aforementioned example of friendship or knowledge indicates this: the actors recognise, or misrecognise these forms of capital instead as legitimate phenomena, holding an inherent value rather than being merely a derived form of economic capital. This (mis)recognition of capital as legitimate “competence”\textsuperscript{80} is important because it renders the use of the capital effective – especially in the cases of cultural and social capital. Bourdieu remains somewhat vague on who must perform this act of (mis)recognition: he just mentions that symbolic capital stems from the “recognition, institutionalized or not, that they [the actors] receive from a group.”\textsuperscript{81}

Although he does not describe a step-by-step guide or recipe to the obtaining of legitimacy for one's capital, Bourdieu does indicate the social processes which produce this qualification. In particular he calls attention to 'rites of institution' such as ceremonies for the introduction into manhood.\textsuperscript{82} The institution of a specific identity, in this case the formalisation of an individual's status as a man, separating him from traits associated with femininity, allows him access to (social) capital.

However, Bourdieu also provides a more general insight into the origins of legitimacy. He argues that reputations – which can be seen as symbolic cultural capital – are created by “the field of production, understood as the system of objective relations between (...) agents or institutions and as the site of the struggles for the monopoly of the power to consecrate”.\textsuperscript{83} In other words, aside from the rites of institution which are specific manifestations of bestowal of legitimacy, in fields actors are constantly seeking, bestowing or challenging recognition and legitimacy of their own and other actors' capital.

\textsuperscript{78} Bourdieu, Language and symbolic power, 230.
\textsuperscript{79} Bourdieu, 'The forms of capital', 49.
\textsuperscript{80} Bourdieu, 'The forms of capital', 49.
\textsuperscript{81} Pierre Bourdieu, Language and symbolic power, 72.
\textsuperscript{82} Ibidem, 118.
In addition to this general conception, he says that to understand how capital is accumulated and granted recognition in (advanced) societies, one must look at how “institutionalized mechanisms have emerged which tend to fix the value accorded to different products, to allocate these products differentially and to inculcate a belief in their value”\textsuperscript{84}. Especially the inculcation or production of belief is relevant to this matter – a process that for the journalistic field takes place in e.g. journalism schools and journalistic councils that judge journalists on their professional values and qualities. They may also be found in journalistic awards, attention given to journalistic work by (literary) critics, and in the responses of colleagues to status claims actors may have made. If, for example, a well-known literary critic recognises a journalistic piece as literature, he is effectively creating symbolic capital for the author of the piece – in the form of status.

2.4. Autonomy of the field

A last concept of Bourdieu's notion of the field that is relevant to this research is the degree of autonomy of a field. A field is autonomous to the extent that it creates and obeys only its own laws, its own nomos. A perfectly autonomous field is not dominated or influenced by other fields but completely independent.\textsuperscript{85} It can be understood by analysing purely the internal relations within that field. One of the examples Bourdieu uses to illustrate this is the artistic field, which he argues has become more autonomous throughout history: he holds there has been a “shift from an art which imitates nature to an art which imitates art, deriving from its own history the exclusive source of its experiments and even of its breaks with tradition.”\textsuperscript{86} In other words, the pure form of the adage 'l'art pour l'art'. A perfectly autonomous field, then, is closed in on itself and has no external clarification or even relation with other fields.\textsuperscript{87}

However, according to Bourdieu the journalistic field is autonomous to a much lesser degree. In fact, he argues it has become more and more heteronomous over the years, obeying to a great extent laws of other fields such as the economic and the political field, rather than any purely journalistic rules that may exist. Especially

\textsuperscript{84} Bourdieu, \textit{Language and symbolic power}, 24.
\textsuperscript{85} Bourdieu, "The Political Field, the Social Science Field, and the Journalistic Field", 32-33.
\textsuperscript{86} Bourdieu, \textit{Distinction}, 3.
\textsuperscript{87} Bourdieu, "The Political Field, the Social Science Field, and the Journalistic Field", 34. In relation to New Journalism, the field of literature would be an obvious example of such a field with a high degree of autonomy. Because this thesis focuses on the field of journalism however this venue is not further explored.
in the subfield of television journalism “the weight of the economy within the field is constantly growing”, through audience ratings on which advertisers base their decisions to invest – investments essential to the livelihood of the current forms of journalism in general, and television in particular.\textsuperscript{88}

Although Bourdieu does not explicitly link economic capital with heteronomy and cultural capital with autonomy, Benson does conclude the existence of such a link. He argues that “each field is structured around the opposition between the “heteronomous” pole representing economic and political capital (forces external to the field) and the “autonomous” pole representing the specific capital unique to that field (e.g., artistic, scientific or other species of cultural capital).”\textsuperscript{89} The fact that a large part of the relevant specific capital in the journalistic field is exemplified by readership and the aspects of news production that foster readership (i.e. factors pointing towards a high proportion of economic capital), demonstrates the limited autonomy of the journalistic field.

2.5. Methodology

As was mentioned in the introduction, the core part of this thesis consists of chapters investigating the causes of revolutionary influence in the lives of four icons of New Journalism; Hunter S. Thompson, Truman Capote, Tom Wolfe and Norman Mailer. These chapters follow a case study methodology; more specifically the methodological guidelines for case study research as elaborated by social scientist Robert K. Yin\textsuperscript{90} were followed as closely as possible.

By making use of a case study methodology, the thesis aims to find the causes of the revolutionary influence of the four authors within the sociopolitical context of the Sixties and the fields of journalism and literature. According to Baxter and Jack, case study research “allows the researcher to explore individuals or organizations, simple through complex interventions, relationships, communities, or programs and supports the deconstruction and the subsequent reconstruction of various phenomena”.\textsuperscript{91}

\textsuperscript{88} Ibidem, 41.
\textsuperscript{90} Yin, \textit{Case Study Research}.
As Yin does, they also specify that there are four main characteristics that determine if a certain phenomenon is fit for case study research: firstly, the focus of the study must be to answer “how” and “why” questions, secondly the researcher cannot manipulate the behaviour of those involved in the study, thirdly the researcher wants to cover contextual conditions because he believes they are relevant to the studied phenomenon and fourthly the boundaries are not clear between the phenomenon and context.\textsuperscript{92} Yin adds to this that case studies make use of various sources of information, such as official documents, artifacts, interviews and observations.

All of these criteria apply to this thesis. It investigates what the extent of the four authors' influence was in the field of journalism and what factors caused this influence; the research subjects cannot be influenced; the context is an important part of the thesis and it is difficult if not impossible to separate the New Journalists' revolutionary influence from the context in which it operated. Yin's specification about sources is also followed; next to academic writing (books, articles and reports), an important source are primary sources such as own writing by or interviews with the subjects, as well as audiovisual material such as documentary films and recordings by the authors. A comparative case study methodology is thus very appropriate for this research.

\textit{Specific sources of evidence}

The case study chapters will look for two elements in the lives of the four icons of New Journalism; firstly the amount and kinds of capital they had at the time New Journalism rose to prominence, and secondly the extent to which the four agents followed a deviant trajectory. As was mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, these factors are the cause of change in a field according to Bourdieusian field theory.\textsuperscript{93}

For the first element, economic, cultural and social capital must be quantified. Economic capital can be found in pre-existing monetary or material wealth possessed by the authors and the amount of salary they received. Sources of evidence for cultural capital will consist of educational credentials, both formal and informal. As Benson states, "[f]ollowing from Bourdieu's notion of habitus, one can examine

\textsuperscript{92} Idem.
\textsuperscript{93} See chapter 2.2, page 11.
various characteristics of those entering the field - their social/economic origins, where they went to school and received professional training, and how they rose in the profession.⁹⁴ Following the logic that social capital enables agents to, by proxy, make use of the capital owned by members of their group, the amount of capital that was present in the networks of the four New Journalism icons will also be accounted for - writing for the New York Times provides more economic and cultural capital by proxy than the Louisville Courier-Journal. Lastly, evidence for social capital will be found in the size of the authors' network and the amount of different publications they worked for. A balance will be drawn between bonding and bridging social capital - for example a ten year, full-time employment at a magazine brings more bonding than bridging capital whereas several free-lance stints maximize bridging capital instead.

2.6. Conclusion

Looking back at our research question (To what extent can Bourdieu's field theory explain the influence Thompson, Capote, Mailer and Wolfe had on the field of journalism?) it is clear that several elements of Bourdieu's field theory on paper account for revolutionary potential. According to Bourdieu, this potential consists of two factors: the amounts and kinds of capital an agent possesses, which determine his power, and the deviance of the agent's trajectory, which determines to what extent he will have a disposition for change or even revolution in the field.

A last factor of influence is the mentioned crisis in society which can magnify the efforts of the agent. These three factors, according to Bourdieusian field theory, are the most important causes of actors developing attitudes aimed at transformation of the structures of relations of forces within the field and of the impact their attitudes will have on the field. The next chapter will provide the historical context within which the phenomenon of New Journalism would rise to prominence.

⁹⁴ Benson, Bourdieu and the Journalistic Field, 6.
Chapter 3 - The Rise of New Journalism

Now the different elements of Bourdieu's field theory have been clarified, the second core concept of this thesis must be introduced: New Journalism. This chapter starts with a brief summary of the most important characteristics of and developments in American print journalism from 1950-1965. The wider social and historical background of the era is shortly described, and two important changes in the field of journalism (the rise and fall of objectivity and the changing trends in journalistic education) are illustrated. After that, the phenomenon of New Journalism and the different academic interpretations of it that have emerged over the years are introduced. The conclusion will answer the question to what extent the Sixties in the United States can be interpreted as a Bourdieusian crisis and New Journalism as a revolution in the field of journalism.

3.1. American society in the Sixties

As was mentioned in the introduction, the 1960s were a turbulent decade in many parts of the (Western) world and the intensity of societal and cultural tensions that came to a climax was possibly highest in the United States of America. The involvement of the USA in the Vietnam War, the New Left and the anti-war protest movement, the counterculture of sex, drugs and rock'n'roll, the civil rights movement: all of these phenomena played an important part in the social upheaval that erupted in this period of time called “the Sixties”. As historian William H. Chafe states: "by almost any standard the 1960s do remain the pivotal decade of the post World War II years." 95

The term 'period' is used here in relation to the Sixties, because most authors do not define the 1960s technically as a decennium running chronologically from January 1960 through December 1969. Mostly the Sixties are seen to begin slightly earlier and end somewhat later than the strict decennial markings. Historian Terry H. Anderson, for example, describes it as “the era that began in 1960 at Greensboro and that ended in the early 1970s when Congress passed the Equal Rights Amendment and the U.S. Army came home from the Vietnam War." 96 With 'Greensboro' he refers

to the American city which saw sit-ins being organised at 'white' restaurants and establishments by black students to advocate desegregation. These protests quickly spread across the southern states of America.\textsuperscript{97} Political theorist Fredric Jameson argues the beginning of the Sixties coincided with the decolonisation of British and French Africa, from 1957 onward. He also refers to Greensboro as the starting point of the era in the United States but frames the budding civil rights movement as a part of the decolonising process.\textsuperscript{98} Jameson places the end of the Sixties somewhere between 1972 and 1974, when the Vietnam War drew to an end, voiding the \textit{raison d'etre} of the anti-war movement, and causing the American government to adopt a more reactive stance in its foreign policy.\textsuperscript{99}

One of the most important years in the long decade that was the Sixties is 1968. During that year many of the developments that had been brewing for a long time finally came to a head in societies all around the globe, sometimes triggered by extraordinary historical events. In May 1968 for example, massive and famous student protests took place in the Latin Quarter of Paris, France, which coincided with the largest strike in French history that involved six million workers.\textsuperscript{100} In the United States, the prominent leader of the American civil rights movement Martin Luther King, Jr was assassinated on April 4\textsuperscript{th}, triggering race riots in more than 125 American cities that saw almost 27000 people arrested and 46 others killed.\textsuperscript{101} That same year in June, another high-profile politician was assassinated: democratic presidential candidate Robert Kennedy. At the Democratic National Convention in August 5000 people, many very angry about the escalating war in Vietnam, demonstrated against the administration of president Johnson. The police, on edge after the riots that had followed Dr. King’s assassination, reacted violently, clubbing protesters and even attacking the press.\textsuperscript{102}

Earlier that year in January, the North Vietnamese and the National Liberation Front in Vietnam had launched a widespread attack on American forces in the south of the country, known as the Tet Offensive.\textsuperscript{103} Although the North Vietnamese

\textsuperscript{97} Ibidem, 43-44.
\textsuperscript{98} Jameson, “Periodizing the Sixties”, 180.
\textsuperscript{99} Ibidem, 204.
\textsuperscript{102} Ibidem, 966.
\textsuperscript{103} Ibidem, 964.
suffered heavy military losses, public opinion in the United States swung as a result of the offensive and support for the war declined dramatically. The American student movement, which had proclaimed solidarity with the civil rights movement at the beginning of the decade, was also fuelled by these developments. The antiwar movement was particularly strong on campuses of prominent universities and teach-ins were organised by staff members and students across the country to debate the merits of military intervention. Violent incidents were again the result sometimes: for example, four college students at Kent State University were killed by members of the Ohio National Guard on May 4th 1970.

Looking back towards Bourdieu's theory, the "external pressures" that he sees as a prerequisite of a successful revolution in a field are thus plainly demonstrated for the 1960s in the United States. In all areas of society, be it political, cultural or social, large disruptions and changes were taking place. The following two sections assess to what extent the second prerequisite for revolution in Bourdieusian was present; an objective crisis, or disruption of the dominant vision of the social world.

3.2. Journalism in the Sixties
Objectivity; origins and decline of an ideal

The 1960s were thus a period that was marked by a chaotic sequence of events that to some “lacked coherent logic” and clearly profoundly influenced society. These changes in society also had an effect on the writing of the era, both journalistic and literary. Traditional modes and genres of publications such as the novel and newspaper journalism no longer seemed adequate to record and capture the changed social reality in the eyes of many literary authors and journalists. Some novelists felt their imaginations were no match for the absurdity of daily life.

This feeling was perhaps most clearly represented in the changing appreciation of objectivity in journalism. Before 1965, the journalistic doctrine of objectivity had held central importance in the field of American print journalism. As literary critic Michael J. Arlen observes: “The American press rested its weight upon the simple declarative sentence. The no-nonsense approach. Who-What-Where-

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104 Righart, De Wereldwijde Jaren Zestig, 10.
105 Maier et al., 956.
107 Ibidem, 3.
108 Hollowell, 4.
When Clean English, it was later called when people started teaching it at college. Lean prose.”

This ideal of objectivity consisted of detachment, nonpartisanship, inverted pyramid writing, reverence for facts and balance.

This journalistic code of course did not materialise out of thin air. It had been pushed to prominence by the belief that a strict separation of facts and opinions was possible and desirable, a belief that in turn had its historical causes. After World War I, the proliferation of a governmental public relations apparatus served to erode the belief in the innocence of facts. The reaction to this increasingly active news management by the government was threefold: newspapers increasingly acknowledged the presence of some subjectivity in their reporting (for example by including bylines more often), some journalists pursued a specialisation to counteract the force of the government PR-machine and lastly, many reporters committed themselves to the ideal of objectivity as a bulwark against this encroaching influence.

This belief in the doctrine of objectivity that individual journalists held was reinforced by the reaction of some American newspapers to and against the overt partisanship and political campaigning conducted from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards. As journals broke their official links with parties and started to become more critical, they began, as media scholar Richard L. Kaplan writes, to cast “a cool appraising eye when judging the news value of the speeches of politicians.”

As a consequence of these developments, the press was forced to move away from overt political commentary and the injection of emotions and evaluations into news writing. News was to be detached, distant and factual: the doctrine of objectivity had emerged. In addition to a government that was more cleverly manipulating information, two other reasons for this change in approach can be observed. Firstly there were economic motivations, as less or less obviously partisan news meant a newspaper would be able to reach a broader audience. Secondly, in the

113 Kaplan, Politics and the American Press, 2.
114 Idem.
field of journalism a professional journalistic consciousness seemed to emerge. Famous journalist Walter Lippmann, one of the most vociferous proponents of objectivity, even believed that the “pursuit of scientific method in journalism would make the press not only more professional, but more liberal and more heroic.”

However, the ideal of objectivity came under increasing criticism during the 1960s. This criticism took many institutional and intellectual forms, but three major critiques can be distinguished. Firstly, some argued that objectivity had begun working in ways diametrically opposed to the goals it was meant to serve. Objectivity was intended as a move away from partisan slant towards less politically biased reporting, at the same time facilitating the cutting of the formal ties that political parties had with the press and thus the re-establishment of independent, factual, nonpartisan, autonomous journalism. But after some time, politicians again found clever ways to use the ideal of objectivity to serve their own interests. The inverted pyramid style for example gave administrations a tool to sometimes dictate almost word for word what journalists would publish. As media historian David Mindich notes: “modern journalists (...) should keep in mind how information, when cleverly managed and manipulated, may give little more than the government's side of a story.” Thus, while the ideal was meant to limit political infiltration of reporting, it sometimes merely served to disguise this practice.

Secondly, objectivity was said to cover up journalists’ own implicit political preferences and assumptions. In this way, the form of the objective news story concealed the hidden content consisting of personal and political assumptions whose validity was never questioned by virtue of remaining hidden. The specific requirements of the journalism business added to this, emphasising factors that would increase newspaper sales such as conflicts rather than non-dramatic happenings and events rather than processes.

A third main criticism of objectivity sees the objective form not as a literary one but as a social one, highly constrained and determined by the daily practice of journalistic work. This criticism sees objectivity not as an ideal, but as a practice. Where the second criticism regards the hiding of personal and political assumptions,

115 Schudson, *Discovering the News*, 154.
117 Ibidem, 83.
this third one holds that objectivity reinforces official viewpoints and makes journalists into mere stenographers of government officials. This then devoids news stories from any critical interpretation and deeper analysis. Objectivity in this respect was seen as the fig leaf behind which journalists hid their shallow, unenlightening reporting and as a means by which they dodged the responsibility for what they wrote.¹²⁰

The changing appreciation of objectivity paved the way for a different approach to journalism. Another factor in the journalistic field was important in this development: at the beginning of the 1960s the ways in which journalists were being trained began shifting.

**Socialisation of journalists**

Traditionally, at journalism schools new generations of journalists had been instilled with the skills and knowledge required to gain easy and legitimate entrance to the field. This process had begun at the beginning of the twentieth century at the journalism school at the University of Missouri and the graduate school of journalism at Columbia University in New York.¹²¹ These and other journalism schools could grow and flourish with the support of press associations and news media companies, both endorsing the institutions and hiring their graduates on a large scale.¹²²

However, amongst reporters and editors the belief was widespread that “the newsroom, not the classroom, was the proper place for learning journalism.”¹²³ They would argue that the 'technical/vocational' model¹²⁴ on which most journalism schools' curriculums were based, was either not enough or simply useless as an education. As educational philosopher Robert M. Hutchins said; “All there is to journalism can be learned through a good (general) education and newspaper work.”¹²⁵ Nevertheless, journalism school increased in popularity during the first decades of the twentieth century.

