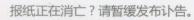


小的是美好的

Introduction to Community Newspapers in the USA Small Is Beautiful

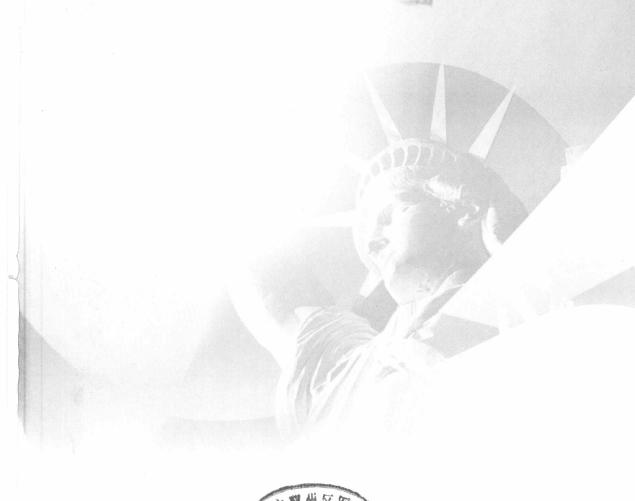
陈 凯◎著





有关美国报业的坏消息绝大部分来自发行量位于前20位的所谓主流大报,而最新数据是:占报纸总数97%的各类社区报却长兴未艾,这才是这个国家的真实心跳!







小的是美好的

Introductio



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陈凯 著

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# 序一 社区报是美国的心跳

当我告诉学生们,美国97%的报纸都是小型报纸<sup>①</sup>时,他们无一例外地大吃一惊,有些人则坦率地质疑这个说法。和多数美国人一样,他们倾向于认为在那些都市摩天大楼顶层的宽敞办公室里生产出来的"大城市新闻日报"把持着美国的报业主流。

或许中国的读者也持有这种过分简化的概念,但你将会读到,在美国,没有什么事实比这个离真相更远。

我们称为"社区报"的小型报纸才是这个国家的心跳。事实上,它们分布在每一座村庄、每一处城镇——在某些情况下甚至是在都市里的社区。无论是缅因州的周刊、北卡罗来纳州的双周刊,还者是加利福尼亚州的日报,它们都拥有一个共同的、不言而喻的、超越单纯利益层面的目标:报道地方新闻,服务社区,以树立、培植、增强和鼓励"地域感"等一系列手段建设社区。

本地媒体正是驱动我们称为"社区建设"的这列火车前行的原动力。

### 我们的开端: 乡村周刊

如你所知,美国是一个非常年轻的国家,与拥有5000年历史文化的中国相比,只有200多年历史的美国不过是个新生的婴孩! 16世纪的欧洲殖民者们发现了这片无尽的荒原,在从海岸推进到内陆的勘探开发过程中,小农场与小集镇开始涌现,那些小镇的开拓者通常会把本地报纸视为重要的基础设施之一。

这些俗称的"乡村周刊",自19世纪以来一直在城市大报和主流学术界的视野之外安静地发展、壮大、被收购或者被出售、合并或升级——直至20世纪50年代,一本开创性的书才终于改变了这个局面。

肯·拜耳利,一位由乡村周刊编辑、出版人转变而来的大学教授,在 1960年写就的《社区新闻》一书改变了我们看待"社区新闻"的方式。他

①根据美国编辑协会的定义,发行量在5万份以下的报纸为小报。

弃用"乡村"并以"社区"一词来标识和区分新闻形式,让"社区新闻"的概念、风格和出版方式单立门户,成为完全不同于"大都市新闻"的新闻业态,同时他也是理解并表达了"社区感"——这一报纸核心使命的第一人。

从20世纪60年代、90年代直至2001年,美国社区报一直在成倍增加、成长、兴盛繁荣,"9.11"恐怖袭击和随后的经济衰退虽然使其减慢了增长速度,但即使是在经济低迷的环境下,社区报应对金融风暴的表现也远超大都市报纸。

如今,随着新时代的黎明渐现,社区新闻再一次复苏。具有讽刺意味的是,大城市日报的缓慢消逝重新引发人们对本地事物的尊重和渴望。英语里有这样的说法: "旧即是新。"美国的社区新闻如今在媒体圈和学术界已得到广泛接受和尊重。

