

(IN)FORMING CONFLICT PREVENTION,  
RESPONSE AND RESOLUTION:



THE ROLE OF MEDIA  
IN VIOLENT CONFLICT

## INFOCORE Definitions

### “Peace Journalism”

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### **Definition: “Peace Journalism”**

Peace journalism, originating from the work of peace researcher Johan Galtung, is defined as “a normative mode of responsible and conscientious media coverage of conflict, that aims at contributing to peacemaking, peacekeeping, and changing the attitudes of media owners, advertisers, professionals and audiences towards war and peace” (Shinar, 2007, p. 2). At the level of news content, the notion of peace journalism refers to a set of choices “of what to report, and how to report it - that create opportunities for society at large to consider and value non-violent responses to conflict” (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005, p. 6).

Galtung famously distinguished between two distinct modes of conflict reporting: “peace/conflict journalism” and “war/violence journalism”. War/violence journalism treats conflict as a zero-sum game and is “propaganda-oriented”, “elite-oriented” and “victory oriented.” Peace/conflict journalism, by way of contrast, has a win-win orientation and is “truth-oriented”, “people-oriented”, and “solution-oriented” (Galtung, 2006, pp. 1-2). The many studies that operationalized the competing frames of war and peace journalism in content analyses of conflict coverage have continuously demonstrated a dominance of war frames in the news. However, the framework of peace journalism has also drawn much criticism. It was criticized for its simplistic epistemological assumptions, its dichotomous nature, its advocacy orientation, its empirical and theoretical grounding, and its insufficient attention to the various factors and structural constraints that shape news production (e.g., Hanitzsch, 2007; Loyn, 2007; Tenenboim-Weinblatt, Hanitzsch & Nagar, forthcoming; Wolfsfeld, 2004). In INFOCORE, we seek to develop improved models for identifying escalatory/reconciliatory frames and dynamics in news content, and to examine the conditions under which journalists play constructive or destructive roles in conflict and peacebuilding.

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