In the 1950s for the first time American college students showed a diminishing interest in studying journalism: whereas in 1948 a peak of 16,000 journalism students

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¹²⁰ Ibidem, 185-186.
¹²² Sloan, *American Journalism*, 76.
¹²³ Idem.
¹²⁴ This model saw professional preparation of journalism students as its most important goal.
nationwide had been reached, this number declined during the next decade. This implies that the new generation of journalists beginning work in the early 1960s had had less specific journalistic education than the cohort that ran the established media at the time. This is affirmed by a study done in 1971 which confirmed that during the 1960s a trend emerged of news organisations hiring more college graduates in history and the social sciences. This observation is supported by evidence compiled by media and literary journalism scholar John J. Pauly, who notes that in the mid-1960s a whole generation of non-fiction writers was coming of age. Thus, the social composition of newsrooms was changing and the more diverse backgrounds of the new generation of journalists also meant less experience with and investment in the principles of objectivity. The young writers according to Pauly in turn inspired journalism students after them, who "often found little appealing in the occupational identities or work that conventional journalism offered."128

The volatile social situation, where at all times revolution seemed to be just around the corner, made it increasingly difficult for traditional journalists as well as some (realistic) novelists to adequately record what was happening with just the tools they possessed. The gradual erosion of objectivity's centrality to the journalistic field and the changing learning trajectories by which journalists were receiving their academic and professional training compounded the instability felt throughout society for the field of journalism specifically. It was in this setting that a group of journalists would come to the forefront and establish what would be called the “New Journalism”.

3.3. The rise of New Journalism

“A movement, group, party, program, philosophy, or theory that goes under a name with “New” in it is just begging for trouble”129, Tom Wolfe writes in the introduction to his famous anthology *The New Journalism*. He is not alone in this observation, as many authors have argued that the supposedly distinctive features of New Journalism are not really that new. Its characteristics - e.g. the using of literary techniques, the application of personal viewpoints, the involvement in the subject - may be found in

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more or less journalistic writings of for example Ernest Hemingway, George Orwell or even Charles Dickens.\textsuperscript{130}

Indeed, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, literary prose and journalistic reporting were not so far removed from one another in the work of several journalists such as Stephen Crane, Lincoln Steffens and Hutchins Hapgood. Prominent New Journalist Gay Talese once said he followed the practices of Hapgood in studying the characters for his writing by "observing them in revealing situations, noting their reactions and the reactions of others to them."\textsuperscript{131}

Towards the second half of the twentieth century however the practices of going further than merely reporting the facts without quite as far as creating new material out of nothing, became increasingly rare. The accepted position of the ruling dogma, or doxa, was slowly but surely becoming that this mixing of literary writing and journalism had to be avoided at all costs.\textsuperscript{132}

The practices of New Journalists in the Sixties thus to an important extent have their roots in earlier times. The name of the phenomenon is also not new. In the era of the yellow press, also towards the end of the nineteenth century, publisher William T. Stead and editor Joseph Pulitzer of the \textit{New York World} both used the term New Journalism. Stead used it to refer to journalism that was “more responsive to the real needs of the people”, Pulitzer to indicate a mix of sensationalism, human interest, illustrations and reportage which would be central to his newspaper.\textsuperscript{133}

\textit{The New Journalism of the Sixties}

But if it was neither the name nor all of its practices, what was so new about this phenomenon? According to Wolfe, around 1966 the term 'New Journalism' started appearing in everyday conversation, although he claims not to be interested in the history of the actual term himself. His definition at first also remains rather vague, noting merely that one could observe "some sort of artistic excitement in


\textsuperscript{132} Ibidem, 17-18.

\textsuperscript{133} Hannes Haas, “Fiktion, Fakt & Fake?”, 44.
The fact that even he finds it difficult to pinpoint the essence of New Journalism does not stop Wolfe from making great claims to fame for New Journalism, stating his firm conviction that it would mean the end of the novel as literature's main event.\textsuperscript{135}

In addition to the name and some of the practices, the New Journalism of the 1960s and 1970s shared something else with that of Stead and Pulitzer. Both instances of unorthodox journalistic practices centered on change, on the adaptation and further development of journalistic innovation.\textsuperscript{136} This was also emphasised in Wolfe's aforementioned introduction to his anthology. The work has become known as the first systematic discussion of New Journalism by an author who, according to Hollowell, “has become almost synonymous with the term \textit{new journalism}.”\textsuperscript{137}

In the upheaval that was characteristic of the Sixties, which was only further compounded by the erosion of the ideal of objectivity and the changes in the average journalist's education, New Journalism also came to represent the unrest, changes and disruptions in the ways writers and journalists were making sense of the social and political world. It was not only a parallel development to the turbulence in society but also a transformation in journalism that went even further. As American media researcher Michael Johnson notes: "during the 1960's [\textit{sic}] these changes have been so fast and profound [...] that conscientious journalism has metamorphosed itself in an attempt to be relevant and participate communicatively in those changes. This journalism has thus evolved, by quick quantum leaps, into a New Journalism."\textsuperscript{138}

New Journalism compelled a discussion about the ways in which groups of people encounter one another through the production and consumption of journalistic and literary discourse. As Pauly notes, it forced writers from both fields to "confront [...] by what habits society organizes its practices of public imagination."\textsuperscript{139} These discussions and disruptions, taking place both in the field of journalism and in American society as a whole during the Sixties, can be interpreted as a Bourdieusian crisis, or disruption of the dominant vision of the social world, that is a prerequisite

\textsuperscript{134} Wolfe and Johnson, \textit{The New Journalism}, 23.
\textsuperscript{135} Ibidem, 9.
\textsuperscript{136} Idem.
\textsuperscript{138} Michael L. Johnson, \textit{The new journalism: the underground press, the artists of nonfiction and changes in the established media} (Lawrence KS: University Press of Kansas, 1971) xii.
\textsuperscript{139} Pauly, "The Politics of New Journalism", 125.
for revolution in a field. The following section assesses the extent to which New Journalism, in general terms, can be interpreted as a Bourdieusian revolution in the field of journalism.

3.4. Three strands of interpretations

Although Wolfe's anthology is widely read as a programmatic discussion of New Journalism, it is clear that he is forcefully arguing his own case. However, more scientific, academic classifications and interpretations have also sprung up over the years. While these all agree on the exceptional character of New Journalism, the observed underlying reasons of this uniqueness differ substantially. An interesting review of many of these reasons is given by Van Dijck. She argues that three main interpretations of New Journalism exist: an interpretation as literary non-fiction, one as alternative or underground press and one as meta-journalism. This trichotomy strongly resembles the one given by Johnson in his book on New Journalism.

Underground press

The views on New Journalism as alternative or underground press can be situated mostly within sociology. They focus on the efforts of the younger generation to create new journalistic institutions rather than new forms of journalism. According to Van Dijck, the underground press was essential in the spreading of New Journalism's products to a wider audience.

However, her reliance on and quoting of Johnson seems somewhat out of place. Whereas Van Dijck claims Johnson interprets New Journalism mainly as underground press, he himself very clearly states that, although any treatise of the subject must pay attention to “the underground press as an evolving institution (...) it is the writing itself - its style, technique, its expression of the writer as a person, and its records of human events - that is central, and it is to the writing that I will give my closest attention.” Nevertheless, Wolfe, Mailer and their famous fellow New

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140 Van Dijck, “Cultuurkritiek en journalistiek”, 66-69. In her conclusion, Van Dijck hints at a fourth interpretation as cultural criticism.
141 Johnson, The new journalism, xv.
142 Van Dijck, “Cultuurkritiek en journalistiek”, 68.
143 Johnson, The new journalism, xii.
Journalists often did begin their publishing careers in smaller magazines and these underground outlets are a part of the phenomenon of New Journalism.

Interpreted from a Bourdieusian perspective, the underground press might be viewed as a part of the old-new opposition that occurs in struggles within fields. The writers and publishers of the alternative press rejected the doxa of the mainstream media and the institutions that belonged to it. This rejection resulted in a rebellious, alternative reproduction of - ironically - the very structures they opposed, to an extent creating a mini-field of their own.

**Literary non-fiction**

A different, quite dominant interpretation of New Journalism that both Van Dijck and Johnson identify is that of literary non-fiction, including non-fiction novels. Seeing New Journalism as a literary form that combines the writing forms and techniques of realistic novels with the factuality and credibility of journalism is perhaps the most widespread interpretation of the phenomenon in academic literature.

Tom Wolfe himself can be largely aligned with this interpretation. He describes four literary techniques New Journalism employs: the use of scenes to reconstruct a situation, the extensive use and sometimes literal transcription of dialogues, telling a story in the third person and the emphasising of symbolic details in for example manners, customs and events. In Wolfe's approach to literary non-fiction, the style and form are the most important aspects. Dealing with more political themes, such as what the relation of non-fiction to reality was or what reasons there were to assume any writer or group of writers could legitimately reproduce social reality, was not the core business of New Journalism according to him. Nevertheless, Wolfe's literary non-fiction work and that of others is often seen as a manifestation of the deeper and broader social transformation of the era, as these writings are “deeply colored with the mood of perpetual crisis that pervaded the sixties”.

According to Dutch media scholar José van Dijck, Wolfe argued that the abovementioned use of literary techniques placed New Journalists in a two-sided

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144 Van Dijck, “Cultuurkritiek en journalistieke”, 66.
145 Ibidem, 68.
149 Hellman, *Fact and Fiction*, 147.
symbolic struggle. New Journalists were fighting the older generation of journalists on one side and the novelists of that time on the other. The fight was a struggle over form and style, but also over status.\(^{150}\) The argument that Van Dijck locates in Wolfe's writing is echoed by other academic writers such as English scholar Phyllis Frus, who observes that New Journalism is defined relationally against the dominant, mainstream forms of both journalism and fiction.\(^{151}\) Concrete examples of this struggle are visible in the highly critical appraisals of New Journalism by established media reviews such as the *Columbia Journalism Review* and the *New York Review of Books*. They referred to it as “parajournalism” and claimed it was a “bastard form”,\(^ {152}\) much in the way earlier editors had responded to work by the nineteenth century examples of literary journalists.\(^ {153}\) Wolfe claimed that the authorities in his day were all afraid to lose their dominant positions as the reigning practitioners of non-fiction.\(^ {154}\)

**Meta-journalism**

The elaboration of the double-fronted struggle metaphor using Bourdieu's theoretical tools has much in common with the last strand of academic reflection on New Journalism, which views it as a meta-journalistic language. This strand holds that whereas traditional journalism was uncritical of its own practice, hiding from view the process leading up to the end-product, New Journalism demystified and actively criticised the techniques, assumptions and practices of traditional journalism. David L. Eason, an American media scholar, called New Journalism “a set of metajournalistic operations through which journalism as a language becomes a subject for explicit reflection.”\(^ {155}\)

Using an article by literary critic and political scientist Fredric Jameson, Van Dijck argues that New Journalism contained the two most important parts of Jameson's argument, namely the struggle for the power over the imagination of reality, and the fading of borders between "genres" such as journalism and literature.

\(^{150}\) Van Dijck, “Cultuurkritiek en journalistiek”, 66.


\(^{153}\) Connery, "A Third Way to Tell the Story", 3-4.


but also history and theory. From there it is only a small step to the Bourdieusian conception of a partially unified field of journalism and literature which New Journalists populated, as they struggled with established journalism on one hand and with literature on the other. This suggestion is further elaborated in Chapter 8.

Another Dutch media scholar, Ilja van den Broek, points to the additional political and emancipatory function of New Journalism. She argues that New Journalism brought information closer to the reader and emphasised the relativity of news accounts by showing the production process. This meta-journalistic transparency enabled the common man to become politically critical and independent in his consumption of information.

3.5. Conclusion

This chapter has shown the extent to which the Sixties in the United States were the prime example of the sweeping social and cultural changes that were occurring in many parts of the (Western) world. The impact of the Sixties is undeniable, both in terms of countercultural phenomena involving drugs and music and in political terms involving a student new left and a mass antiwar movement.

The crisis in society created a space for something like New Journalism to flourish and successfully influence the existing, traditional journalistic practice. The negative attitudes of some actors in the field could not stop the rise of New Journalism and several prominent New Journalists would soon emerge from the smaller, underground publications where they began their careers, being published in increasingly popular magazines such as Rolling Stone, Esquire and New York Magazine and gaining notoriety and influence in the journalistic field. Another group of writers would join these New Journalists from the literary field, completing the coalescence and boundary crossings between the two previously separate fields.

In the same year in which Wolfe places the surfacing of widespread discussion of the New Journalism phenomenon, several influential non-fiction novels were published. Truman Capote's In Cold Blood and Hunter Thompson's Hell's Angels added to the impact and momentum of the literary non-fiction aspect of reporting that was an important part of New Journalism. By the year 1966, New Journalism as a

156 Van Dijck, "Cultuurkritiek en Journalistiek", 75-76.
157 See page 95.
158 Van den Broek, “De persoonlijke politiek van New Journalism”, 121.
159 Jameson, “Periodizing the 60s”, 180.
phenomenon had placed itself irrevocably at the forefront of American literary and journalistic attention.¹⁶⁰

Thus in Bourdieusian terms, both the precondition of crisis in society was observable during the Sixties and New Journalism can be interpreted as a revolution in the field of journalism. The following chapters will delve into the lives and work of four prominent New Journalists. They will answer the question to what extent the Bourdieusian criteria for change within a field as described in chapter two are necessary and sufficient to explain the revolutionary influence these icons of New Journalism had in the field of journalism.

Chapter 4. Tom Wolfe

The first author in our selection of four New Journalists is the iconic man in the white suit, in some ways the intellectual father of the New Journalism phenomenon itself: Thomas Kennerly Wolfe, better known as Tom Wolfe for short. The first part of this chapter provides a short introduction containing biographical background on Wolfe's early life and an assessment of his relevance for the field of journalism and for New Journalism itself. After that, following the methodology detailed in chapter two, this first case study chapter analyses the life and works of Tom Wolfe in order to clarify the causes of his influence in the field of journalism. It will present and analyse the evidence of the two concepts elaborated earlier; the amounts and categories of capital Wolfe possessed, and the deviance of his trajectory. The conclusion will answer the chapter's subquestion: to what extent can Bourdieusian field theory explain Tom Wolfe's influence in the field of journalism?

4.1. Life, work and legacy of Tom Wolfe

Thomas Kennerly Wolfe Jr. was born in 1931 in Richmond, Virginia. His father Thomas Kennerly Wolfe Sr. was a farmer and agronomy teacher with a Ph.D. from Cornell, but also worked a publisher and a journalist. His mother, Helen Hughes Wolfe, took care of the household mostly by herself. The couple would have only one more child, a daughter five years Tom's junior, much to the dismay of the youngster. As a child Tom Wolfe would fantasise about having a brother and would sometimes even go as far as to publicly claim to have not one, but eight siblings in total.

Wolfe grew up in the South in a culture which disdained any form of supposed Northeastern liberal elitism. Although perhaps not as resentful as many in his surroundings were, Wolfe would take his early Southern influence with him all his life as demonstrated in his trademark white suit, the mark of a true Southern gentleman. After his high school, in a similar 'typical' Southern move he would turn down an offer to go to college at Princeton, New Jersey's Ivy League university, for a stay at Virginia's own Washington and Lee University.

In college Wolfe would major in English and pursue his writing in several endeavours. He attended fiction seminars, co-founded the literary magazine *Shenandoah* - which would go on to publish authors such as E.E. Cummings and William Faulkner and continues in existence today - and worked on the college newspaper, after having already been editor of his high school newspaper previously. In these literary and journalistic exploits, Wolfe soon took an interest in thinkers who crossed the boundaries of the otherwise separate fields of academia, journalism and literature.

After graduating from Washington and Lee, Wolfe followed in the footsteps of one of his teachers there, Marshall Fishwick, who had greatly influenced him. Like Fishwick, Wolfe moved on to graduate school, pursuing a Ph.D. in American Studies at Yale. During graduate school, Wolfe was introduced to the writing of academics such as Max Weber, whose work would mean the first introduction to the dynamics of the concept of status in contemporary society - something which would come to play a role of great significance in Wolfe's life.

Although towards the end of his graduate studies Wolfe was offered a university teaching job, he instead opted for journalism and started as a general-assignment reporter for the *Springfield Union* in Massachusetts, although the *Daily News* in New York had also offered him a job. Apparently this successful jobhunt pleased the author quite a bit, as he rode the train home while singing "I'm-a-member-of-the-working-press." In 1959 Wolfe moved on to the *Washington Post*, remaining there for another three years before settling in at what would arguably become the most important newspaper in his career: the *New York Herald Tribune*.

At the *Herald Tribune*, Wolfe would witness with great admiration the work that Gay Talese, another author that would become associated with New Journalism, was writing for the *New York Times* and *Esquire* magazine. The article that Talese wrote on boxer Joe Louis for *Esquire* would open Wolfe's eyes "to the possibilities of

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a new form of journalism that incorporated the techniques of fiction" - the seed of New Journalism had been planted in Wolfe's brain.

Wolfe realised that he wanted to do what Talese was doing - and within a few years he had crowned himself leader of the New Journalism 'movement'. By claiming for his new movement a wide range of writers who were operating on the increasingly blurry intersection of the fields of journalism and literature and by immortalizing the phenomenon of New Journalism in a somewhat self-promoting manifesto, Wolfe would secure for himself a central spot in this revolution in the field of journalism. His unique style, some observers note, would not only characterise his prose, but even the era of the Sixties itself.171

4.2. Tom Wolfe's capital: kind and quantity

The first factor in Bourdieusian revolutionary potential is the kind and quantity of capital that an agent possesses. After assessing Wolfe's objective amounts of economic and cultural capital, the amount of social capital and the value of the connections that make up this social capital will be demonstrated in this section. To establish this value an analysis will be carried out of the New York Herald Tribune, the most important publication that Wolfe worked for, to establish its amounts of economic and cultural capital. Lastly, Wolfe's symbolic capital will be approximated.

Economic capital

Economic capital is defined as those assets which are immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of property rights. As was mentioned, Wolfe's father was the sole provider for the family with his business and writing jobs. Wolfe Junior's background can be considered upper class, "genteel" even, attending a private day school, living very "civilized and refined" with a father that had all his clothes custom-made - although Wolfe Senior refrained from ostentation or pretension, for example not going anywhere near the Country Club of Virginia which according to Wolfe Junior was the "big thing in Richmond,

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170 McKeen, Tom Wolfe, 10.
171 Ibidem, 137.
Virginia". The farmer's cooperative which Wolfe's father served as the director of, Applebome, would become a Fortune 500 Company.

As a journalist, Wolfe Junior himself started off quite modestly. As a city hall reporter for the Springfield Union in Massachusetts he earned a wage of $55. Of course, when Wolfe had finally established himself as the frontman for New Journalism and had attained his celebrity status, his books and work started generating more revenue. Nevertheless, he was never much concerned with material wealth - perhaps because he grew up never having to worry about it. In fact, in Wolfe's eyes, his whole generation did not have to worry about it very much. He argued that in the Seventies, which Wolfe baptised the "Me" decade, people had become so prosperous in America that the whole concept of work and earning a living had changed, that a job was no longer the primary determinant of one's personality and that everyone was beginning to have enough time to discover what 'The Real Me' did entail.

Cultural capital
The second fundamental category is cultural capital, which can also be understood as informational capital and exists in an embodied, institutional and objectified state. This category, mainly as education, knowledge, reading and writing, played a far greater role in Wolfe's life from an early age than economic capital. Although Wolfe Senior was, as mentioned, a man of considerable wealth, the journalist and publisher side of his father most influenced Wolfe Junior - as he said himself: "To my mind he was a writer." His entire family took schooling very seriously, placing a premium on his classroom performance at the private day school he went to. He became student council president and editor of the school newspaper in his final year - in everything a model student.