### 从编辑部到课堂

我自己的职业经历在许多方面反映了过去50年里美国社区新闻发展的轨迹。

在大学里受教于拜耳利教授,毕业后为本地伟大的社区报编辑们所激励,我在24岁时创办了自己的第一份社区报。在15年的艰辛却卓有成效的工作之后,我出售了股份,转向课堂教授社区新闻至今。

在此期间,我在UNC(University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 北卡大学教堂山分校,以下简称UNC)新闻与大众传播学院创立了两份试验性的免费网络社区报纸(作者注:指The Carrboro Citizen和The Voice),扶植了北卡州176份社区报的成长(作者注:Jock每年暑假深入全州各社区报路演,提供免费培训),从社区报纸编辑、出版人到新闻教授的职业路径使我熟知编辑部和课堂的方方面面。

拜耳利的原著应该被更新和扩充,1993年,我写了《社区新闻:亲近个体》一书,该书第三版《社区新闻:无以复加的当地化》,已于2006年出版。

经常有人问我: "为什么不再出新版呢?" 我回答: "因为中国。"



### 中国特色

2008年,当听说有一位中国学者对研究美国社区新闻感兴趣的时候,我并不是特别惊讶。毕竟,我的书已经有了罗马尼亚语和韩语译本,为什么不考虑一下出版中文译本呢?然而使我又惊又喜的是陈凯副教授的项目所带来的学术水平、远见和强度。

虽然我的年纪已经可以做陈教授的父亲了,但我马上就意识到我也得做她的学生。在我们的研究于2009年8月开始之后,我学到了"中国特色"这个概念,我很快意识到,若是将我的书逐字逐句译成中文必将水土不服。

她在投入研究成打的北卡罗来纳州优秀的社区报案例的同时,也在巧妙地对我进行着潜移默化的教导,将我引入中国的历史、风俗、哲学、政治、思想、文化和社会习俗之中。我没有离开美国,却好似在中国度过了一整年!

如果你想用一种完全不同的眼光看待自己的世界,那就试着通过来自 另一个世界的人的眼光来观察吧。在我们游历我的家乡,为她的研究访问 北卡罗来纳州最好的社区报的过程中,我发现自己再三地被问到关于美国 文化和新闻业宗旨的问题,"这意味着什么?"她的口头禅强迫我批判性地 去思考,以清晰地表达我的文化和我的职业中那些最基础的信念。

当我们努力尝试着进行有效的沟通时,多次意识到横阻在双方之间的文化沟壑。但幽默总能起到桥梁的作用——我们形容美国教授和中国教授在"鸡同鸭讲",我们都是"一丘之貉",用着相同的语句,却在表达着不同的意思。

我们之间的沟通挑战,仿佛隐喻着另一个更大的问题,我们两人的国家——美国和中国——双方都在试图相互表达,相互理解。有时能成功,通常会失败,但尝试一直没有停止。

通过我们的讨论和辩论(有一些相当激烈!),我开始认识并且体会到,美国的社区新闻经验不能简单地强加给中国,或者是被中国照搬照抄,中国将检验和剖析我们的"最佳实践经验",然后通过改进、接受、塑造,最后形成具有中国特色的社区报。

再一次强调:中国特色,必须的。



### 作为美国实验室的北卡罗来纳州

《社区新闻:亲近个体》的出版——在全美范围内被作为新闻教材,同时记者们也用它提高专业技能——使我得以于2005年组织了一个全国性的会议,吸引了200多位来自全美20多个州学习、研究和教授社区新闻、志同道合的大学教授参加,所以我有底气宣称:我已经研究了美国所有的社区报,同时亦可证实,北卡罗来纳州的社区报是一个完美的实验室,也是美国社区报总体中一个具有代表性的取样。

最后关于陈教授的学术水平,我可以向读者保证,她对于所涉报纸的 关键人物进行的多方访谈,是彻底的、全面的、深入的甚至是穷尽的。事 实上,通过对编辑和出版人的穷追猛问,她揭露的那些关于我所在国家的 报纸的真相,有的连我自己都没有意识到!

### 寄语未来

我对中国的未来,以及中国社区新闻的成长都充满信心。中国的规模如此之大,光是想到社区报所能给这个朝气蓬勃的国家带来的积极影响,就足以让人心潮澎湃。因此我推崇陈教授所做的开创性的工作。以我之拙见,这本先驱性的指南开创了此领域的先河。作为路标,它为那些渴望探索社区新闻的学生和编辑们指明了方向——社区新闻的世界奇妙而又充满挑战,而这些挑战最终都能有所回报。

十分荣幸能够在这趟旅程中担当一个小角色,我将怀着极大的期许关注社区报在中国的发展与演变。

——向前去,向上去。

美国北卡罗来纳大学教堂山分校 赵克

附:《序一》英文版

**FOREWORD** 

When I inform my students that 97 percent of all U.S. newspapers are small

newspapers\*, they are invariably surprised. Some are openly skeptical. Like most

Americans, they subscribe to the stereotype that the American newspaper landscape

is dominated by only the big-city daily newspapers with spacious offices on the top

floor of some urban skyscraper.

And perhaps the Chinese reader will also hold to this simplistic notion. But as

you will read, in the United States, nothing could be further from the truth. Small

newspapers, which we call "community newspapers," are the heartbeat of the

country. They are located in practically every village, hamlet, small town — and

even in some cases, urban neighborhoods. Whether they are weeklies in the state of

Maine, twice-weeklies in North Carolina, or even dailies in California, they all share

a common, often unspoken purpose — beyond being merely profitable: to TELL

the LOCAL news, to SERVE the community and to help BUILD that community

by instilling, nurturing, reinforcing and encouraging a "sense of place." We call this

"community-building," and the local media is the primary engine driving that train.

**OUR BEGINNINGS: COUNTRY WEEKLIES** 

As you doubtless realize, the U.S. is a very young nation. Certainly compared

to a Chinese culture that stretches back 5,000 years. A mere 200-plus years old, our

country is a baby! But out of that "newness" grew a new form of media. Remember

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that the European settlers of the 1600s found this land to be a vast wilderness. And as exploration and development moved from the coasts into the interior, small farming and market towns sprang up. And very often among the vital institutions and facilities that town leaders deemed absolutely necessary would be a hometown local newspaper!

These so-called "country weeklies," many of which were started in the 1800s, developed, grew, were bought and sold, merged and evolved quietly, out of view of the big-city major metro press and mainstream journalism academics — until the late 1950s when a seminal book was written that changed the landscape.

Community Journalism, written in 1960 by Ken Byerly, a former country weekly editor/publisher turned university professor, changed the way we thought about so-called "country newspapers."

Byerly was the first author/scholar to delete "country" and substitute the word "community" to brand and to differentiate the style of journalism — distancing community journalism as a concept, style and practice that was wholly separate and apart from "big-city journalism."

Byerly was also among the first to grasp and articulate the "sense of community" as being vital to the newspaper's raison dêtre — vital to its core mission.

From the 1960s through the 1990s and until 2001, American community newspapers multiplied, grew, thrived and flourished. Only the events of 9/11 and the subsequent recession have slowed that growth. But even in the economic downturn, community papers weathered the economic storm far better than their big-city media cousins.

So now, as a new age dawns, community journalism is once again resurgent. Ironically, the slow demise of the major metro daily has led to a new respect and



desire for all things local. So we have this expression, "What is old, is new again." And community journalism in the U.S. is now widely accepted and respected, both in media and academic circles alike.

#### FROM THE NEWSROOM TO THE CLASSROOM

In many ways, my own professional history reflects the trajectory of U.S. community journalism over the last 50 years. Educated in college by Professor Byerly and inspired by great local community newspaper editors in my college hometown, at the age of 24, I launched the first of two community newspapers. After 15 years of hard and rewarding work, I sold my interests and turned to the classroom, where I now teach community journalism, produce two lab newspapers and nurture the state's 176 community newspapers from a center at my university's school of journalism and mass communication. So I am a community newspaper editor/publisher who became a professor. I have seen all sides of both the newsroom and the classroom. In 1993 I wrote the first edition of my book, *Community Journalism: the Personal Approach*, because Ken Byerly's original book needed and deserved to be updated and expanded. My book, now in its third edition, titled, *Community Journalism: Relentlessly Local*, was published in 2006.