At Washington and Lee, Wolfe continued his literary interests, co-founding and working for the literary magazine Shenandoah and taking a fiction seminar and American Studies classes next to his English major. In those American Studies classes

172 McKeen, Tom Wolfe, 4.
173 Ragen, Tom Wolfe, 5.
174 McKeen, Tom Wolfe, 7. When the dollar sign is used in this thesis, all amounts referred to are in United States dollars.
176 McKeen, Tom Wolfe, 4.
177 Ragen, Tom Wolfe, 6.
Wolfe was influenced very much by his teacher Marshall Fishwick. He graduated *cum laude* in 1951.\(^{178}\)

After graduating Wolfe moved on to pursue a Ph.D. in American Studies at Ivy League's Yale University, just as his mentor Fishwick had done before him. In the end the writing of the dissertation took him longer than expected - he finally finished in 1957, when he had already been working as a journalist for a year.\(^{179}\) Wolfe's work contains several references to how stifling the life of a grad student is, constantly cooped up in a library carrel.\(^{180}\) Wolfe was offered a job teaching history at a Midwestern university, but had had enough of academic life.\(^{181}\)

Even so, with his Yale Ph.D. Wolfe commands a considerable amount of institutional cultural capital. The other two kinds of cultural capital seem less obviously present in Wolfe's life. In terms of the embodied kind however there is one example that can be given. Wolfe would study people's mannerisms from an early age, turning them into pieces of material he could later use in his writing. As he says: "I like the way people talk in rural areas - homey phrases, it's a richer speech and phrasing. (...) I like to slip them in. Sometimes it'll be a thing that probably I'm the only one aware of."\(^{182}\)

**Social capital**

The third fundamental form of power, social capital, was defined as deriving from the "possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition"\(^{183}\) - or membership in a group. In Wolfe's life and times a number of significant networks or groups can be identified which add to his stock of social capital - both bonding and bridging.

The first group Wolfe would become a part of was the academic circle of first Washington and Lee University and later Yale grad school. The academic world contributed relatively little to his stock of capital as he left it behind after finishing his Ph.D. According to himself he had spent too much time in it and had gotten everything out of it that he could. Nevertheless, Wolfe does note that his academic

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178 Ibidem, 6-7.
181 Dundy, "Tom Wolfe... But Exactly, Yes!", 16.
182 Ibidem, 15.
183 Bourdieu, 'The forms of capital', 51.
title may have helped in finding a job in journalism. Additionally, his status as an academic somewhat supported the credibility of his famous anthology on New Journalism and the introductory essay to said anthology where he was able to "expound as the professor he had trained to be at Yale". This use of social capital from his academic network was not unanimously reciprocated however, as many literary scholars were unimpressed by the essay introducing his anthology.

More important than the connections and network he had acquired during his academic career would be the journalistic groups he became a member of. Wolfe would pass through a number of newspapers, including the already mentioned Springfield Union and the more well-known and influential Washington Post before arriving at what would become the most important publication he wrote for: the New York Herald Tribune. Wolfe had become fed up with the lack of space for creativity at his two first employers. Social historian and former literary editor at the Herald Tribune Richard Kluger states that the Post even seemed to punish him for stepping out of line: "every time he [Wolfe] turned out something fresh and original, he found himself assigned to a story on sewage in Prince Georges County." So Wolfe took a scrapbook full of clippings and went to the Trib, at the time the foremost writer's paper of New York showcasing some of the nation's best journalistic talent and possessing an army of great writers.

The New York Herald Tribune: economic and cultural capital

As we saw in chapter two, social capital functions as a multiplier, allowing the agent that possesses it to make use, by extension, of the capital that the group which he belongs to disposes of. Therefore, to properly understand the value of the social capital Wolfe could derive from his involvement with the Herald Tribune, it is necessary to assess the amount of capital that this newspaper could command at the time.

The New York Herald Tribune was created in 1924 when the New York Tribune purchased the New York Herald. Over the course of twenty years the paper

184 McKeen, Tom Wolfe, 6-7.
185 Ibidem, 13.
188 McKeen, Tom Wolfe, 9.
would blossom and become very influential in the field of American journalism, only to go out of business another twenty years later in 1966 after a series of strikes.\textsuperscript{189}

In its brief existence it did rise to great heights, nevertheless. By the time Tom Wolfe arrived at its bureaus in 1962, the paper had become a fierce adversary of \textit{The New York Times} and made use of Wolfe's unorthodox features to point out the difference between the two media.\textsuperscript{190} By offering much more room to experiment with new journalistic forms and also supplying actual column space to publish these lengthy pieces, the \textit{Trib} was rapidly increasing their stock of cultural capital, becoming in the eyes of many "the most literary and certainly the most experimental of New York's city papers".\textsuperscript{191}

Although culturally the \textit{Herald Tribune} was gathering clout, economically the paper was already in its twilight years at the beginning of the Sixties. With television becoming available to the general public, thus eating away at newspaper readership nationwide and subsequently seeing advertising income drop, and widespread newspaper strikes in the 1962-63 winter, by 1964 the paper was in dire need of a large capital investment. Where once the paper had seen circulation of nearly a million, by 1965 sales were dwindling at 300,000 and the journalists, especially the older ones, were very aware of the imminent demise of their employer.\textsuperscript{192} After a brief attempt at renaming the paper \textit{World Journal Tribune}, the \textit{New York Herald Tribune} went under in spite of investments amounting to almost forty million dollars.\textsuperscript{193}

Not all of the \textit{Trib} was lost however. In 1963 the paper had started publishing a Sunday edition for which Tom Wolfe also regularly supplied features and other pieces. The Sunday \textit{Herald Tribune} grew in popularity quickly and especially the center piece of the new edition, \textit{New York} - a visually attractive magazine filled with attempts to "capture the verve and variety of city life in stylish prose".\textsuperscript{194}

After the \textit{Herald Tribune} went belly-up, the rights to the name \textit{New York} were sold to Clay Felker, who had edited the magazine since 1964.\textsuperscript{195} Although often characterised as a bully and a boor, Felker succeeded in making \textit{New York} a magazine that had significant amounts of both cultural and economic capital. A 1977 \textit{Time}

\textsuperscript{189} Kluger, \textit{The Paper}, 10 and 732-735.
\textsuperscript{190} Ibidem, 673-674.
\textsuperscript{191} Ragen, \textit{Tom Wolfe}, 11.
\textsuperscript{192} Kluger, \textit{The Paper}, 696, 709 and 717.
\textsuperscript{193} Ibidem, 736.
\textsuperscript{194} Ibidem, 679.
\textsuperscript{195} Ibidem, 680 and 742.
magazine portrait of Felker states that his "weekly Almanac de Gotham lays down standards of aspiration, acceptance and rejection as rigid as any set by Louis Quatorze", disseminating seemingly secret knowledge which gave "the insecure a superior feeling of being inside".  

At the same time, the magazine, unlike the unlucky institution that created it, did fairly well in terms of circulation. So much so in fact that after ten years, in 1977, media mogul Rupert Murdoch decided to buy the magazine. In 1985, *New York* sold 440,000 copies — a number that has remained this high over the years.

Wolfe thus seems to possess a sizable although not enormous amount of bonding social capital, mostly originating in his long association with *New York* magazine. At the same time his various other networks in which he spent less time, such as the academic world and the numerous other journalistic productions he worked for, increased his bridging social capital significantly.

*Symbolic capital*

Aside from the three fundamental forms of capital, Bourdieu specifies symbolic capital as a fourth kind, albeit a kind of power that is not independent but rather one of the other three forms in a state of (mis)recognition as legitimate. Concrete examples of this in the field of journalism are journalistic awards, recognition of the work of journalists by journalistic councils but also by influential peers — in short, the validation of a journalist's work by authorities in the field. These authorities can be more or less powerful depending on their respective position in the field of journalism — or that of politics or literature. For example, the recognition of the work of a New Journalist as literature by respected literary authors has a stronger and more important recognition effect on the cultural capital of this author than the same act by a fellow journalist.

Looking at Wolfe's life from a Bourdieusian perspective, one concept which is closely related to symbolic capital immediately springs to mind: status. In chapter two it was argued that status in effect is a form of symbolic capital, an amount of cultural capital which is (mis)recognised as legitimate competence - in Wolfe's case, the legitimate competence of a literary author.

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196 No author, "Felker: 'Bully... Boor... Genius", in *Time* 109 (1977) 3, 83.
198 See chapter 2, page 21.
Status as symbolic capital was central to Wolfe's career. As was mentioned, he was introduced to the Weberian interpretation of status in graduate school and would soon start to playfully use distinctive clothing to make a status-related point. He would dress in black turtlenecks to adopt some of the elements of the Beatnik generation, but the most important example of his dandyism would of course become his white suits. Wolfe claims that at first he did not intentionally use his clothing to set himself apart from the masses, but when he noticed the effect his dress style had, he did begin to wear his outfits as a means of subtly provoking those around him. As Wolfe himself remembers: "It annoyed people tremendously. So I liked it. It's kind of a harmless form of aggression, I guess." He would also note that "One of the greatest male fears in America today is the fear of seeming pretentious in dress. That is status consciousness. That's why I have so much fun being pompous in dress (...) I consider that very daring because it's status consciousness in another fashion." Wolfe also made status the central subject of his journalism. When asked what he felt was the function of journalism, he replied: "Perfect journalism would deal constantly with one subject: Status [sic]. And every article written would be devoted to discovering and defining some new status." According to sociologist Joel Best, in his work Wolfe does what sociologists fail to do; show the importance and workings of the concept of status. Wolfe sees people's actions as always competing for status within their subculture or 'statusphere' - a definition that fits quite well with that of a Bourdieusian field. In fact, in the account by political scientist Carol McNamara of Wolfe's concern for status it is almost as if Wolfe and Bourdieu are one and the same: "To understand individuals, Wolfe contends, one must understand the society of which they are members. For Wolfe, society is composed of multiple status spheres or groups, and “the status group—be it the army platoon or the Park Avenue charity establishment—is the paramount social unit.”

Nevertheless, the important difference is that according to Wolfe, status is the final goal of all the struggles going on in all of the different fields, including that of

199 Ibidem, 6.
201 Tom Wolfe as quoted in McKeen, Tom Wolfe, 11.
202 Dundy, "Tom Wolfe... But exactly, yes!", 9.
journalism, whereas Bourdieu states that in journalism, as a field that is concerned with the production of discourse, the ultimate prize is the right to legitimately represent social reality - not the largest amount of symbolic capital.

Wolfe not only focused on status in his manner of dress and in his journalistic writing. He also claimed in his observations about journalism and literature that literary journalism would replace the novel as literature's 'main event.' To Wolfe, New Journalists were trying to ratchet up their status from reporter to literator, struggling on one side with an older generation of journalists and on the other with literary authors - and winning both fights. As Wolfe said: "When we talk about the rise and death of literary genres, we are talking about status mainly."\(^{205}\)

Although Bourdieu does not analyse status separately and explicitly, as we saw in chapter 2 he does treat the concept of reputations, which is closely related to that of status. If one enjoys a certain reputation of, say, acclaimed literary artist, one also receives the status that goes with it - they are as two sides of the same coin. As was noted, Bourdieu argues that reputations are created by “the field of production, understood as the system of objective relations between (...) agents or institutions and as the site of the struggles for the monopoly of the power to consecrate.”\(^{206}\) Reputations can be understood as symbolic forms of cultural capital - a reputation of, again, literary author can be defined as an amount of cultural (or informational) capital that is consecrated and (mis)recognised as legitimate competence by the agents that have the power to do so.

Wolfe thus focuses heavily on the importance of symbolic capital, in the form of status. Although his conception of 'statuospheres' share many attributes with Bourdieusian fields, Bourdieu has a wider understanding of the kinds of capital that matter and sees a different objective of the struggles in the journalistic field; status is not the final goal or intrinsic value, but serves along with the other forms of capital to compete for the power to legitimately reproduce social reality. Van Dijck confirms the slight tunnel vision that Wolfe seemed to suffer from, stating that the Southern gentleman was narrowly defining New Journalism as a stylistic revolution.\(^{207}\)

Summarizing, Wolfe's overall capital profile is characterised by relatively low amounts of economic capital - and a disinterest for it, significant amounts of cultural

\(^{205}\) Van Dijck, "Cultuurkritiek en journalistiek", 66-67.
\(^{206}\) See chapter 2.3, page 16.
\(^{207}\) Van Dijck, "Cultuurkritiek en journalistiek", 68.
capital in the form of an excellent education at prestigious universities, a sizeable stock of both bonding and bridging social capital but most importantly a very large quantity of symbolic capital - and a personal fascination with it. The amounts and kinds of power an agent possesses can only halfway explain his revolutionary potential, however. The second half must be found in the deviance of the agent's trajectory. The following section will analyse Wolfe's modal and actual trajectory in order to determine the extent to which such deviance was present and demonstrate what the consequences were for his impact in the field of journalism.

4.3. Reconstruction of Tom Wolfe's modal and actual trajectories

As was mentioned in the first section, Wolfe grew up in the South in a relatively wealthy family, having a highly educated father holding a Ph.D. from Ivy League Cornell University who was a teacher, agronomist, writer and publisher. Wolfe's own education took centre stage in his childhood, being sent to a private day school while at home his mother often read to him and encouraged him to adopt reading as a way of life himself.208

This worked quite well as Wolfe excelled in school and enjoyed the experience, trying to make good grades and "get that extra smile from the teacher".209 While Wolfe did well at school, he did not seem to make many friends. He is characterised as "alone but not lonely"210 and as a very private man.211

Because of Wolfe's individuality and lack of a clear surrounding social group during his earliest youth, it is difficult to determine a well-defined modal trajectory by looking at his peers. The most important characters that determined this modal destination for Wolfe then are his parents. Taking their occupation and preferences as a model, it becomes clear that the father of New Journalism has deviated very little from his modal trajectory. Wolfe was most influenced and impressed by his father's occupation as a writer. As he himself observes: "To my mind he was a writer. My first memories of him are when he was editing [...] it seemed magical to me."212

The most obvious sign of rebellion and deviance seems to be a very brief period Wolfe worked as a truck driver, living a sort of bohemian, proletarian working-

209 Dundy, "Tom Wolfe... But Exactly, Yes!", 15.
210 Ibidem, 18.
212 Ibidem.
class fantasy.\textsuperscript{213} This rebellion, which was strongly influenced by Wolfe's admiration for the writings of Jack London, soon lost its appeal however when the writer learned his romantic views did not match the gritty reality.\textsuperscript{214}

Passing through journalism, at age 32 Wolfe would become that which his whole education, role models and background had been leading up to; a writer. Wolfe's work in mainstream, traditional journalism could be interpreted as a deviance from and rebellion against his modal trajectory. However, somewhere deep down Wolfe himself sees fear rather than heresy or rebellion as the cause of his delayed acceptance of the writer he had inscribed in the deepest regions of his habitus. "I guess I always wanted to be a writer. I didn't actually become one until I was thirty-two. I suppose there was a lot of fear involved."\textsuperscript{215} At the same time Wolfe considers himself even in his novels to start from journalism as a basis.\textsuperscript{216}

Although deviance from one's modal trajectory is an important factor in Bourdieu's explanation of an agent's revolutionary potential, in Wolfe's case there is little of such deviance present - except for the very minor venture into working-class life. Passing through a very thorough education, a few years of traditional journalism and finally arriving at literary journalism as a final destination, Wolfe quite diligently follows the modal trajectory set out for him by virtue of his background and most important childhood influences.

4.4. Conclusion

Tom Wolfe was an iconic figure within the field of journalism. To a large extent he was the intellectual father of the New Journalism phenomenon, both by experimenting with literary techniques in his journalism and by authoring an anthology and manifesto on the matter - as well as speaking about New Journalism and what it meant in many other publications and occasions.

In terms of his stock of capital Wolfe possessed relatively low amounts of economic capital - partly because he had a disregard and disinterest for it - significant amounts of cultural capital, a notable amount of both bonding and bridging capital but


\textsuperscript{214} McKeen, \textit{Tom Wolfe}, 6.

\textsuperscript{215} Dundy, "Tom Wolfe... But Exactly, Yes!", 15.

most importantly a very large quantity of symbolic capital - and a personal fascination with this last category of capital.

It is surprising that Wolfe does not exhibit a large amount of deviance in his trajectory. However, taking into account the way Wolfe moved from the traditional forms of journalism to the more rebellious and deviant New Journalism, we are reminded of the second part of the definition of deviance; agents can display deviance by entering a different field than their group of origin, or by moving in a deviant manner inside the field they enter. By refusing to follow the dictates of economic capital in his journalism but instead opting for the integration of literary techniques into his writing, Wolfe was doing exactly that.

Bourdieu's field theory thus seems to clarify Wolfe's influence in the field of journalism rather well. The following three chapters will assess the extent to which this holds true for three other icons of New Journalism and the extent to which all four authors fit one specific Bourdieusian profile. The next chapter does so for the Prince of Gonzo; Hunter S. Thompson.

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217 See chapter 2.2., page 11.
Chapter 5 - Hunter S. Thompson

This second case study chapter investigates the causes of and factors playing a role in the revolutionary potential that expressed itself in the life and work of Hunter S. Thompson. Firstly, the introduction presents a short biography and provides a general assessment of his revolutionary influence for the fields of journalism and the phenomenon of New Journalism in particular. Secondly, the methodology that was elaborated in chapter two is used to answer the research question of this chapter, namely to what extent can Bourdieu's field theory explain this revolutionary influence?

5.1. Life, work and legacy of Hunter S. Thompson

Hunter Thompson was born in 1937 in Louisville, Kentucky, as a first son of three to Virginia Ray and Jack R. Thompson, who was an insurance agent. During his youth he was highly interested in sports, a passion that would return later on when he became a sports writer. As he grew into puberty, his penchant for wildness surfaced more and more often, partly because he was no longer kept on the 'straight and narrow' by his father who passed away when Thompson was fifteen. Underage drinking, drunk driving, vandalism and shoplifting caused him to have regular run ins with the police.218.

It was not all raucous rebellion and small criminality though. Thompson also became a member of the upper-class literary high school association Athenaeum, where he found a forum for his writing - again as an expression of the wildness in him however, as witnessed for example in his well-known rhetorical question: "who is the happier man, he who has braved the storm of life and lived, or he who has stayed securely on shore and merely existed?"219

Nevertheless, Thompson's misbehaving caught up with him by the end of high school when he was sentenced to sixty days in juvenile prison for robbery220 and was ordered to join reform school or the military upon release. So as his richer, more fortunate friends went off to Ivy League schools, Hunter Thompson had to join the

219 Perry, Fear and Loathing, 17.
Although his rebelliousness and dislike of following orders made times tough for the young maverick, he did take up sports writing again and enjoyed it so much that when he was honorably discharged, he started building his career in journalism.  

Journalistic career: the Prince of Gonzo

After leaving the armed forces, Thompson traveled throughout South America freelancing for several publications and began writing numerous short stories as well as his first two novels, *Prince Jellyfish* (which was never published) and *The Rum Diary* (which was only published in 1998). His real fame did not materialize until 1966 however, when his book *Hell's Angels: The Strange and Terrible Saga of the Outlaw Motorcycle Gang* was published. It received generally positive reviews, went through 29 reprints within twenty years and firmly marked Thompson's ascendance as a non-fiction writer and New Journalist. In the years that followed he would become a cult hero and one of the defining members of the New Journalism phenomenon - or, as he himself would come to name his style, 'Gonzo journalism'.

As is the case with New Journalism as a whole, Gonzo journalism to a large extent defies any concise and neat definition. According to Douglas Brinkley, Thompson's literary executor, Gonzo can be best described as follows:

"Gonzo requires virtually no rewriting: the reporter and his quest for information are central to the story, told via a fusion of bedrock reality and stark fantasy in a way that is meant to amuse both the author and the reader. Stream-of-consciousness, article excerpts, transcribed interviews, telephone conversations - these are the elements of a piece of aggressively subjective Gonzo journalism."

In his obituary in *The Economist*, it is stated that Thompson would "explain that it [Gonzo journalism] followed William Faulkner's dictum that "the best fiction is more true than any kind of journalism". Thompson's famous piece *The Kentucky Derby is Decadent and Depraved* is often marked as the first real example of Gonzo. As

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221 Perry, *Fear and Loathing* 22-23.
224 Perry, *Fear and Loathing*, 122.
such, it is also credited with having casually and almost accidentally smashed the rules of American journalism.\textsuperscript{227}

New Journalism profoundly influenced the field of journalism in 1960s America. Hunter S. Thompson and his Gonzo journalism formed an integral part of this revolutionary change. Gonzo journalism and the general concept of Gonzo have even become part of our modern lexicon.\textsuperscript{228} As David Halberstam, another well-known American reporter and author, notes in his foreword to a collection of Thompson's letters: "His truths are, I suspect, larger than the truths of most of the rest of us [...] He helps fill an immense vacuum in the world of journalism."\textsuperscript{229}

The characterisation of Thompson as smashing the rules of American journalism reminds one of the description of the Bourdieusian heretic who, as was described in chapter two, rebels against the ruling doxa using subversive strategies.\textsuperscript{230} Other academic publications on Thompson's life and work also provide evidence to support this interpretation. Firstly, in support of the Bourdieusian statement that heretics force the orthodox, ruling group to defend their implicit rules, American literature scholar Greg Wright concludes that one of Gonzo's main achievements was and always has been that it constantly forces the "static authorities" who maintain status quo to stay alert and on the defensive.\textsuperscript{231} Secondly, the claim to the source that the subversive heretics make according to Bourdieu's theory can also be distinguished in Thompson's Gonzo journalism. According to English scholar John Hellmann, Thompson himself asserts that Gonzo is a necessary antidote to the "prepackaged language, forms, and concepts with which the corporate media produce illusory images and abstractions."\textsuperscript{232}

Thompson's Gonzo journalism and its heterodox approach to the rules of journalism might thus be interpreted as an example of a Bourdieusian heresy against the ruling group. To what extent his capital profile and trajectory confirm this interpretation will be analysed in the following section.

\textsuperscript{227}Idem.
\textsuperscript{228}Steven Hoover, "Hunter Thompson and gonzo journalism. A research guide", in \textit{Articles} 107 (2009), accessed at http://digitalcommons.library.unlv.edu/lib_articles/107, 31-10-2011.
\textsuperscript{230}See chapter 2, page 14.
5.2. Hunter S. Thompson's capital: kind and quantity

The first factor in Bourdieusian revolutionary potential is the kind and quantity of capital that an agent possesses. After assessing Thompson's objective amounts of economic and cultural capital and analysing what this meant in the context of the field of journalism and field theory in general, the amount of social capital and the value of the connections that make up this social capital will be demonstrated in this section. To establish this value, *Rolling Stone*, arguably the most important publication in Hunter Thompson's professional career, will be analysed along the same lines of economic and cultural capital. Lastly, the amount of symbolic capital that Thompson possessed will be approximated.

*Economic capital*

Hunter Stockton Thompson was born into a middle class family and even though he spent a lot of time with the 'rich kids' in Louisville and was well-liked by many of them, some others considered him "too lower-class for their circles". After his time in the military, he spent a while in New York City where he got a job as a copyboy at *Time* magazine earning $85 per week - which in those days was enough for someone to support himself at a reasonable standard of living.

This situation of relative economic deprivation never changed much. As Halberstam states, for Thompson "the financial rewards were and are minimal [...] he was doing wonderful work and getting very little back for it financially [...] The IRS seems to be in constant pursuit, and he is always arguing with editors for his last check and for his expense accounts."

Although Thompson became increasingly well-known and even (in)famous, material wealth and with it economic capital never really accumulated - even after the period of the Sixties. This was also because of his own disinterest in such matters and even embarrassment at earned money, although he sometimes needed it badly. In an interview given to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in 1977, Thompson states he once received an $11,000 royalty cheque and thought to himself "Man. Jesus Christ... I haven't paid taxes in five years." He then describes how he proceeded to

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235 Halberstam, "Foreword", xi.
give the cheque away to a stockbroker, threatening to pull out the man's teeth if he ever saw him again.  

In terms of physical property or property rights, which as Bourdieu mentions also belong to the economic category, Thompson is equally modestly endowed. Apart from his small ranch called 'Owl Farm' in Woody Creek Colorado - which he would sometimes consider selling because of his financial inability to keep the house in shape - Thompson never accumulated any assets worth mentioning that could be directly and immediately converted into money, as Bourdieu defines economic capital. In fact, the Prince of Gonzo cultivated a strong loathing towards economic capital, stating for example in a letter in 1964 that he was "coming to view the free enterprise system as the greatest single evil in the history of human savagery". Not surprisingly then, the economic power Thompson brings to the equation is quite minimal.

Returning to Bourdieu's field theory and the characterisation of Thompson as a heretic, the conclusion that he disposed of a relatively low amount of economic capital is congruent with the earlier findings. The journalistic field according to Bourdieu is only very minimally autonomous, following to a large extent the rules set by economic capital and thus being dominated by that category also. Bourdieu also states that it is mainly the newcomers in a field, the agents who possess less of the specific capital of a field, who will resort to heresy and subversive strategies. Thus, Thompson's low amount of economic capital can be interpreted as a cause of his role as a heretic within the field of journalism. To be able to have any impact as a rebel, however, he would then need more capital in the remaining categories.

Cultural capital
For this second category, as with economic capital, Thompson at first glance does not seem to have much clout - at least not in the institutionalised form of diplomas and official credentials. Kicked out of high school many times, the idea of going to university never quite appealed to Thompson - much too structured - and he also

237 Brinkley, Fear and Loathing in America, 682-683.
239 See chapter 2.4, page 23.
240 See chapter 2, page 14.
resented not being able to join his old upper class friends at their Ivy League schools.\textsuperscript{241} When he did get the opportunity to take some classes at New York's Ivy League Columbia University while he worked the copyboy job at \textit{Time}, he quickly dropped out again. Within a few months, according to friends from that period, he had realised that he was not learning anything valuable anyway.\textsuperscript{242}

Thompson's stubborn resistance to any authority, outside interference or imposition which had also made his time in the military significantly more complicated thus made formal education problematic. However, he did have a very strong curiosity, so from an early age he educated himself. Firstly through reading - always and everything. He stacked paperback books around his bed, two feet high, and devoured them. A friend who became an English major at Princeton remembers that "Hunter was better read as a high-school student than most of the people I graduated with."\textsuperscript{243}

According to Anita Thompson, Hunter Thompson's second wife, once Thompson had chosen writing he "made a point of backing up his immense talent with scrupulous research and genuine scholarship."\textsuperscript{244} She mentions for example that he copied entire Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald novels to get a feel for the rhythm of their writing - although it is of course debatable to what extent this technical training represents scholarship in the strictest sense of the word.\textsuperscript{245}

A last place where Thompson drew cultural capital from were the various journalistic organisations he worked for over time, first for smaller publications such as the Middletown \textit{Times Herald-Record}\textsuperscript{246} and the \textit{National Observer} (a sister publication to the \textit{Wall Street Journal}) but later also the then still young \textit{Rolling Stone} magazine which would grow in fame along with Thompson.

It is questionable however how much socialisation actually went on in the journalistic organisations Hunter Thompson worked for. He was fired from the \textit{Times-Herald Record} for kicking open the office candy machine,\textsuperscript{247} from \textit{Time} for

\begin{itemize}
\item 241 Perry, \textit{Fear and Loathing}, 29.
\item 242 Ibidem, 31.
\item 243 Ibidem, 9.
\item 244 Thompson, ed., \textit{Ancient Gonzo Wisdom}, 27.
\item 246 Often referred to as the \textit{Daily Record}
\end{itemize}
insubordination and split up with the Observer bitterly, over a minor disagreement.

Thus, aside from everything that Thompson learned and taught himself by following the urge to satisfy his extremely wide curiosity, his stock of cultural capital also would appear to be modest. Of the three forms of cultural capital Bourdieu distinguishes - embodied, objectified and institutionalised - Thompson possesses mainly the embodied kind.

Although Thompson's special lack of economic capital is incongruent with the supposedly high proportion of economic capital in the field of journalism as identified by Bourdieu, Thompson's repulsion at the baseness of economic capital and monetary motivations does fit well with heretic attitudes described in field theory. The agents at the cultural pole of the field look down upon the agents on the economic side. The fact that Thompson's cultural capital, although also somewhat modest, still far exceeded his economic capital reinforces this interpretation. This interpretation is further supported by the observation that Thompson was perhaps more of a fiction writer at heart than a journalist. As fellow journalist William Kennedy once commented, perhaps they "were both failed novelists who had turned to journalism in order to make a living." As an aspiring or failed literator and heretic against the economic dictates of the field of journalism in which Thompson moved, his attempts to distinguish himself from worldly possessions and wealth come to seem quite logical.

Social capital

Regarding the third fundamental kind of capital, for Hunter Thompson in terms of his journalistic career two publications - the already mentioned Time magazine and National Observer - stand out somewhat regarding the length of time the unruly author spent working for them. A third outlet however was the most important publication in his career in this regard: Rolling Stone magazine. Thompson started working for it in 1970, while he was running for sheriff of Aspen. He met editor in

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249 Perry, Fear and Loathing, 92-93.
chief Jann Wenner during that run for office and stayed on for fourteen years\textsuperscript{251} - although officially he was kept on as head of the National Affairs Desk at the magazine even until his death in 2005.\textsuperscript{252}

The first two publications where Thompson worked for were unable or unwilling to hold on to the budding Gonzo journalist for more than a few years. At Time magazine the young copyboy rebelled when it was made clear to him that despite having two years of experience at the publication, he would still have to work his way through "a complex maze of desks, cubicles, and tiny offices [...] before making it into the field where he could roam the world and file copy from pay phones."\textsuperscript{253} The National Observer fired him over a disagreement regarding the content of one of Thompson's pieces - ironically, a review of other prominent New Journalist Tom Wolfe's The Kandy-Colored Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby. And also ironically, the piece was killed because it supposedly contained too much personal opinion.\textsuperscript{254} The editors of the Observer would no doubt agree with the words Thompson had heard at his earlier firing from the Times Herald-Record: "At this moment, your idiosyncrasies exceed your talent."

In his professional career in general Hunter Thompson thus did not establish many durable networks of relationships - or social capital - with the notable exception of his relationship with Wenner at Rolling Stone magazine. He fought with all his employers for more freedom, and more money. The mere fact of becoming a staff writer made him uncomfortable, as he stated to Observer colleagues: "There's something about working for a company that feels like a tarantula crawling up my back."\textsuperscript{255}

Rolling Stone: economic and cultural capital
When Thompson showed up in Jann Wenner's office, the editor of the Rolling Stone did not feel the same way as Thompson's previous bosses. As Wenner recalls, "[h]e was thirty-three, stood six-three, shaved bald, dark glasses, smoking, carrying two

\textsuperscript{252} Jann S. Wenner, "My Brother in Arms", Rolling Stone, 970 (2005), 33-34 here: 33.
\textsuperscript{253} Perry, Fear and Loathing, 36.
\textsuperscript{254} Ibidem, 92.
\textsuperscript{255} Perry, Fear and Loathing, 75.
six-packs of beer; he sat down [...] and didn't leave me for three hours. He was hypnotic.”

Three years prior, in 1967, Berkeley dropout Wenner had started *Rolling Stone* with $7,500 he collected from friends and family to be able to publish his own rock'n'roll journalism which he could not sell anywhere else. Within two years, it had become generally accepted as the most important rock'n'roll magazine in the U.S. and by extension the world. The magazine not only covered popular music, but also everything that related to such music in some way or another. In the Sixties, this included politics, sports, movies and other forms of American social behavior and in covering these issues along with the music, the magazine would achieve "legendary status" and even a "mythical power" in American popular culture.

Economically, the magazine would increase its capital very quickly although the first two years were difficult. Starting off as mentioned, on the modest collections of Wenner, by the end of fiscal year 1970 the magazine was over $250,000 in debt and came dangerously close to bankruptcy. By 1977 however, the magazine was approaching the magical circulation number of one million copies and another ten years later the publishing house of *Rolling Stone* had grown to gain a value of approximately $250 million.

Culturally, as mentioned above, *Rolling Stone* magazine occupies a central spot in American popular culture and music journalism of the Sixties. But it did more than just cover rock'n'roll music: the magazine would also become known for its investigative reporting and in-depth features. The single photograph covers could even catapult a minor B-list celebrity into stardom. The fact that the magazine could bestow this sort of legitimacy and status onto the subjects it covered shows the strong stock of capital it possessed.

256 Wenner, "My Brother in Arms", 33.
262 Ibidem, 338 and 7.
263 Lambiase, "Impressing the editor", 4.
The same star-building capacity to an extent applied to its writers. Editor Jann Wenner was extremely successful in attracting and fostering talent, reestablishing reputations of reporters such as Joe Eszterhas and Howard Kohn, who had left their previous jobs under "disreputable circumstances". As Wenner himself put it: "We fix broken careers."\textsuperscript{264}

Thus, when Hunter S. Thompson walked into Wenner's office, as a part of his campaign for sheriff of Aspen, he was committing himself to a magazine with a small but soon to be exploding amount of economic capital and an important amount of cultural capital to go along with it. The journalism of \textit{Rolling Stone}, covering musicians and politicians with the same interest, reverberated with an entire generation and meant a significant increase in Thompson's social capital.

Nevertheless, Thompson did always remain a loose cannon and was notoriously hard to control, showing little sign of genuine or lasting bonding social capital. At one point Wenner even decided to leave Thompson hanging out to dry when Dr. Gonzo failed to file any copy from Saigon. So although \textit{Rolling Stone} did increase Thompson's bonding social capital slightly and his bridging category a little more, all in all the Prince of Gonzo does not seem to have gathered a very large stock of social capital in his professional career.

Accounts of his personal life do demonstrate that the nonconformist, rebellious author did however gather a "snowleopard-like network of lifelong friends".\textsuperscript{265} He had a rolodex that "was equal to those found at Newsweek or Time, with telephone conference call (on speaker phone) being his primary mode of communicating with his eccentric circle of cronies" - of whom many were journalists themselves.\textsuperscript{266}

One explanation for the discrepancy between his professional success and seeming lack of social capital could be that, once he had more or less stumbled his way into the publication of \textit{Hell's Angels}, he could suddenly dispose of a large amount of bridging social capital. Offers for work were coming in from all sides even though Thompson did not seem "impressed to be holding court with top New York

\textsuperscript{264} Jann Wenner as quoted in Draper, \textit{Rolling Stone Magazine}, 12.
\textsuperscript{266} Douglas Brinkley, "Contentment was not enough", \textit{Rolling Stone} 24-03-2005, 36-42 here: 37.
No, his social capital seems mostly to be supported by his reputation and cult status - in other words, by his symbolic capital.

Symbolic capital

The category of symbolic capital, *id est* any of the other three forms of capital (mis)recognised as legitimate competence, can be observed in Thompson's life in a number of manifestations. Unlike Wolfe, Thompson never accumulated any symbolic capital in the forms of prizes or awards. In fact, as the following two chapters will show, he is the only New Journalist in our selection that did not receive formal critical acclaim for his writing, from either the literary or the journalistic field. The closest that he ever got was a Writers Guild of America, Best Documentary Screenplay nomination for *Gonzo: the Life and Works of Dr. Hunter S. Thompson.* Perhaps this is just as well as Hunter Thompson most likely would have taken any official award as an insult and taken it into his backyard to fire guns at it.

No, the symbolic capital that Thompson commanded resided mostly in his status and carefully cultivated persona of the Prince of Gonzo. More so than any other New Journalist, or even any other journalist period, Thompson developed a wildness, a penchant for chaos and craziness, infused with alcohol and drug abuse, that is often seen as an essential part of Gonzo Journalism. The slogan "I hate to advocate drugs, alcohol, violence or insanity to anyone, but they've always worked for me" became one of his best-known quotes. In fact, since 2001 there is an award named after Thompson called the *Hunter S. Thompson NORML Media Award for Outstanding Achievement in Advancing the Cause of Ending Marijuana Prohibition.*

Thompson's symbolic capital thus is found mostly in his eccentric personality and the consequences this had for his writing. Even Wenner was completely flabbergasted by this phenomenon of a man. The editor remembers saying after his first encounter with Thompson at the *Rolling Stone* offices, "Look, I know I'm supposed to be the spokesman for the youth generation and everything [...] But what

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267 Perry, *Fear and Loathing*, 128 and 118.
the fuck was *that?*\textsuperscript{271} Thompson's fans and some of his colleagues embraced his erratic writing as a legitimate type of journalistic discourse representing the turbulent social reality of the Sixties.

So next to a very limited amount of economic capital, a modest amount of embodied cultural capital and an equally modest amount of mostly bridging social capital, Thompson's reputation, persona and careful (mis)management of them both supplied him with a sizeable amount of symbolic capital. The next section attempts to identify causes for Thompson's revolutionary attitudes that employ this stock of capital towards transformation of the journalistic field - the extent of deviance in his trajectory.

5.3. Reconstruction of Hunter S. Thompson's modal and actual trajectories

We saw that the second factor causing an agent's revolutionary potential can be found in the deviance of their life's trajectory, or as Bourdieu writes, the "objective gap between their individual trajectory and the modal trajectory of their group of origin, in other words, between the slope of their actual trajectory and the modal slope of the probable career that remains inscribed in the deepest regions of a person's habitus."\textsuperscript{272}

For Hunter Thompson a number of clues towards the extent of his deviance were already briefly mentioned. The fact that during his youth he often associated with the wealthy youngsters in Louisville but was unable to really rise from his middle class background and truly belong with the elite, is one important piece of evidence. Thompson's group of origin thus can be defined as the wealthy upper class of Louisville. He became a member of two exclusive groups, the Castlewood Athletic Club and later the Athenaeum literary association, which was one of many but carried the biggest reputation and was "the toniest of them all".\textsuperscript{273} According to a classmate, Thompson "always fit in well with the upper-class kids in town" even though "[h]e never had any money like we did."\textsuperscript{274}

Because of this belonging to a different economic class, Thompson was inevitably from the very outset on a different trajectory than the rest of the members of his groups of origin. According to one of Thompson's friends, "Hunter really

\textsuperscript{271} Draper, *Rolling Stone*, 212.
\textsuperscript{273} Perry, *Fear and Loathing*, 13.
\textsuperscript{274} Idem.
resented being on the outside looking in. [...] He was an outsider not because of who he was, but because he didn't have the family money and connections behind him to allow him to do some of the things that his friends did. Paul Perry, one of Thompson's biographers, argues that the "frustrations of this social situation may have been partly responsible for the rage and erratic behavior that seemed to permeate his being." This resentment and frustration can also be detected in the aversive attitude Thompson developed towards material wealth and the entire system of capitalism in general, which were mentioned in the section about his economic capital.

A significant amount of deviance thus appeared early in Hunter Thompson's life trajectory. The distance between his individual trajectory and the modal trajectory which was followed by his peer group, a gap which at first was only noticeable in the economic distance between the two different trajectories, was compounded when most members of his group of origin went off to Ivy League schools and he was more or less left behind to join the army after serving thirty days in juvenile prison. The second Bourdieusian factor in Thompson's revolutionary potential is thus significantly present.

5.4. Conclusion

This chapter aimed to explain the influence Hunter S. Thompson had on the field of journalism in the Sixties by looking at two factors in his revolutionary potential identified by Bourdieu: firstly the amounts and kinds of capital he possessed and secondly the extent to which his life's trajectory can be qualified as deviant.