I am often asked, "Why don't you do a new edition?"

I reply, "Because of China."

#### THE CHINESE WAY

When, in 2008, I first heard that a Chinese scholar was interested in studying

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American community journalism, I was not particularly surprised. After all, my book had been translated into Romanian and Korean — so why not Chinese? But what did surprise me, and pleasantly, was the level of scholarship, vision and intensity that Associate Professor Kai Chen brought to her project.

Although I am almost old enough to be Professor Chen's father, it became immediately clear that I would be a student as well. Soon after we began our studies together in August 2009, I would learn the term "the Chinese Way," which quickly led me to realize that a literal translation of my book would never work for China. Even as my Chinese visitor plunged into her case studies of a dozen excellent North Carolina community newspapers, she was subtly instructing me, inculcating me, acculturating me into Chinese history, customs, philosophy, politics, thought, culture and social behavior. It was as if I spent one entire year in China without ever leaving the United States!

If you want to see your world in a totally different light, try looking at it through the eyes of someone from another world. As we toured my home state, visiting the best community newspapers for her study, I found myself being asked repeatedly about the most basic of American cultural and journalistic tenets, "What is the meaning of this?" she would ask — forcing me to think critically and to articulate clearly the very foundations of my culture and profession.

Many times, as we struggled to communicate effectively, we would both realize the chasm of cultural differences that lay between us. But always, humor provided the bridge — and we learned to laugh about the American professor speaking "Chicken," while the Chinese professor was speaking "Duck." We were both "birds of a feather," using the same words, but those words didn't have the same meaning.

It was as if our communication challenges served as a metaphor for the larger

# FOREWORD

issue — that of our two home nations, the U.S. and China — attempting to make sense to, and of, each other. Sometimes succeeding and often failing, but always trying.

Through all our discussions and debates (some quite heated!) I came to realize and appreciate the fact that American community journalism could not simply be overlaid or beamed down or "cut and pasted" onto China...but that China would have to examine and dissect our "best practices" and then adapt, adopt, modify, mold and shape a version of community journalism that will be wholly and thoroughly Chinese. Again: the Chinese Way.

### NORTH CAROLINA AS AN AMERICAN LABORATORY

As a result of my book, which has been used nationwide by professors in their journalism classes and by journalists wanting to brush up on their journalism skills, I was able to organize in 2005 a national cadre of 200-plus like-minded university professors from across the U.S. who study, conduct research and teach community journalism. That has led to speaking engagements in half of the states in America. This exposure entitles me to say: I have studied community papers all across my country, and can attest that the North Carolina newspapers that Professor Chen studied serve as a perfect laboratory, a representative sampling of and for U.S. community newspapers in general.

And finally, a word about Professor's Chen's level of scholarship. I can promise the reader that her multiple interviews with key personnel from each newspaper she studied were thorough, comprehensive, in-depth and at times exhaustive. In fact, through her hard questioning of editors and publishers, she uncovered facts about my



state's newspapers of which even I was unaware!

TO THE FUTURE

I am excited about the future of China and about the growth of community

journalism in your country. If for no other reason than China's sheer size, it is

thrilling to contemplate the positive impact that community newspapers could

bring to such a dynamic nation. Thus I commend the groundbreaking work of

Professor Chen; it is my humble opinion that this pioneering field guide will

serve as a first-of-its-kind roadmap for students and editors wishing to explore the

wonderful, challenging but ultimately rewarding world of community journalism.

It has been my honor to share a small role in this journey. I will be watching the

growth, development and evolution of community newspapers in China with great

anticipation.

— Onward and upward.

**Jock Lauterer** 

Chapel Hill, N.C.

USA

\* According to the American Society of Newspaper Editors, newspapers with print

circulations below 50,000 are defined by the industry as "small newspapers."



# 序二 了解美国报业全景的 必要补充

美国97%的报纸发行量在5万份以下,这个数据实在令人意外,也就是说这么多年来,我们仅知晓美国报业的冰山一角,却误把象鼻当做大象全身。存在即合理,《走进美国社区报》这本非学术类专业著作使我们有机会潜到水底看清冰山全貌,是了解美国报业全景的必要补充。

从一个工作在一线的业者角度,我更关注美国社区报对中国的现实参照意义。任何媒体的创新行为都无法超越其所源于的社会发展阶段的约束,《法制晚报》2005年开始在社区新闻/社区报领域进行探索,我们意识到社会发展到目前阶段,社区新闻/社区报的发展有了内在动力和需求,该出发了。

首先,城市碎片化是社区新闻/社区报兴起的前提,"本市新闻"这个概念已经越来越无法满足当下城市读者的阅读需要,把整个城市居民看成一个具有趋同性的阅读人群是越来越不够明智的做法。

其次,市民阶层的成型是社区新闻/社区报发展的关键,他们对生活 热点的关注已远远超越对政治热点的关注,"政治北京"正在让位于"生 活北京"。

最后,传播媒体的环节缺失是社区新闻/社区报成功的契机,离你越近与你关系最密切的新闻却无法获取,这是媒体传播的"灯下黑"盲点,看准这个空白点,也许就是下一个发展良机。

社区报是个舶来概念,几年来边学边做逐渐看出门道:它是完全不同于商业大报的新闻品种。但中国社区报现在处于什么样的发展阶段?市场潜力到底有多大?未来走向如何?如入迷宫般的困惑正是源于国内相关系统研究的缺失,就该领域而言,知彼是知己的前提,能起到事半功倍的效果。

从学术角度,陈凯准确地把握住了国际新闻研究的空白点,及时"拨乱反正",为考察美国报业和文化独辟蹊径;从业界角度,新闻同质化现象迫使报业眼光向下开发次级微观新闻,但发展却并不一帆风顺,急需学



者的研究给我们提供前车之鉴或指明方向。在我看来,这是一部出现在合适时间、合适地点,没有注水内容、100%原创、货真价实的作品。

社区报的研究在国内迟迟没有进展,可能是隔岸观火的疏离所致。表面上看,一家小报,几个编辑,上百年历史,看不出什么门道,如果只是不求甚解地拿来概念,换汤不换药地以大众传播模式继续出版社区报,结果不难预料。正如作者所观察到的,美国文化是社区报的依托,这是两个不可分割的部分,没有一定深度的生活体验和思考,很难看透社区报现象,接地气的社区生活和大量高强度采访使本书内容翔实,案例生动,颇具可读性,为读者展示了各具特色、具象、生动的社区报和社区报人群像。

许是以前对美国报业的片面理解,某些借来的概念移植到都市报效果并不特别理想,书中首次把很多国人一知半解的概念放在小众传播范畴内进行阐释,显得合情合理,让人茅塞顿开,比如讣告为何深受美国读者欢迎,却很难成为中国都市报读者的必读,原来是被缺少理解语境的我们省略了社区报这个定语。类似颇具启发性的观点介绍几乎遍布于全书的每个案例,这有助于修正旧存的某些误区,同时也为我们从微观层次走进美国报业提供抄了近道的捷径。

《走进美国社区报》让读者看到了美国报业的内容、广告、发行等方面精耕细作的操作模式,值得借鉴的东西很多,有的适用,有的还需改造。

中国报业将真正受益于更多类似的实用性研究,相信报纸没有理由成为未来博物馆消失物种的标本。

《法制晚报》总编辑 王林

# 引言

2009年夏季,我带着即将读中学的儿子来到美国北卡州橘郡东南小镇教堂山。

北卡盛产柏油(Tar),南北战争时期,北卡子弟兵在援军被击溃的情况下死战不退,最终获得胜利。逃兵问北卡士兵他们是否还有柏油,北卡士兵回答:"有,下次要涂在你们的脚板(heel)上,让你们跑不了。"从此代表着坚毅、永不放弃精神的Tar Heel成为北卡州的别称。

教堂山位于北卡中部以医药、高科技为主业的研究三角地,这座与全美第一所公立大学UNC伴生的小镇从18世纪初的几千人发展到如今的5万人口规模,它能扬名美国则得益于篮球巨星迈克尔•乔丹的光芒,这里深厚的篮球传统与盎格鲁-撒克逊文化交融的社区氛围让我们体验了最纯正的美式生活。