On the first factor, the evidence presented above shows that in all three fundamental categories of power the author was not well-endowed to say the least - except for the derivative category of symbolic capital. Throughout his life, Thompson possessed very little material wealth and also actively expressed his repulsion of and contempt for monetary gains, possessions and even the entire free enterprise system. His stock of economic capital was thus very limited. The same is true of his institutionalised cultural capital: he was kicked out of school repeatedly and although he took some classes at Columbia University, he never really lasted and was not 'student material'. Neither did the author have large amounts of bonding social capital,

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275 Ibidem, 14.
276 Idem.
277 Whitmer, When The Going Gets Weird, 71.
at least not in his professional career, as is shown by his inability to stay with an organisation for long periods of time - with the notable exception of Rolling Stone magazine.

In terms of bridging social capital Thompson was shown to fare better. His large, 'leopard-like' network of friends and acquaintances facilitated the publication and dissemination of his work to a great extent - which is in line with one of the most important functions of bridging social capital that was pointed out in chapter two. He also was more successful in accumulating embodied cultural capital, by indulging in a relentless curiosity, becoming a voracious reader from an early age and always maintaining a learning attitude. As Anita Thompson states: "Hunter had the experience, the insight and the wisdom that come with age, but he also had the enthusiasm, the vitality, and the curiosity of a teenager. He never stopped wondering about things, and that is what kept him young. He never stopped learning." 278

Lastly, Thompson by virtue of his carefully (mis)managed reputation and persona did possess a sizeable amount of symbolic capital. The Prince of Gonzo would become somewhat of a cult-figure to his fans and followers over the years.

The second factor in clarifying revolutionary potential was present more unambiguously in the life of Hunter S. Thompson. Growing up in a surrounding of upper-class athletic clubs, literary associations and rich friends, he could not truly belong to their ranks economically. Knowing this and also experiencing his friends going off onto other trajectories after high school meant that his trajectory deviated considerably from the modal path that was unattainable for Thompson - purely because of his belonging to a different economic class.

Taken together, then, Thompson's recipe for revolutionary potential is a combination of a large stock of embodied cultural capital, some bridging social capital, and a deviant trajectory. Looking back towards Wolfe's characteristics (little economic capital, high amounts of other categories, no deviant trajectory) the similarities lie in a low amount of economic capital - although Wolfe, also by virtue of his parents, was slightly better off than Thompson - relatively high amount of cultural capital, high amount of symbolic capital and deviant movement within the field of journalism. This profile will be contrasted with those of the other two selected

278 Thompson, The Gonzo Way, 23.
New Journalists, to assess the extent to which a uniform pattern can be distinguished in the causes for their influence.

Attention will also be given to the fact that the first two writers in our analysis found their way towards New Journalism in the opposite direction from the second two authors; whereas Thompson and Wolfe can be characterised as primarily or firstly journalists, the following two authors started off mainly as literary writers before entering the field of journalism. The first of these two literators-turned-journalists that is analysed, is Truman Capote.
Chapter 6 - Truman Capote

Following the same structure as the previous two chapters, this one presents the third case study which investigates the sources of the revolutionary potential in the life of another famous and iconic example of New Journalism: Truman Capote - born as Truman Streckfus Persons. After a brief introduction providing a general assessment of his relevance for literature, journalism and New Journalism, this chapter again looks at the amounts and kinds of capital possessed by Capote as well as the deviance of his trajectory. The conclusion answers the subquestion to what extent Bourdieu's field theory can explain Truman Capote's revolutionary influence.

6.1. Life, work and legacy of Truman Capote

Truman Streckfus Persons was born in New Orleans on September 30 1924 to his father Archulus (Arch) Persons, a salesman, and his mother Lillie Mae Faulkner. She was only seventeen at the time and since Arch could not support her at that time she resolved to have an abortion. However, pleading and stalling by her husband caused her pregnancy to advance beyond the point where this was an option.279

During Capote's youngest years, Arch Persons proved to hardly be a reliable father, constantly chasing after get-rich-quick schemes, often without much success and abandoning them as quickly as he thought them up. The marriage withered slowly away, ending in divorce and in 1930 Truman, after having lived with a series of aunts for short periods of time,280 was left with friends of his mothers in Monroeville, Alabama.281 He was finally adopted by his mother's new husband, a Cuban man named Joseph Capote, whose last name he also took.282

In Monroeville, around the age of eleven, he also began writing in a 'serious' way, meaning that "in the sense that like other kids go home and practice the violin or the piano or whatever, I used to go home from school every day and I would write for about three hours. I was obsessed by it."283 By the time he was fifteen, he was sure he

279 Clarke, Capote, 4-7.
281 Clarke, Capote, 9-10.
282 Ibidem, 37-38.
wanted to be a writer and had started "immodestly" sending out stories to magazines and literary quarterlies.\textsuperscript{284}

In his mid-teens, Capote joined his mother and Cuban life partner in New York, where he dropped out of school and got a job at \textit{The New Yorker} magazine.\textsuperscript{285} However, during the time that he worked there initially he never rose above the ranks of copy-boy, sorting cartoons and pieces rather than writing them. This frustration finally led to a conflict with his employer and he focused even more on his writing, while Joe Capote supported him.\textsuperscript{286}

His first break into the literary field came when, after successfully publishing a short story called "Miriam", Capote was given a $1,500 advance to finish his first novel, \textit{Other Voices, Other Rooms}. Not a large amount in those days when publishers were paying large advances, Capote was instead charmed by the "paternal warmth and encouragement" that Random House editor Robert Linscott purveyed.\textsuperscript{287}

The novel, published when Capote was still only 23 years old, was a critical and financial success and so would most of the volumes of short stories, reportage and novellas that followed be. With the success came also the social celebrity which he would carefully cultivate in the years to come.\textsuperscript{288}

\textit{Journalistic career: the shadow of In Cold Blood}

Although Capote started out in the field of literature, his greatest fame did not come from his fiction writing but from the non-fiction novel \textit{In Cold Blood} which most consider to be his masterpiece.\textsuperscript{289} In the novel, which was published serially in \textit{The New Yorker} and subsequently as a book in 1965, Capote provides a "detailed, painstakingly researched and chilling account of the 1959 slaying of a Kansas farm family and the capture, trial and execution of the two killers."\textsuperscript{290} Upon being published, the book's sales soared and "brought its author millions of dollars and a

\textsuperscript{286} Clarke, \textit{Capote}, 76-77.
\textsuperscript{287} Robinson, "The Legend of Little T", 14-15.
\textsuperscript{289} Idem.
fame unparalleled by nearly any other literary author since."²⁹¹ In terms of content, Capote stated that with the creation of the genre of the non-fiction novel he "wanted to produce a journalistic novel, something on a large scale that would have the credibility of fact, the immediacy of film, the depth and freedom of prose, and the precision of poetry."²⁹²

After *In Cold Blood* Capote started working on *Answered Prayers* which was to be a detailed and biting non-fiction account of the jetset world in which he had been moving for years. However, after being shunned by many friends and acquaintances upon releasing the first few chapters, he spiraled into a binge of alcohol and drug abuse.²⁹³ Truman Capote was never able to escape from the shadow of his greatest achievement.

Nevertheless, the significance of that greatest achievement and also his earlier literary work for the field of journalism is undeniably great. Some even go so far as to claim his work "upgraded the entire publishing industry,"²⁹⁴ that his "contributions to our national life have been of inestimable value"²⁹⁵ and that his exploration of the new genre of the non-fiction novel had paved the way for further best-selling non-fiction work such as Norman Mailer's *Armies of the Night*.²⁹⁶ Truman Capote thus followed a different trajectory than Tom Wolfe and Hunter Thompson; Capote started in the literary field and was not drawn towards journalism until later. Or, perhaps more accurately, Capote's early and sizeable literary success made sure he was not forced to make a living with journalism as a 'failed novelist.'

### 6.2. Truman Capote's capital: kind and quantity

As in the previous chapter, in this section the objective amounts of economic and cultural capital Capote possessed are assessed as the first factor in the Bourdieusian concept of revolutionary potential. The evidence that is found will be interpreted in the context of field theory, after which Capote's stock of social capital and the value of the connections that constitute it will be demonstrated. To establish this value, the

²⁹² Idem.
²⁹³ Idem.
²⁹⁴ Clarke, *Capote*, 363.
²⁹⁶ Clarke, *Capote*, 360.
publication with which Truman Capote had the strongest connection will be assessed along the same lines of economic and cultural capital. Lastly, the amount of symbolic capital that Capote possessed will be approximated.

**Economic capital**

Truman Capote grew up in a family with modest means. His father Arch Persons, as mentioned, was a bit of a schemer, with dreams of turning one of his many ideas into a gold mine that nonetheless always remained just dreams. Capote's grandmother, Lillie Mae Faulk's mother, had died a few years before the two would-be parents would meet, "leaving a comfortable estate for her five children". Other than that, she never was able to mount much of a career - although she tried for a long time. Capote's family background was thus neither one of great wealth nor of destitution - although the writer himself expressed a different opinion: "My relatives were nothin', dirt-poor farmers." In his younger years he would always be strapped for cash, often relying on his friends to engage in the same social activities - even though on one occasion he paid the bill at a night club with a mountain of pennies he had collected.

This all changed radically once Capote ascended relatively quickly to a position of some fame and recognition within - at first - the literary field. The success of his first novel brought with it considerable attention and economic gains. After publishing *In Cold Blood* this wealth of course only expanded. Whereas before the 'new book', as Capote referred to it, magazine reportage was still to an extent the writer's "bread and butter", this was over the moment *In Cold Blood* came out. As fellow author and acquaintance of Capote, James A. Michener, states, "I judged at the time that Truman must have earned at least four million dollars from his book and more likely five. His extraordinary wealth allowed him to behave in extraordinary manners." Others observe that much of his income went to agents, lawyers and taxes and subsequently "he was not rich." Even so, he did begin to live more luxuriously.

297 Clarke, *Capote*, 4.
298 Ibidem, 14.
299 Ibidem, 49.
300 Ibidem, 56.
302 Michener, "Foreword", 8.
303 Clarke, *Capote*, 366.
Capote's own attitude towards his increasing affluence was one of satisfied success. In 1978 he stated "I always knew that I wanted to be a writer and that I wanted to be rich and famous".\(^{304}\) He relished his newly acquired position amongst the jetset of the world, throwing an enormous masked ball in November 1966, to celebrate the publishing of *In Cold Blood*. This, according to one of Capote's acquaintances, had been a childhood wish of the author; "He wanted to give the biggest and best goddamned party that anybody had ever heard of."\(^{305}\)

Summarizing, although Truman Capote came from a modest background, he succeeded in becoming as rich and famous as he dreamt. His stock of economic capital - capital which is immediately and directly convertible into money - increased greatly with the enormous book sales he enjoyed, catapulting him into the upper class surroundings of rich and famous jetsetters - to Capote's own great delight.

*Cultural capital*

Due to an unstable home environment Capote often changed schools, attending several private ones such as Trinity School and St. John's Academy in New York. All this switching and moving around was possibly one of the things causing his profound dislike of institutionalised learning. Capote did poorly in his courses, even English, and many of his teachers told his parents that he was probably mentally backward.\(^{306}\) However, when he was sent to Columbia University to take a whole range of psychological and aptitude tests it turned out that he was in fact highly intelligent and merely bored to death in class.\(^{307}\) He himself has stated that, after realising he wanted to be a writer, he "was determined never to set a studious foot inside a college classroom. I felt that either one was or wasn't a writer, and no combination of professors could influence the outcome."\(^{308}\) In any case, his attendance records to classes at the different institutions kept going down until finally, in his late teens, he left schooling for what it was and focused on his ambitions as a writer.\(^{309}\)

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305 Clarke, *Capote*, 369.
307 Gloria Steinem, ""Go Right Ahead and Ask Me Anything" (And So She Did)", in M. Thomas Inge (ed.), *Truman Capote: Conversations* (Jackson, University Press of Mississippi: 1987)
309 Clarke, *Capote*, 67-68.
Perhaps most telling of his intelligence coupled with a strong aversion for formal, institutionalised cultural education was the fact that he taught himself how to read even before attending any school. At the age of five or six "he was carrying a tiny dictionary wherever he went, along with a pencil and paper on which he could scribble notes." ³¹⁰

Capote himself has declared he has learnt the most in terms of writing from Newton Arvin, a literary critic and academic with whom Capote had an affair during two years. "Newton was my Harvard", he once claimed - although some maintain that even this tutoring did not instill in the author a very critical mind as his opinions of other works of art often do not go beyond a simple qualification such as "very good" or "dreadful". ³¹¹

Capote thus does not possess a large amount of institutionalised cultural capital. Some clues for embodied cultural capital however are present and in fact indicative of his most important piece of cultural capital; the stylistic and technical mastery in his writing. Having begun from a young age to hone his writing skills and stylistical aptitude, at thirteen he was already surprising teachers with his prose. ³¹² As the years went by, he would further perfect these skills, coming to be called a "literary genius" whose "prose styling was impeccable". ³¹³ In his obituary the *New York Times* quotes critic Mark Schorer who said about Capote that "[p]erhaps the single constant in his prose is style, and the emphasis he himself places upon the importance of style." ³¹⁴

Regarding cultural capital, the most important assets available to Truman Capote thus consisted of his own very strong curiosity and autodidactic efforts, which lasted a lifetime, and the very sizeable results of his arduous labour to increase his stylistic abilities.

*Social capital*

Although Capote published some of his short stories in a variety of magazines (*Mademoiselle, Harper's Bazaar, Esquire, Story, Vogue*) he did not remain attached

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³¹⁰ Ibidem, 49.
³¹¹ Mallon, "Golden Boy".
³¹² Clarke, *Capote*, 50.
to the professional social circles that the staff of these magazines made up. One notable exception exists to this rule however, in the form of the magazine *The New Yorker*. Capote's fascination with and love for this publication began early on, as a friend from Greenwich remembers. He read it every week and "thought it the ultimate in wit and sophistication". At the age of seventeen he took a job as copyboy there for a few years, hoping in vain to be able to ascend to the ranks of staff writers in due time. When these hopes were squashed, he continued - again, vainly - to try to get published in the magazine, feeling that it was the only home for a gifted young writer.

However, after being published in the aforementioned series of magazines, he came back to *The New Yorker*, at first to write a series of journalistic stories about for example an American opera troupe performing in Soviet Russia and an eviscerating profile of Marlon Brando in Japan - who, upon reading it, vowed to kill Capote. Aside from all that however, again the most important connection with the magazine comes in the form of Capote's masterpiece, *In Cold Blood*. The literary and journalistic world had been waiting with great anticipation for several years to read the story and Capote published it serially, in four instalments, in his beloved *The New Yorker*. This final act of commitment would tie the bonds of social capital between the magazine and the pioneer of the non-fiction novel for good.

Next to the capital, both bonding and bridging, that Capote could command in the network of relationships with *The New Yorker* and some other publications, he also, like Hunter Thompson, possessed a talent in making and holding on to friends. As one of those friends recalls, few could resist the urelenting onslaught of his affection. "He had a great, and immense, capacity for friendship." Even if Capote made many an enemy, if he really wanted someone's friendship he usually was able to win it. This talent served him well in the pursuit of a jetset life and the culmination of these talents can be seen in the immense Black and White ball he threw in 1966, which was attended by governors, ambassadors, barons, several Kennedys, movie stars and even a maharajah.

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315 Clarke, *Capote*, 57 and 70.
316 Ibidem, 81.
317 Clarke, *Capote*, 290-304.
319 Clarke, *Capote*, 55.
However, the book that Capote had been planning even before beginning *In Cold Blood*, would do much damage to the social capital he possessed here. *Answered Prayers*, which was supposed to be a book about the "super rich he'd come to know by intimate association." But rather than becoming Capote's *magnum opus* and an even more important work than his 'new book', the four parts of *Answered Prayers* which actually saw the light of day destroyed his contacts with most of the individuals he discussed in it - even though they were slightly fictionalised. As a consequence, it also "paralyzed Capote and sent him whirling into a dark depression and a nervous breakdown." Indeed, the Capote from before, the well-respected and beloved frequenter of high-society, had to a large extent crushed this part of his life for himself.

The New Yorker: economic and cultural capital

His bond with *The New Yorker* was less devastatingly affected, however. And as with Tom Wolfe and the *Trib* and Hunter Thompson and *Rolling Stone*, in Capote's case to be able to effectively valuate the strong connections he had with the magazine it is necessary to provide some evidence on the position the magazine occupied in the field of journalism, in terms of kinds and amounts of capital.

*The New Yorker* was first published in 1925 as a weekly magazine and its founder, Harold Ross, intended it to "be a reflection in word and picture of metropolitan life [...] it will be what is commonly called sophisticated" including a significant amount of reviews, prose, verse and illustrations. Nevertheless it was not meant to be "high-brow".

By the 1950s the magazine had gained a significant reputation and readership, making it "a habit, a status symbol, a pillar of one's identity." The magazine's culture consisted of "a belief in civility, a respect for privacy, a striving for clear and accurate prose, a determination to publish what one believed in, irrespective of public opinion and commercial concerns, and a sense that the *New Yorker* was something special, something other and somehow more important than just another

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322 Grobel, *Conversations with Capote*, 200.
324 Ibidem, 313.
magazine." Thus, the magazine as an epitome of literary writing commanded significant amounts of cultural capital - in its own eyes, but also in that of readers, authors and other critics, even though it "never claimed to be a serious intellectual journal".

In the same era the magazine could also already dispose of a significant amount of economic capital. In 1966, the magazine turned a yearly net profit of $3.02 million. This financial bonanza is also witnessed in some of the payment practices at the magazine; author A.J. Liebling had allegedly run up a debt to the magazine of over a hundred thousand dollars and although the accuracy of this rumor is questionable, then editor in chief William Shawn did periodically "forgive" loan debt its contributing authors owed The New Yorker, as well as dole out checks to writers who were in financial trouble.

In fact, the attitude of Shawn towards the writers perhaps sums up best the extent to which the magazine possessed a very large stock of both cultural and economic capital. Once the editor was convinced an author and a subject were matched in a satisfactory manner, he would grant them virtually unlimited space and would encourage them to elaborate. Publishing space was thus not an issue economically and the fact that this might exhaust readers "but that - the understanding was - would be their problem."

Capote thus amassed a very sizeable amount of social capital for himself only to destroy it again by exposing all of his contacts' most intimate details. Although his strong connection to The New Yorker did continue to provide him with a certain amount of bonding social capital, it was much less impressive than before.

Symbolic capital
As we saw, the fourth category of capital, the symbolic kind, is any of the three fundamental kinds of power that is represented symbolically and (mis)recognised as legitimate competence. Capote accumulated such symbolic capital throughout his career in a number of observable ways.

325 Ibidem, 323.
327 Yagoda, About Town, 364.
328 Ibidem, 325.
329 Ibidem, 326.
Firstly and most easily empirically verified is the numerous awards he received, both for his fiction and his non-fiction writing. This began with "Miriam", the first short story that was selected for publication in Mademoiselle in its June 1945 issue.330 The following year the story received an O. Henry Award for Best First-Published Story. The award, which is "widely regarded as the nation's most prestigious award for short fiction"331, would be given to Capote twice more; in 1948 he received a First Prize for the story "Shut a Final Door" and in 1951 the short story "The House of Flowers" received a third prize.332 A second award Capote won more than once is the Edgar Award, which is named after Edgar Allan Poe and given to outstanding mystery and crime writing in both fiction and non-fiction. According to the granting organisation, the Mystery Writers of America, the 'Edgars' are "widely acknowledged to be the most prestigious awards in the genre".333 Capote won it in 1962 for a screenplay adaptation and again in 1966, almost inevitably, for In Cold Blood.334 Two other important awards, the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award, were never given to Capote. According to biographer Gerald Clarke, In Cold Blood should nevertheless have won both these prizes, as he forcefully expresses; "Displaying what in retrospect seems like a willful blindness, the judges for both awards passed over the most talked-about book of the year in favor of worthy but less important contenders."335

Next to the prizes, as was mentioned in the social capital subsection Capote thoroughly enjoyed his status as good friend of the extraordinarily rich. However, the author violated the norm of silent recognition and reciprocity when he published the first parts of Answered Prayers. Suddenly it seemed that the legitimate friendship the protagonists in the stories had cultivated with Capote were nothing more than a façade providing Capote with writing material - and not the most flattering; most of his society friends were "shocked and outraged" that "their favorite household pet, their

330 Clarke, Capote, 85.
335 Clarke, Capote, 398.
ami de la maison, had turned against them. Although he had done something comparable before, in writing *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, this time he was not forgiven and was cast out of the in-group he had desired so strongly to be a part of fulfilling the prophetic words Norman Mailer had uttered several years before; "I would suspect he hesitates between the attractions of Society which enjoys and so repays him for his unique gifts, and the novel he could write of the gossip column's real life, a major work, but it would banish him forever from his favorite world."