从1000多万人口的大都市到5万人口的美国小镇,两种文化的差异被放大到极致:无边无际的绿、笑意盈盈的脸、不见人流只有车流的街等让人有些许恍惚;知识分子聚集的小镇有着浓厚的自由民主包容的氛围,美国朋友经常对我们说的是:感谢你们带来的多元视角。亚洲人没有遭到排斥,反而成了可以独享很多专利的招牌,我们的文化休克期混杂着不适与享受。

UNC新闻学院闻名全美,它的开放和包容使我的研究总能适时地得到 多方援手。

赵克主持的社区媒体研究中心于2001年成立,该机构致力于通过教学和研究加强与业界的联系,支持促进北卡州的社区报纸的发展,其理念是高质量的社区媒体有助于提高社区的归属感,从而让居民从高质量生活中得到更高的幸福指数。由此开始,每年暑假他都会走访北卡大大小小的社区报,为他们提供免费的现场培训,涉及从新闻报道到摄影的方方面面。屈指算来,他已经走遍了170份社区报纸。丰富的从业经验以及所处的学术高度让他有机会在全美各地大学、几十个州的报纸协会开办各种有关社区新闻的培训,深入而及时地了解社区新闻领域的最新动态。我庆幸自己在合适的地点和时间找到了合适的导师引领我走进这个充满未知的领域。

任何报纸本质上都是社区报,主要取决于对社区的定义。"社区"的概念可以从三个角度理解:作为场所的"社区",作为符号的"社区"和虚拟的"社区",本书所涉及的则为第一种场所社区,由此所谓社区报,"就是服务于城市中的社区读者,强调其归属性和认同感的报纸"。美国学者强调,社区报的唯一标志就是它"对某个特定社区的服务性和归属感",而且需要补充的是:因为社区报的根本特色是相关性,所以小发行量是它的优势,是它的"大",所以又被称为小报,此处的"小"完全不同于当"小"被用来指煽情的报道风格时所具有的负面意义。

我在出国之前,曾一厢情愿地构想庞大的采访计划:走遍全美最优秀的社区报。但后来的现实原因使我及时打消原先不切实际的想法,财力物力精力的限制使我根本不可能在预定时间内达到目标。

刚到美国,主要由于文化背景的障碍,我总会困惑于很多现象:比如新闻人的职业追求,居民对社区发自内心的热爱,美国人对慈善的热情等等,在赵克看来最平常不过的事对我而言却是大大的问号,我意识到不能贸然匆忙开始采访,第一个学期我的主要任务是听课,参加社区活动,做赵克的"影子",跟着他去开会、送报,慢慢地在他的引领下很多的谜团被一个个破解,从文化休克中清醒过来再看美国人的行事逻辑,即使在我这个东方人眼里,也变得合理,茅塞顿开的成就感成为我不断探究的动力和乐趣,这些积累为后期采访奠定了基础,我已经知道如何以美国人能接受的方式进行交流,什么是文化中的禁区,如何让他们的谈兴更浓等等。

美国人以保持社区差异为荣,走遍全美各地,从外表看,到处都一样,只有当你拿起一份社区报,才能看出当地的特质。赵克总说: "1000个社区就有1000份不同的社区报。"从这个意义上看,找出具有代表性的社区报几乎是很难完成的任务,美国文化推崇的观念是每一个个体都是独特的、不可替代的,大家都不愿"被代表",但服务首位的共性又使散布各地的社区报存有诸多共性。

经过充分沟通,我和赵克一致认定把采访范围限定在北卡范围内是比较现实的方案,北卡传统上是杰佛逊"小政府,大社会"理念的坚定贯彻者,家族拥有的报纸超过一半,居民对社区有很强的向心力,是非常难得且理想的研究社区报的地区。而且便利条件是赵克作为这个圈子里的明星人物,几乎无人不知,由他出面联系能让我少走很多弯路,搭上顺风船事半功倍。

北卡州有关社区报纸的各种数据与全美报业趋于一致。据北卡罗来纳报业协会(North Carolina Press Association)2010年统计,全州共有179份报纸(数据不含约20份非成员报纸),173份属于小报范畴,细分如