Capote's literary fiction and non-fiction work thus amassed sizeable critical acclaim and various awards, adding a significant amount of symbolic cultural capital to his stock. Nevertheless, his status and respected position within high society, as symbolic social capital, was irreparably damaged after the publishing of parts of *Answered Prayers*. This loss of status is doubly damaging to Capote's overall quantity of capital because according to some critics Capote had 'squandered' much of his time and talent on this pursuit of wealth and celebrity, which meant that "he failed to join the ranks of the truly great American writers". By violating the mutual understanding that some information should not be made public, Capote had destroyed the reciprocity which, as was mentioned in chapter two, is such an essential part of social capital. From a Bourdieusian point of view this would mean that after Capote lost this social and symbolic capital it would be much harder to exert a revolutionary influence in the field of journalism - an interpretation that so far seems to be supported by Capote's inability to write anything of comparable influence to *In Cold Blood*.

Summarizing then, Capote amassed great economic capital, significant cultural capital and impressive social and symbolic capital - although the latter two were decimated by the indiscretions in his planned *magnum opus*. The following section will analyse Capote's trajectory to establish the extent of deviance that it contained.

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336 Ibidem, 468.
338 Clarke, Capote, 470-474.
6.3. Reconstruction of Truman Capote's modal and actual trajectories

Capote was raised in a middle class environment, being passed around between several relatives before in the end his parents practically abandoned him. He loathed school, and it seemed to loathe him back\textsuperscript{341} and he never went to college. The fact that Capote's younger years were marked by a lack of constance, making him feel like "a spiritual orphan, like a turtle on its back"\textsuperscript{342} means that it is difficult to identify a clear group of origin and to pin down a sharply demarcated modal trajectory.

The economic position of Capote's parents and background does seem to play an important role in his own perception of belonging and destiny. Capote observed that "My mother, after divorcing my father, married a rich man, but they were upper-middle-class rich, and that's worse than being poor. [...] You must be either very rich or very poor. [...] I've always known rich people, but I was so aware of not being rich myself.\textsuperscript{343} And even though Capote would come to earn a comfortable living himself, he still felt the gap very strongly. He has stated "I know somebody who has a yearly income just from one thing of five million that he doesn't have to pay one penny of tax on. Not one cent. And every time I look at him it makes me furious."\textsuperscript{344}

The same discrepancy was observed by Capote in terms of his mental, intellectual capacities. Capote once noted about his younger years "I was so different from everyone, so much more intelligent and sensitive and perceptive. I was having fifty perceptions a minute to everyone else's five. I always felt that nobody was going to understand me, going to understand what I felt about things."\textsuperscript{345}

Thus, although it is difficult to draw the same firm conclusions as with Tom Wolfe and Hunter Thompson due to the fluidity of Capote's group of origin, some degree of deviance can be observed. Capote, like Thompson, spent a lot of time around the rich without really ascending to the same level - although Capote stayed in their presence much longer and indulged in it much more. Capote always remained somewhat of a clown, something of a pet to his wealthiest friends.\textsuperscript{346} That the writer departed from, or perhaps rose above, the unintelligent surroundings he grew up in is

\textsuperscript{343} Clarke, \textit{Capote}, 273.
\textsuperscript{344} Grobel, \textit{Conversations With Capote}, 207.
\textsuperscript{346} Clarke, \textit{Capote}, 468.
the second part of this deviance - that is thus larger than Wolfe's but smaller and less well-defined than Thompson's.

6.4. Conclusion

Capote's stocks of capital varies considerably for the four different categories. Economically he started out modestly in a family of 'dirt-poor farmers' as he called them, but successfully accumulated a significant amount of wealth and thus capital over the years - although he resented the fact that others were much richer still and that they were able to pay much less taxes than himself. Capote, like Thompson, did not possess a stock of institutionalised cultural capital worth mentioning; he loathed schools - and vice versa. However, his intelligence, curiosity and above all his stylistic gifts and the energy he invested in perfecting these do amount to an important amount of embodied cultural capital. The third fundamental category, social capital, showed a trajectory which was the opposite of his economic capital; possessing great charm and an exceptional talent for making friends, Capote shocked and alienated even those closest to him with the publishing of parts of Answered Prayers. However, before this happened his social capital was considerable, not lastly because of his close affiliation to his beloved The New Yorker which at the time was itself richly endowed both economically and culturally. Lastly, in terms of symbolic capital Capote won several prestigious awards and was, according to some, unjustly refused other ones. As with his social capital, his loss of status in the upper echelons of America's high society cost him dearly in terms of symbolic capital. Capote deeply regretted this, sometimes crying almost desperately "I didn't mean to hurt anybody [...] I didn't know the story would cause such a fuss."347

Regarding Capote's trajectory, the fact that it is difficult to demarcate his group of origin also complicates the analysis of the extent of deviance from his modal trajectory. Nevertheless, leaving behind the unintellectual and middle class background for an uneasy and ultimately failed existence within high society does indicate some measure of deviance.

Thus, comparing Capote's profile with those of Tom Wolfe and Hunter Thompson, the most striking similarities are the high amounts of cultural and symbolic capital that the three authors share. Deviance also seems to play a role,

347 Ibidem, 473.
though in Wolfe's case it functions differently than in the cases of Thompson and Capote. The following chapter will complement these comparative case study profiles with the last one: that of the life and work of Norman Mailer.
Chapter 7 - Norman Mailer

The fourth and last case study of this thesis delves into the life and works of Norman Mailer, the writer who, in connection with New Journalism, is most well-known for *Armies of the Night*, his non-fiction novel on the 1967 Vietnam war protest march on the Pentagon.\footnote{Jean Radford, *Norman Mailer: A Critical Study* (London and Basingstoke: the Macmillan Press, 1975) 72.} As in the previous three chapters, after a brief biographical introduction providing some details on Mailer's youth, background and his significance for the field of journalism, a case study will be conducted assessing his objective amounts and kinds of capital as well as an analysis of the extent of deviance present in his trajectory. The conclusion will compare Mailer's profile with the results of the previous chapters, to complete the case studies on the causes of revolutionary potential in agents of New Journalism.

7.1. Life, work and legacy of Norman Mailer

Norman Kingsley Mailer was born on January 31, 1923 in Long Branch, New Jersey to Isaac Barnett Mailer, an accountant from South Africa, and Fanny Schneider.\footnote{Alfred Kazin (ed.), *Writers at Work: The Paris Review Interviews* (3rd series, New York and London: Viking Press, 1967) 251.} Isaac Mailer was a flamboyant, elegant man who, despite never getting officially licensed as an accountant in the United States, got a job at a big firm in Manhattan and settled their family in Brooklyn, moving to the Jewish middle-class neighbourhood of Crown Heights when Mailer was nine years old. Mailer's mother ran the family and to outsiders often appeared as a strong, serious and even intimidating woman.\footnote{Rollyson, *The Lives of Norman Mailer*, 2-4.}

Mailer would attend school at P.S. 161 and Boys High School for seven years, doing particularly well.\footnote{New York Times, "Norman Mailer, Towering Writer With Matching Ego, Dies at 84", accessed at http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/10/books/11mailer.html, 11-10-2011.} According to his mother, "[e]ven in the first grade his teacher recognized his talent, and I remember her saying 'Mrs. Mailer, you have to recognize that your son's pleasures in life are going to be solemn ones.'"\footnote{Peter Manso, *Mailer: His Life and Times* (New York: Penguin Books, 1985) 17.} At the age of sixteen, Mailer enrolled at Harvard, majoring in aeronautical design but quickly falling in love with writing. He set himself a limit of 3000 words per day, in order to
get 'bad writing' out of his system\textsuperscript{353} - which seemed to work as in 1941 one of his short stories won the \textit{Story} magazine college writing contest.\textsuperscript{354}

After graduating from Harvard Mailer was drafted in 1944 and spent time in the Phillipines and Japan, although he did not see much combat. The experiences nevertheless proved to be enough to inspire his first novel, \textit{The Naked and the Dead}, which was an absolute critical and financial success (selling over 200,000 copies in three months). Mailer himself had conflicting feelings about the 720 page novel, saying "Part of me thought it was possibly the greatest book written since ‘War and Peace.’ On the other hand I also thought, ‘I don’t know anything about writing. I’m virtually an impostor.’"\textsuperscript{355}

\textit{Journalistic career: Armies of the Night and other long stories}

Although Mailer may have felt like he was faking it at times in the beginning of his writing career, the impact he would come to have on the field of journalism and on the New Journalism phenomenon were and are very real. As was mentioned, the first modest recognition of his talent came with the \textit{Story} prize he won while still in college. With \textit{The Naked and the Dead} he irrevocably established a reputation for himself - it was both his first novel and the only one of his thirty works that was positively reviewed by almost every single critic that read it.\textsuperscript{356}

Indeed, \textit{Barbary Shore}, the second novel Mailer wrote, was not well reviewed at all. One reviewer advised readers to drop the "evil-smelling" work into the trash, and \textit{Time} magazine called it "paceless, tasteless and graceless".\textsuperscript{357} The ambiguous attitudes critics adopted to his work - acknowledging his great talent but singling out some work as flawlessly bad\textsuperscript{358} - was also present amongst his readership. Loved by many, Mailer over the course of his life has also "elicited more vitriol than any other major American writer of this century, and probably as much as generated by Edgar Allan Poe in the nineteenth century."\textsuperscript{359}

\textsuperscript{354} Kazin, \textit{Writers at Work}, 251.
\textsuperscript{356} Idem.
\textsuperscript{357} Rollyson, \textit{The Lives of Norman Mailer}, 71.
\textsuperscript{358} Idem.
Mailer would become known as an excitable character, picking fights with whomever would cross his path, head-butting people for the slightest provocation, attacking the feminist movement in his writings which some therefore consider misogynist - in short, an "all-purpose feuder and short-fused brawler". After the publication of *The Naked and the Dead*, Mailer would be "identified with themes of sex, violence, and political power in modern life, and be alternately praised and damned for these preoccupations." Controversial as he was, Mailer's very large influence in both the field of literature and that of (New) journalism cannot be denied. He was an active writer for sixty years, publishing his last novel *The Castle in the Forest* in 2007 and writing over forty works, including many fiction and non-fiction books but also plays and essay collections.

Although Mailer's critics claimed that his attempts to become an American icon failed because he sold out to celebrity at a certain point, he did always hold on to his authenticity. In doing so, according to some he remained the outrageous, boastful voice of a whole generation. His influence on the field of journalism and particularly within the phenomenon of New Journalism is undeniable - as *The New Yorker* concludes: "He left a huge footprint on American letters."

### 7.2. Norman Mailer's capital: kind and quantity

As in the preceding two chapters, this second section looks at the four different categories of capital, assessing the amounts that Norman Mailer possessed of the economic, cultural, social and symbolic varieties. Again, in the social capital section the publication that Mailer was most strongly attached to will be analogously analysed for amounts of economic and cultural capital - in this case both *Esquire* and *The Village Voice* play such an important role that the two of them will be analysed.

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Economic capital

Norman Mailer grew up in a middle-class environment, first in the Flatbush section of Brooklyn but moving away from what Mailer's mother called the "cheap goyim" to Crown Heights. With a father that was extremely neat, 'fastidiously' so even, the Mailer home gave off an air of sophistication and higher class to Mailer's friends who came from rowdy, unorganised households. "The Mailers were not rich but could seem so to adolescents who watched them move to better apartments within the same building."

When The Naked and The Dead was published however, Mailer started outgrowing his middle-class origins. Reminiscing about his first royalty check, the author remembers "it was for $40,000, which in 1948 was something like $300,000 today". Mailer was also a good negotiator, convincing his next publisher to pay him 2.5 percent more than the 'normal' maximum of 15 percent on royalties.

Mailer thus did alright after he had, quite suddenly and forcefully, entered the publishing arena. His wealth during the Sixties never took on the exorbitant character it did with Capote, nonetheless. Although by 1966 there was a lot of money around, there were also strong ups and downs, as the writer by then also had to provide financially for six children with four different wives. Mailer would let the situation deteriorate, also by taking on ambitious film projects that lost a lot of money, to a point where it would get especially bad and he would be forced to take assignments "just to get himself out of a hole".

When Mailer had shown his talent and the ability to produce several best-selling novels, the money did start coming in in larger quantities. For example, in 1983 Mailer signed a contract with Random House for four books for the sizeable amount of $ 4 million. Still, at times he would be strapped for income due to his large expenditures. For example, Mailer sent one of his daughters to public school out of pure financial necessity.

364 Goyim is Yiddish for non-Jewish.
366 Ibidem, 7.
367 Manso, Mailer, 127-128. Note that the 'today' Mailer refers to is around 1985, when Manso's interviews were published.
368 Ibidem, 476.
369 Ibidem, 659-661.
In the end then, although Mailer did create a sizeable basis of economic capital for himself, he was never able to hold onto this capital for very long. Either because he could not or because he was not interested in great wealth, Mailer let the high amounts of expenditure on living costs of his relatives reduce his economic capital until no more than a modest amount was left.

*Cultural capital*

Different than Thompson and Capote, Norman Mailer functioned quite well in regular education. From a young age, he excelled in his educational endeavours in Brooklyn, both at P.S. 161 and after that at Boys High School. Early on he took an interest in math and science and started building model airplanes, also writing a piece on the activity in a school magazine. Having great admiration for his cousin who went to Harvard, the choice to go there and major in aeronautical engineering seemed a logical one. His studious nature would continue during his freshman year at Harvard, where "[m]ost of the time he could be found at his desk studying. He rarely left campus and did not go out on dates" because "[h]is parents had made a big sacrifice to send him to Harvard, and he was not going to let them down."373

Before he graduated in 1943, however, writing would have won a central place in Mailer's heart and future plans. In an extra class he took, English A, Mailer had discovered that he wanted to be a writer, starting to wonder what name he should write under - Norman Kingsley Mailer? N. Kingsley?374

Next to the formal classes he attended in Harvard, Mailer also continued schooling himself by reading classic English and American literature, as was demonstrated for Thompson and Capote. Although Mailer took in many different influences he was nevertheless quite strategic and careful about which writers to read. As he himself states: "There's a navigator in us - I really do believe that - and I think this navigator knew I wanted to be a writer and had an absoute sense of what was good for me and what wasn't. If somebody had said, "Go read Proust," I'd say, "No, not now.""375

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373 Ibidem, 13.
375 Ibidem, 68.
Mailer's amount of institutionalised cultural capital thus greatly exceeds those of Thompson and Capote - although he does not overtake Wolfe. In terms of embodied cultural capital he seems to fall somewhere in between Thompson and Capote.

_Social capital_

Mailer had won national recognition with "The Greatest Thing in the World", the short story that won _Story_ magazine's contest, but his final break came after he returned from military service in the pacific. _The Naked and the Dead_, published in 1948, won him almost universal critical acclaim and great popularity. From that point on Mailer could market his writing on his own terms, much like Wolfe after hid first _Kandy-Kolored Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby_ article, Thompson after _Hell's Angels_ and Capote after _Other Voices, Other Rooms._

Mailer did have several sources of social capital. Of course being a part of the network of Harvard alumni provided him with some bonding social capital, which was enlarged by his membership in Signet, a club comparable to so-called final clubs such as the Porcellian, but more focused on literature. It was "the intellectual club" and selected the best candidates from the several campus publications and other interesting students in arts and music.377

Two other important networks in his career, and thus sources of social capital, were the publication he was most connected to - _Esquire_ - and the one he co-founded - _The Village Voice_. In the following subsection both publications are briefly reviewed for amounts of economic and cultural capital, as was done in the preceding chapters for the _Herald Tribune, Rolling Stone_ and _The New Yorker_, respectively.

_Esquire: economic and cultural capital_

_Esquire_ magazine was first published in 1933 with the aim, as explained by its founding editor Arnold Gingrich, to "become the common denominator of masculine interests - to be all things to all men".378 It started with a circulation of 100,000 copies

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376 Idem.
377 Manso, 53.
which was quite ambitious for the time, especially at a price of 50 cents compared to other magazines that were selling just for a nickel.  

'Esky', as the magazine would affectionately become known to its creators, writers and readers, would over the years publish some of America's best-known contemporary writers, including in its early years Ernest Hemingway, John Dos Passos, James T. Farrell, Thomas Wolfe, D.H. Lawrence and later Gore Vidal, Truman Capote, Tom Wolfe, Gay Talese and Tennessee Williams - among others. The increasing importance over the years of these authors in the pages of the magazine demonstrates a shift in editorial policy which took place from 1957 onwards, shifting *Esquire's* target audience more and more towards a "niche readership of upwardly mobile sophisticates". In the eyes of *Esquire's* actual readership, the move was well-appreciated and successful as a 1963 survey found nearly half of its readers thought the magazine was cultural, intelligent, literate, sophisticated.

This attempt to increase the cultural capital of the magazine interestingly enough went hand in hand with a support for male consumerism - and thus potential economic capital - that has always been a part of *Esquire*. It "suggested that consumer culture was the most legitimate site for the cultivation of the self". This last message should of course be music in the ears of advertisers and with a circulation of 900,000 at a price of 75 cents halfway through the Sixties, *Esquire* had come to do quite well in terms of economic capital. Even so, the magazine usually did not pay it's writers more than $1000 for a story, keeping them satisfied instead with a very high degree of editorial freedom. This combination of attracting advertising by supporting consumerism and being conservative with writers' salaries meant that the the magazine managed to maximize the use of their sizeable economic capital.

Thus, *Esquire* was a magazine to be reckoned with in terms of economic and of cultural capital, even if it did have a somewhat narrowly defined audience.

380 Not to be confused with the later Tom Wolfe, although the latter also published work in the magazine.
383 Idem.
384 Ibidem, 165.
Village Voice: economic and cultural capital

In 1955 Norman Mailer, along with Ed Fancher and Dan Wolf, launched the *Village Voice*, an alternative, small-scale weekly newspaper aimed at the estimated 100,000 inhabitants of Greenwich Village in New York City.\(^{386}\) The paper published a mix of advocacy and personal journalism, "to reflect the cultural ferment and political discontent simmering in the intellectual life of the country" and wrote about topics such as gay rights, Black Panthers and the women's liberation movement. The magazine opposed the war in Vietnam.\(^{387}\)

Starting out small, it took the *Voice* seven years to begin breaking even financially.\(^{388}\) Mailer and Ed Fancher both put in $5000 to get started and an additional $5000 each, adding also $15,000 of a friend of Fancher's when the first money quickly ran out.\(^{389}\)

The *Voice* was a haven for young talent, coddling and encouraging young authors and publishing work by future greats such as E.E. Cummings and Allen Ginsberg.\(^{390}\) However, these talents mostly were only just arriving on the scene at the time they published in the *Village Voice*, so the newspaper could not derive significant amounts of cultural capital from this fact.

More important was its function in the counterculture. The *Voice* quickly became "an inspiration for the underground/alternative press that exploded during the 1960s. Papers such as the *L.A. Free Press*, the *Berkeley Barb*, Chicago's *Seed*, East Lansing's *Paper*, Detroit's *Fifth Estate*, and innumerable others were inspired not only by the kind of journalism the *Village Voice* made possible, but also by the anti-professional, entrepreneurial spirit the paper's founders staunchly engendered."\(^{391}\)

The *Village Voice* thus possessed very little economic capital during the Sixties, and only a limited amount of (counter)cultural capital. Mailer's involvement in the founding and later writing for the newspaper thus does not add greatly to the value of

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his social capital. His affiliation with Esquire magazine however does have that effect, as the publication was strong both in terms of economic and cultural capital - although less so than The New Yorker.

Next to this, his membership of Signet and his status of Harvard alumnus, make up a sizeable amount of bonding social capital. The author seems less well-endowed in bridging social capital, nevertheless.

Symbolic capital
As with the previous three authors, the symbolic capital - any of the other forms represented symbolically and (mis)recognised as legitimate competence - that Mailer possessed is most obviously demonstrated by the awards he won with his writing. More than Capote and Thompson and perhaps even more than Wolfe, Mailer was able to gain formal recognition for his work. This recognition started early when he received the Story magazine award for one of his first short stories. Over time, to this would be added the George Polk Award and the National Book Award for Armies of the Night. Mailer would also win the highly prestigious Pulitzer Prize twice - again, Armies of The Night would be awarded it in 1968 and The Executioner's Song would receive the prize in 1979. Some critics have wondered why Mailer never won the Nobel Prize for Literature.

This long list of very prestigious awards readily indicates Mailer enjoyed the status of a highly respected figure in both the fields of literature and journalism - albeit a controversial one, as was noted earlier. Or, as the New York Times describes him in the title of his obituary: "Towering writer with matching ego".

Next to the other three categories Mailer thus possessed a significant amount of symbolic capital.

7.3. Reconstruction of Norman Mailer's modal and actual trajectory
Mailer grew up in a middle-class neighbourhood of Brooklyn, in a Jewish family and background. His going to Harvard was thus a distinct step up on the social ladder and in taking that step Mailer left behind most of his group of origin. One of his childhood friends remembers "[i]t was the talk of the street. Norman going to Harvard. I mean,

392 Lennon, Critical Essays on Norman Mailer, 1.
393 "George Polk Awards - Previous Award Winners", accessed at http://www.liu.edu/About/News/Polk/Previous.aspx, 16-10-2011.
who the hell was Norman Mailer in those days? He was just one of the guys, and nobody from Crown Street had ever gone to Harvard. So we were surprised".396

At Harvard, Mailer had a hard time fitting in. He did not know much about the etiquette of the prestigious university, showing up in ridiculously flashy clothes and committing minor blunders on several social occasions, such as taking up a casual invitation to a charitable institution as a formal and weighty occasion, only to find an empty building.397 He would later recollect that he "had "suffered" at Harvard and "felt like a fish out of water"398

The fact that Mailer was Jewish also led to some minor ostracism, although Mailer himself never consciously noticed this. At registration, for example, next to notations indicating if a student came from a particular private school there would be a note made if one was Jewish. According to Mailer's second wife, "it was probably a combination of his family and not having much money and being Jewish, but also his feeling that he was unattractive - physically unattractive - and so he was always worrying about being accepted."399

As was already mentioned however, Mailer did not participate in social life with much enthusiasm. Focusing mostly on studying, he was rarely out on dates and "had few outside interests"400. Instead he focused on his writing from his sophomore year onwards with greater and greater resolve.401

Although Mailer did not have a reputation of 'campus bad boy' he did act out his misfit, rebel status to an extent - something that would become a recurring theme in his professional and personal life years later. He would throw footballs down the halls of his dorm, tackle passersby and would sometimes become a "bully and a lout" in front of large audiences after drinking.402

Norman Mailer's early life and college education thus indicate a considerable amount of deviance from his group of origin and subsequent unease with the social universe he stepped into as he moved up the social ladder. The poor fit and deviance already caused some degree of rebellious behaviour during his college years and would continue in his later career and personal life.

396 Manso, Mailer, 38.
397 Rollyson, The Lives of Norman Mailer, 11.
398 Ibidem, 12.
399 Idem.
400 Rollyson, 14.
401 Ibidem, 16.
402 Ibidem, 18.
7.4. Conclusion

In general, Mailer possessed a sizeable amount of capital. He was least well-endowed in the economic category, coming from a middle-class background and amassing some wealth later in life but always spending it as fast or faster than it would come in.

On the cultural plane Mailer could command a more impressive stock of capital, doing excellently at his grade and high school and going on to graduate from Harvard. Additionally, he carefully groomed himself in the English and American literary classics.

The fact of being a Harvard alumnus and former member of the exclusive literary Signet club there also means Mailer possesses a significant amount of mostly bonding social capital. His attachment to *Esquire* magazine and his founding and continuing affiliation to *The Village Voice* add to this capital. Although Mailer did write for other publications, he thus seems to be particularly well-endowed in bonding social capital.

His symbolic capital, lastly, is clearly very strongly present as well judging by the long list of highly prestigious awards Mailer won - only excluding the Nobel Prize as a crown on these achievements and not justly so, according to some.

Regarding the deviance of his trajectory, from early on it is observable that Mailer leaves his group of origin in an upward social mobility, causing a considerable degree of rebellion and outsider status which Mailer sometimes acted out violently in both his personal and professional life.

Compared to the profiles distilled from the previous three case studies, Mailer occupies a middle rank in terms of economic capital, possessing an amount close to that of Wolfe, but better than Thompson and worse than Capote. Mailer does much better than both Capote and Thompson on the cultural capital plane, again falling in a spot not unlike that of Wolfe. Mailer is the first of the case studies to have more bonding than bridging social capital. Regarding capital, only in terms of the symbolic kind all authors seem to possess impressively high amounts.

The second factor that should clarify Bourdieusian revolutionary influence, the deviance of trajectory, for Mailer was close to that of Capote with Thompson surpassing them both and leaving Wolfe as the odd one out with the least deviance.
As was analysed in chapter four, Wolfe compensated this somewhat by a deviant manner of behaving within the field of journalism.\textsuperscript{403}

The following chapter will take the four capital profiles that were established in the past four chapters and analyse the ways in which the authors made use of their capital. Before that however it will look at the New Journalism phenomenon as a whole from a Bourdieusian perspective, establishing the extent to which it may be interpreted as a Bourdieusian field itself.

\textsuperscript{403} See chapter 4.3, page 51.
Chapter 8 - New Journalism as a Bourdieusian field

In the previous chapters the focus was mainly on the impact that the four selected icons of New Journalism had on the field of journalism and the causes of this revolutionary influence. This penultimate chapter will go one step further and attempt to answer two subquestions; to what extent can the phenomenon of New Journalism be interpreted as a separate Bourdieusian field and in what ways did the four selected authors make use of their respective stocks of capital?

Firstly this chapter will analyse the evidence supporting the interpretation of the New Journalism phenomenon as a separate, more or less autonomous Bourdieusian field. Secondly the dynamics of the trajectories of Wolfe, Thompson, Capote and Mailer within this field are analysed. This analysis will focus on the ways the writers made use of the amounts and kinds of capital they were demonstrated as having in the previous chapters. The focus will mainly be on their symbolic capital since it was demonstrated that all four authors possess impressive amounts of this category. The second part of the chapter will also investigate the reactions of agents in the surrounding fields showed to the movements and uses of capital by the four New Journalists.

8.1. New Journalism in Bourdieusian field theory

To establish the extent to which the phenomenon of New Journalism can be interpreted as a more or less autonomous Bourdieusian field, it is necessary to look at the overlap which exists between the fields of literature and journalism.

A number of scholars point to the existence of such an overlap, among whom Pierre Bourdieu himself. As was mentioned, Bourdieu argues that the two fields coincide on the matter of sharing the same goal; by virtue of being engaged in the production of discourse, in both fields the ultimate objective of the agents is the legitimate construction of the social reality. 404

Another academic is Phyllis Frus, who sees the distinction between the fields of journalism and literature as somewhat arbitrary and mostly stemming from conventional and superficial categorisations. Fundamentally, she argues, the only thing separating the two are the facts that "literature is what we have decided to

404 See page 16.
regard as such" and journalism is "writing for periodicals." The Bourdieusian argument that reality and the separate fields making up this reality are fundamentally relationally defined can also be clearly distinguished in her statement that "literature is in effect defined against other discourses, most obviously against the mass media and popular culture; here we will find New Journalism and nonfiction novels being defined against the hegemonic form of both journalism and fiction".

A third scholar arguing for the common essence of both fields is English professor Shelley Fisher Fishkin, who holds that before the middle of the nineteenth century the realms of the novelist and journalist were often mixed to a very significant extent. Quoting the American author Edgar Lawrence Doctorow she writes that by the 1980s there was "no longer any such thing as fiction or nonfiction, there is only narrative" - although she notes that such a sweeping statement might deserve some further qualification.

Communication and journalism scholar John C. Hartsock observes that academics from both the field of literature and that of journalism have attempted to appropriate New Journalism to their field of expertise. English literature professors, he argues, most often will refer to it as literary nonfiction, whereas communication scholars seem to prefer the term literary journalism.

Significant scholarly support thus exists for the hypothesis that the fields of literature and journalism overlap to a noteworthy extent. The observations by Hartsock also immediately give rise to the interpretation of literary journalism as a somewhat separate field. Whereas the first three arguments simply identify the overlap between the fields of journalism and literature, Hartsock's overview of the academic debate suggests that New Journalism occupies a (Bourdieusian) space which comprises this overlap but is wider; it also incorporates parts of the journalistic and literary fields which do not necessarily intersect with each other.

This interpretation was already hinted at in chapter 3.4, in the observation that New Journalists were engaged in a symbolic struggle which has two fronts. Following Wolfe and Van Dijck it was argued that from their Bourdieusian space New

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405 Frus, The Politics and Poetics of Journalistic Narrative, 120.
406 Ibidem, 121.
Journalists struggled with contemporary novelists on the one hand and with the older generation of journalists on the other. Pauly notes, on the generational struggle:

"Young reporters refused to remain laptop dummies who lip-synched the newspaper's voice. They demanded official recognition that they were the ones in the streets, close to the real action. Editors resisted such nonnegotiable demands. To them personalism was the chant of a permissive and disrespectful age, in which lazy, self-indulgent reporters refused to accept their professional, institutional responsibilities."

An example of the struggle between novelists and New Journalists can be discerned in the hostility that existed between Wolfe and the literary community. Wolfe saw the literators of his time as "running backward, skipping and screaming, into a begonia patch that I call Neo-Fabulism"; the writers in turn had distrusted and resented Wolfe ever since he wrote a two-part series in which he attacked the New Yorker.

Such observations are closely consistent with Bourdieusian field theory; as elaborated in chapter 2.2, within a field there is a dichotomy and struggle between the poles representing economic and cultural capital on the one hand, and a generational opposition between the older agents in a field and the newer agents that are entering the field on the other. Considering the overlap between the journalistic and literary field, it should then become obvious that the New Journalists' struggle with the contemporary novelists represents the economic-cultural opposition, with the novelists occupying the cultural pole, and their conflict with the older, mainstream journalists represents the generational opposition.

The fact that there seems to be little or no struggle between New Journalists and their young contemporaries in mainstream journalism seems strange in this regard; because New Journalism is positioned between journalism and literature, it possesses more cultural capital than the journalistic field which, as we saw earlier, is dominated by economic capital. This would seem to be a basis for a conflict comparable to that between New Journalists and novelists, however with the New Journalists now holding a preponderance of cultural capital over the mainstream journalistic agents of the same age.

409 Van Dijck, "Cultuurkritiek en journalistiek", 66. See also pages 38 and 39.
412 McKeen, Tom Wolfe, 54. See also below, page 101.
413 See page 12 and further.
The absence of such a conflict can be explained by socialisation and generational data briefly referred to in earlier chapters. Firstly, the group of writers that makes up the core of the agents operating in the field of New Journalism has a strong generational cohesion. Pauly compares the ages of the most important nonfiction writers in 1965, incorporating the authors Wolfe included in his anthology and a list of other representative writers. Of the 39 individuals, Norman Mailer is the oldest with 42 years and Richard Goldstein the youngest with only 21 years. However, a large majority of the group hovers around the average age of 31 years.\footnote{Pauly, “The Politics of the New Journalism”, 117-118. In statistical terms, \( n = 39, \mu = 31.4 \text{ years} \) and \( \sigma = 5.7 \text{ years} \).}

Secondly, as briefly noted in chapter 3.2, this generation of young writers which was coming of age in the 1960s had generally enjoyed less formalised, institutionalised journalistic education.\footnote{See chapter 3.2, page 29.} Data shows that from the 1950s onwards the number of journalism students dropped from a high point of 16,000 enrolled.\footnote{Sloan, American Journalism, 84.} A study carried out in 1971 confirms this observation and concludes that during the 1960s newsrooms began hiring more college graduates holding degrees in history and social sciences.\footnote{Weaver and Wilhoit, The American Journalist, 63.}

A final point that must be looked at in the analysis of New Journalism as a field is the degree of autonomy that it possesses. The very fact that an important part of this hypothesised field is made up of the overlap of the fields of literature and journalism, as well as sections of those fields beyond the directly overlapping sections, makes it heteronomous to a large extent. Whereas the journalistic field is weakly autonomous because a large part of its conventional rules about form and content is dictated by economic imperatives, in order to understand what goes on in New Journalism one can rely to a great extent on the mechanisms and dynamics of both literature and journalism. At the same time however New Journalists are asserting their autonomy to an extent exactly by observing, criticising and rebelling against conventions of form and content from both the literary and the journalistic realm. One obvious attempt at carving out an autonomous niche for the phenomenon are Wolfe's slightly grandstanding claims about journalists wiping out the novel as
literature's main event with nonfiction.\textsuperscript{418} It remains a very weakly autonomous field, nevertheless - even more so than the already very heteronomous field of journalism.

Thus, it can be concluded that an interpretation of the phenomenon of New Journalism as a Bourdieusian field stands up to a large extent, although its virtual lack of autonomy may rather justify a definition as a subfield hovering somewhere between and under the larger fields of literature and journalism. The New Journalism phenomenon in this view then becomes more of a link between the two fields of journalism and literature. Literature by the 1950s had become, in Bourdieusian terms, almost perfectly autonomous - \textit{id est}, closed in on itself and essentially self-referential. An important literary critic of the era, Northrop Frye, noted that "what made literary works literature were all the elements that did not refer to the world outside"\textsuperscript{419} - drawing a hard line between most journalism and the field of literature. By repeatedly crossing and breaking this somewhat artificial border and by emphasising the overlap between the two fields, the agents of New Journalism were at once playing with the borders of this overlap and creating a subfield of their own. A quote by Truman Capote comes quite close to this interpretation, in fact: "[Fiction and nonfiction] are coming into a conjunction, divided by an island that is getting more and more narrow. The two rivers are going to suddenly flow together once and for all and forever."\textsuperscript{420}

The following section will demonstrate the ways in which Wolfe, Thompson, Capote and Mailer moved within this subfield, \textit{id est} how and to what extent they made use of their stocks of capital to achieve the Bourdieusian goal of legitimately constructing the social world. The ways in which the agents in surrounding fields responded to their movements will also be elaborated.

\textbf{8.2. Dynamics and trajectories of four icons within New Journalism}

In answering the subquestion stated above, this section follows the same structure as the rest of the research core; first Tom Wolfe, then Hunter Thompson, thirdly Truman Capote and finally Norman Mailer will be analysed. Again, due attention will be given to the fact that the former two started in journalism before moving towards literature whereas the latter pair moved in the opposite direction.

\textsuperscript{419} Ragen, \textit{Tom Wolfe}, 41.
\textsuperscript{420} Truman Capote as quoted in Grobel, \textit{Conversations with Capote}, 89.
As was established in Chapter 4, Tom Wolfe's capital profile was characterised by low economic capital, significant cultural and social capital but most importantly a very large quantity of symbolic capital. This would place the Southern gentleman at the cultural pole of the New Journalism field, close to that of literature.

Interestingly enough, although he did end up at the cultural, literary pole of New Journalism, Wolfe started out as a journalist and always used journalism as the basis from which to depart, even in his novels. He states "I'm a journalist at heart; even as a novelist, I'm first of all a journalist. I think all novels should be journalism to start, and if you can ascend from that plateau to some marvelous altitude, terrific." This declaration of adherence to journalism points to a seeming gap between his actual capital profile, with more cultural than economic capital, and the preponderance of economic capital that is characteristic of the journalistic field.

This seeming discrepancy of Wolfe's position in the field and his capital profile is canceled out however by the fact that as a literary writer he did exactly what he refers to; starting from a basis of empirical material and journalistic skills and practices, he 'rose to the marvelous altitude' of successful novels. It is also noteworthy that the use of words here implies the higher status of literary works - something which, as was noted in chapter 4, Wolfe had a very precise understanding of.

Over the years, Wolfe would come to occupy a stayed position within the subfield of New Journalism, closer to the cultural pole than the economic one. However, by his controversial and rebellious position-takings he would always be both in a sense central to American literature and at the same time marginalized from it. Wolfe would be a feared and sometimes hated criticaster of cultural and literary elites, pointing out the hypocrisies and ironies in the positions of those who feigned nonconformism but actually had become a part of the establishment. He would mock and deride the many people in New York that would "totally accept what is the current intellectual fashion and then pat themselves on the back for being nonconformists".

One early and very telling example of Wolfe's antagonistic, provocative

421 Angela, "Master of his Universe", 287.
422 See chapter 4.2 (symbolic capital), page 48.
423 Ragen, Tom Wolfe, 35.
position-takings are the pieces he wrote about *The New Yorker*,\textsuperscript{425} called "Tiny Mummies! The True Story of the Ruler of 43rd Street's Land of the Walking Dead!" which appeared in the *Herald Tribune* on April 4\textsuperscript{th} 1965.\textsuperscript{426} In it, Wolfe attacked the status, style, content, writers and editors of the very respected magazine, painting editor William Shawn for example as a Mafia-like figure who cannot be contradicted or criticised but really only serves to 'mummify' all the writing that is produced.\textsuperscript{427}

To write the piece, Wolfe made extensive use of his social capital in attempts to piece together the necessary information. Not even his extensive networks served him here, however, as almost all of the *New Yorker* staff kept quiet. The attack was all the more powerful - and to some, contemptible - by virtue of Wolfe's cultural and symbolic capital: his virtuosity, powers and popularity.\textsuperscript{428}

More important than the pieces themselves, which Wolfe has said are not in fact examples of New Journalism since they used neither the journalistic nor the literary techniques that characterised the phenomenon,\textsuperscript{429} was the response of the literary and journalistic fields to them - and the follow-up that Wolfe gave to these responses.

Established literary critics such as Dwight MacDonald of the *New York Review of Books*, Renata Adler of *The New Yorker* itself but also the *Columbia Journalism Review* were extremely critical of the pieces.\textsuperscript{430} MacDonald even directed his arrows at the phenomenon of New Journalism as a whole, saying it was "parajournalism" and a "bastard form, having it both ways [...]. Entertainment rather than information".\textsuperscript{431}

Initially Wolfe was shocked at the responses he had provoked, feeling like the sky was falling down on him. However, when he realised that it was "very difficult to get hurt in a literary fight", he set to respond to the attacks in a new series of articles.\textsuperscript{432} These would become the first steps and ultimately the introduction of his influential anthology on New Journalism. This last work was a prime example of Wolfe making use of his cultural capital as a Yale Ph.D to further the cause of the phenomenon of New Journalism.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{425} See chapter 6.2, page 76 for a discussion of the magazine's capital.
\item \textsuperscript{426} Tom Wolfe, "Tiny Mummies! The True Story of the Ruler of 43rd Street's Land of the Walking Dead!", *New York Herald-Tribune*, April 4\textsuperscript{th} 1965.
\item \textsuperscript{427} Ragen, *Tom Wolfe*, 13.
\item \textsuperscript{428} Ibidem, 15.
\item \textsuperscript{429} Wolfe and Johnson, *The New Journalism*, 24.
\item \textsuperscript{430} Ragen, *Tom Wolfe*, 16.
\item \textsuperscript{432} Ragen, *Tom Wolfe*, 15-16.
\end{itemize}
Wolfe thus used both his cultural, social and symbolic capital in clever but - especially in the eyes of the literary community - usually controversial and provocative position-takings that ruptured the boundaries between literature and journalism. The next section assesses the extent to which Hunter Thompson made use of his capital in a comparable manner.

*Hunter S. Thompson*

The capital profile of the godfather of Gonzo journalism, as was established in Chapter 5, at its core consisted of a modest amount of embodied cultural capital, some bridging social capital and most importantly a sizeable stock of symbolic capital. This would indicate that Thompson occupies a position close to the literary field, much like Wolfe did. The observation by Thompson's colleague and fellow journalist William Kennedy that in fact they were both failed novelists who had only turned to journalism in order to make a living, also points in this direction. An important difference with Wolfe that was observed in Thompson's life and works was the presence of a strongly deviant trajectory - the repercussions of which will also be addressed below.

Unlike Wolfe, Thompson in his career seems to have a less clear focus and exhibits a more erratic pattern across the (sub)field of New Journalism. He was too idiosyncratic and reluctant to accept any form of authority or direction which led to repeated firings at publications. Only at the rock'n'roll magazine *Rolling Stone* Thompson could work for a longer period of time with the freedom he required.

This also makes it difficult to analyse how Thompson made use of his capital. Very much in character, he resisted the stamp of New Journalist that Wolfe had given him, "rejecting membership into anything that Tom Wolfe created" and emphasising that he thought the people Wolfe was fascinated with were "dull as stale dog shit." After getting his big break in writing *Hell's Angels*, Thompson moved from one assignment to the next without any apparent line or pattern. The only guiding theme was his Gonzo approach, the vestige of his symbolic capital.

In the end, Hunter Thompson grew tired of Gonzo himself. Every new story, every new assignment meant he had to top the craziness of the last one to satisfy his

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433 See chapter 5.4, page 66.
readership. Obviously this was taking a heavy physical and mental toll on the Doctor of Journalism. Biographer Paul Perry notes that Thompson "had started out at such a high level of craziness that there seemed to be nowhere left to go." From 1973 this tiredness started to dominate. As fellow writer Joe Eszterhas had warned him after *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* was published: "Don't paint yourself into a corner. You might be sorry for it in the end."

Thompson's greatest strength, his symbolic capital in the form of a Gonzo style, persona and reputation, had become a burden. The position-taking by Thompson himself of a radical, madman kind of literary journalist had caused him to lose it. He no longer seemed able to provide copy even for *Rolling Stone*, making the question "Whatever happened to Hunter S. Thompson?" the most often asked one at the magazine. By making his status and reputation of Prince of Gonzo the core of his journalism, thereby also acting out his deviance and using and producing symbolic capital, Thompson had slowly but surely also destroyed himself; in the end, he could no longer perform.

*Truman Capote*

In Chapter 6 it was demonstrated that Capote's capital profile was characterised most strongly by rapidly changing amounts of capital; Capote amassed large amounts of both economic and social and symbolic capital, but lost most of his power in the latter two categories after publishing parts of *Answered Prayers*. He did hold on to his embodied cultural capital in the form of a carefully honed style however. As with Wolfe, although some degree of deviance was present, it did not have the prominence observed with Thompson.

In writing his greatest achievement, the nonfiction novel *In Cold Blood*, Capote had been able to make use of mainly his large amount of embodied cultural capital. He had used all of his skills to first research in exceeding detail all the bits and pieces of information he needed and received great praise for this. As literary critic Eliot Fremont-Smith notes; "Part of Capote's equipment is his carefully trained

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436 Perry, *Fear and Loathing*, 194.
437 Idem.
memory: he took no notes while interviewing, and nothing was taped; instead, he listened, and thereby won extraordinarily candid accounts.\textsuperscript{439}

But while Capote used his capital to extract as much as possible from his subject, the subject also drained him. Witnessing the deaths of two men directly, as they had requested, while having grown so close to them over the process of researching his book took a heavy toll. Clarke observes that this process had been "exhausting his nerves, his reservoir of patience, and his powers of concentration; depleting, in short, his capital as both a man and a writer."\textsuperscript{440} Capote himself agrees, saying about \textit{In Cold Blood} that "It nearly killed me. I think, in a way, it \textit{did} kill me. Before I began it, I was a stable person, comparatively speaking. Afterward, something happened to me."\textsuperscript{441}

The slow spiral downwards was helped along by the reception of his work which, although very positive, did not please Capote enough. He did not receive the seals of approval of the literary establishment, the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award, and to him this felt like the result of a conspiracy. It seems that by moving from the field of literature to nonfiction and journalism, Capote surrendered some of his symbolic and cultural capital - even though he attempted to resist this development. Nevertheless, Capote's argument that it was not a failure of imagination that had driven him to nonfiction, as Norman Mailer had alleged, but rather exactly imagination itself that caused the drive, did not gain the clout and legitimacy he had hoped for.\textsuperscript{442}

When two years later Norman Mailer won both prizes for \textit{The Armies of the Night}, Capote's belief in a conspiracy of the literary elite against him was completed. He claimed that Mailer's book completely plagiarised his own, saying among other things that Mailer

"took everything that I had done, all of my hard work and experimental technique, and ripped it off [...] They got all the prizes and I got nothing! And I felt I deserved them. The decisions not to give them to me were truly, totally unjust. So at that point I said: 'Fuck you! All of you! If you are so unjust and don't know when something is unique and original and great, then fuck you!'"\textsuperscript{443}

\textsuperscript{440} Clarke, \textit{Capote}, 397-398.
\textsuperscript{441} Ibidem, 398.
\textsuperscript{442} Grobel, \textit{Conversations with Capote}, 114.
\textsuperscript{443} Clarke, \textit{Capote}, 398-400
Capote's steady course on a downward slope was of course only accelerated by the publishing of chapters from *Answered Prayers*. Capote liked to speak about the unfinished work, saying amongst other things it would probably be the book he would be most remembered by, his masterpiece, making him the "American Proust". As with *In Cold Blood*, the writing of this 'masterpiece' took a lot out of him. Capote observes that "It's a book of a great deal of density and intensity. You can only work on it for a certain length of time without becoming quite a nervous wreck." 

Even though Capote felt that his efforts went seriously underappreciated, or in Bourdieusian terms that symbolic and social capital was being denied where he should have received it, before *Answered Prayers* he was quite well-respected and even liked by many, among whom Norman Mailer himself. It is likely that by this time Capote had already began to develop an insatiable need for admiration and started to slide, from the position of great masses of economic, social and symbolic capital into a far less privileged position without the latter two categories of capital and with a serious drinking and drug abuse problem.

*Norman Mailer*

The fourth author analysed in this thesis was shown to have a capital profile consisting of high amounts of symbolic, cultural and social capital and a modest stock of economic capital. The author also exhibited a degree of deviance in his trajectory comparable to that of Capote - significant, but not as extreme as in Thompson's case. Like Capote, he began as a literary writer before moving closer towards the field of journalism.

Different than Capote, however, Mailer seems to have made the move or transition from literature to journalism or New Journalism with more long-term success. He won an impressive amount of literary and journalistic awards, became a public artist, leading a boisterously public private life and running for political office, and in doing so built a legend for and about himself - also at times struggling against the image that it painted of him.

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444 Grobel, *Conversations with Capote*, 204 and and Clarke, *Capote*, 461.
445 Grobel, *Conversations with Capote*, 204.
448 Robert F. Lucid, *Norman Mailer: the Man and His Work* (Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown and
Two books serve as especially telling examples of Mailer building this legendary status, and with it his symbolic capital. They are both examples of Mailer's efforts of working towards a "conception of his personality he could use to dominate and to unify his work"; one from his literary beginnings (*Advertisements for Myself*) and the other marking the first impressive steps Mailer took in the field of New Journalism (*Armies of the Night*).

*Advertisements for Myself* is a collection of Mailer's work, the "biography of a style", published in 1959, with italicised sections that summed up, commented on and plotted the trajectory of his literary career up to that point thus becoming "his own critic/promoter, combining the seemingly contrary functions of creation and criticism". In it Mailer examines how he came to produce his writings, what they mean and what past, present and future hold in store for him. The final piece in the collection reveals, by proxy of the story's protagonist, Mailer's own ambition and future prospect; to effect nothing less than a "revolution in the consciousness of our time". In a way, it is an explicit exercise in legitimisation of his own work and thus, in Bourdieusian terms, an attempt to increase his symbolic (cultural) capital.

The second instance where Mailer made attempts to construct his own legend was his first nonfiction novel *Armies of the Night* which was published in 1968. The novel describes the anti-war demonstration march on the Pentagon of October 21 1967 in which Mailer was arrested and beaten by the police. Writing about himself in the third person and playing with irony in defining and demarcating different roles he saw for himself Mailer continued the search that he began in *Advertisements*.

Mailer not only continued the legend-building in this book, however, he also provided new and interesting observations on the realm of nonfiction. By splitting the book into two parts - *History as a Novel* and *The Novel as History* - Mailer advances the theme that history and the interpretation of history go hand in hand and that there is no such thing as the facts without someone to assign meaning to them.
By his legend building, legitimising efforts and his simultaneous using and increasing of his symbolic capital, Mailer was also engaged in exactly that playing with the borders of the overlap between literature and journalism, building the subfield of New Journalism in the process. As literary critic Jack Richardson observes: "Mailer has created a fresh entente between the personal mode and the public record [...] he has reaffirmed the rights of the individualistic idiom to move in any social sphere [...] he has enlarged the territories of language.\(^{455}\)

8.3. Conclusion

This chapter firstly aimed to delve a little deeper into a Bourdieusian interpretation of the phenomenon of New Journalism, demonstrating that New Journalism can be interpreted as a subfield hovering somewhere between and under the larger fields of literature and journalism. The overlap between these two more autonomous fields and parts of both fields not included in the overlap make up the subfield, and the agents of New Journalism were playing with the borders between the three.

Secondly, it attempted to clarify the ways in which the four selected authors made use of their various amounts of capital as they moved within New Journalism and across the borders of the fields of literature and journalism. It was shown that Wolfe used his cultural and symbolic capital in a constantly controversial and provocative way, that Thompson became the victim, to an extent, of his own myth and symbolic capital, that Capote on the other hand seemed to suffer most from the loss of and failure to accumulate anew his symbolic capital and lastly that Mailer used his self-constructed legend to create new space for New Journalism and its agents.

The following and last chapter will summarise the findings from the introductory chapters and the four case studies, answer the research question posed in the introduction and suggest avenues for further research.

Strange memories on this nervous night in Las Vegas. Five years later? Six? It seems like a lifetime, or at least a Main Era—the kind of peak that never comes again. San Francisco in the middle sixties was a very special time and place to be a part of. Maybe it meant something. Maybe not, in the long run . . . but no explanation, no mix of words or music or memories can touch that sense of knowing that you were there and alive in that corner of time and the world. Whatever it meant. . . .

History is hard to know, because of all the hired bullshit, but even without being sure of “history” it seems entirely reasonable to think that every now and then the energy of a whole generation comes to a head in a long fine flash, for reasons that nobody really understands at the time—and which never explain, in retrospect, what actually happened.

My central memory of that time seems to hang on one or five or maybe forty nights—or very early mornings—when I left the Fillmore half-crazy and, instead of going home, aimed the big 650 Lightning across the Bay Bridge at a hundred miles an hour wearing L. L. Bean shorts and a Butte sheepherder’s jacket . . . booming through the Treasure Island tunnel at the lights of Oakland and Berkeley and Richmond, not quite sure which turn-off to take when I got to the other end (always stalling at the toll-gate, too twisted to find neutral while I fumbled for change) . . . but being absolutely certain that no matter which way I went I would come to a place where people were just as high and wild as I was: No doubt at all about that. . . .

There was madness in any direction, at any hour. If not across the Bay, then up the Golden Gate or down 101 to Los
Both the United States of America as a whole and the field of American print journalism witnessed revolutionary change in the Sixties, that period of social, political and cultural upheaval beginning somewhere around 1957 and ending around 1973. Whereas American society and indeed the Western world as a whole saw rapid

\(^{456}\) Thompson, *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* 67-68.
change in almost every aspect of society, the revolution within the field of journalism was more concentrated and would become known under the moniker "New Journalism".

This thesis has attempted to answer the question *To what extent can Bourdieu's field theory explain the influence Hunter S. Thompson, Truman Capote, Norman Mailer and Tom Wolfe had on the field of journalism?* Thus, the objective of this research was to provide insights into the factors responsible for the revolutionary influence that these four icons of New Journalism had on the field of journalism.

We have seen that according to Bourdieu the amounts and kinds of capital an agent possesses determine his power. There are four categories of capital or power: economic (capital which can be directly converted into money), cultural (which is synonymous with informational or educational), social (which derives from membership in a group) and symbolic (which is any of the former categories in a symbolic state). The deviance of the agent's trajectory - the objective gap between his actual trajectory in life and the modal trajectory that his group of origin followed - determines to what extent he will use this power to push for change or even revolution in his field.

Of the four categories of capital it was noted that Bourdieu only gives very summary attention to social capital. An expansion of this concept along the lines of Putnam was suggested and adopted, distinguishing between bonding and bridging social capital - bonding being more inwardly oriented, bridging more extraverted. Lastly, it was noted that a prerequisite for a real revolution in a field was the disruption of the dominant vision of the social world - a crisis in society.

This slightly adapted Bourdieusian theoretical framework was then employed to demonstrate that the United States in the Sixties were in fact such a society in crisis. The sweeping social, political, cultural and artistic changes challenged every conventional wisdom and caused enormous turbulence which sometimes even exploded into violence and death. This turbulence was also felt in the field of journalism, where the unstoppable rise of New Journalism revolutionised important parts of the field's accepted wisdom and rules.

After establishing these contextual factors, the central part of the thesis constructed a quadruple comparative case study of four iconic New Journalists, namely Tom Wolfe, Hunter S. Thompson, Truman Capote and Norman Mailer. The first two started out as traditional journalists before moving closer to the field of
literature, whereas the latter two began their careers as literary writers and entered the field of journalism only later. Their amounts and kinds of capital on one hand and the deviance of their trajectory on the other served as handles to explain their revolutionary influence.

The first New Journalist to be analysed was Tom Wolfe. It was demonstrated that Wolfe possessed only modest amounts of economic capital but was rather strongly equipped in the other three categories. Surprisingly enough Wolfe did not exhibit a large amount of deviance in his trajectory although he did move in a deviant manner within the field of journalism by ignoring the dominant rules of economic capital that had traditionally dictated the goings-on.

After Wolfe, Hunter S. Thompson's life and work were assessed for the two Bourdieusian factors of revolutionary influence. It was established that the Prince of Gonzo could dispose of only a very limited amount of economic capital, a modest amount of embodied cultural capital and an equally modest amount of mostly bridging social capital. Only in the fourth category did Thompson have any serious clout - his reputation, persona and careful (mis)management of them both supplied him with a sizeable amount of symbolic capital. In addition, from an early age a significant amount of deviance was observable in Hunter Thompson's life.

The third New Journalist that was analysed was Truman Capote, who was shown to have had rapidly and vehemently changing amounts of capital. He grew up in a poor environment yet became very rich (at least for journalistic standards) and he accumulated a great amount of social and symbolic capital but lost almost all of it when he published the secrets of the high society he had become a part of. The only relatively stable factor seems to be his cultural capital. Regarding his trajectory the fluidity of his background - Capote moved a lot in his youth - made it difficult to draw definite conclusions although his upward social mobility and disgust with his background of 'dirt-poor farmers' did indicate some measure of deviance.

The fourth and last author that was studied was Norman Mailer. His capital profile uniquely enough consisted of a relatively large stock in every single category. Mainly his social capital was impressive as Mailer formed part of some groups and networks that were themselves very well-endowed with capital - Mailer was a Harvard and Signet finals club alumnus, founder of the Village Voice and long-time writer for Esquire magazine. In terms of deviance the author also demonstrated a
significant amount of it in his life's trajectory, moving far up society's ladder from his humble Brooklyn roots.

Comparing the four profiles, it becomes clear that there is a large amount of variation between them. Some are more powerful in economic terms, some without much deviance in their trajectories, some amassing great amounts of capital only to flush it all down the drain - it would almost seem that the lack of clarity and large amount of variation with which New Journalism as a whole is sometimes charged holds a special validity in relation to these iconic writers.

However, some patterns and similarities can be observed. For most of the authors, social and symbolic capital are the most important parts of their power. From Tom Wolfe in his Southern gentlemanly white suits to Hunter Thompson with his very own drug-infused Gonzo Journalism to Capote and Mailer's status as recognised literary writers; their status and symbolic forms of power play a large role. The same goes for the groups and networks they form part of - however varied in character these might be. The seeming contradictory fact that Capote lost most of his social and symbolic capital after his high society faux pas on second thought actually supports this analysis because after the writer fell out of favour with the rich and famous he was never able to return to the level of influence he had exerted before.

A second similarity can be observed in the deviance of the four New Journalists' trajectories. All but Wolfe to a significant extent display a gap between their actual walk of life and the road that was laid out for them and their groups of origin. And in Wolfe's case - although it is less decisive - there is a slight deviance present in the way the writer moved within the field of journalism.

In the penultimate chapter this thesis has taken a closer look at the validity of a Bourdieusian interpretation of New Journalism. It found that in fact the phenomenon of New Journalism can be viewed as a Bourdieusian subfield hovering somewhere between and under the larger and more autonomous fields of literature and journalism. It was demonstrated that the agents of New Journalism with their work and lives played with the borders between the three (sub)fields and the most telling examples of the ways in which the four selected authors did so were elaborated.

The answer to the research question - to what extent can Bourdieu's field theory explain the influence Thompson, Capote, Mailer and Wolfe had on the field of journalism? - to a very significant extent. The research has shown that a number of
Bourdieusian elements - in brief, symbolic and social capital coupled with a deviant trajectory - are both necessary and sufficient to explain revolutionary change within the journalistic field and also to demonstrate and clarify the ways in which this influence created a subfield of New Journalism. Interestingly enough, this thesis has shown that the economic and cultural kinds of capital, which receive great prominence in Bourdieusian field theory, are less essential for revolutionary change within the field of journalism.

The limited scope of this thesis necessarily entails that much interesting and relevant research remains to be done. It would be highly useful if more agents in the field of journalism were investigated to validate the results that were found. A comparative study across other fields than that of journalism also is likely to yield very interesting results. A third suggested direction for future research is concerned more with the topic of New Journalism: while this thesis has kept its focus as much as possible on the field of journalism, it would be extremely interesting to see a study that also delves deeper into the literary field.

This research has come to a conclusion, nevertheless. This author bought the ticket and enjoyed the ride. Even if it occasionally got a little heavier than what he had in mind, he tuned in, freaked out and sometimes even got beaten. Even if the wave broke and rolled back, at least he tried to say "fuck it, let's have something which is a little less predictable". Because after all, who is the happier man: he who has braved the storm of thesis writing and lived, or he who has stayed securely on shore and merely existed?
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