

Journalism Education

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Journalism Education

Journalism Education is the journal of the Association for Journalism Education a body representing educators in HE in the UK and Ireland. The aim of the journal is to promote and develop analysis and understanding of journalism education and of journalism, particularly when that is related to journalism education.

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Introduction

Journalism Education is delighted to welcome Dr Karen Fowler-Watt of Bournemouth University as our guest editor for this special edition looking at teaching journalism's storytellers.

It's the story that matters! Teaching journalism's storytellers

Guest Editor: Karen Fowler-Watt, Bournemouth University, UK.

The only thing I have wanted to do in my life – and the only thing I have done somewhat well – is telling stories - Gabriel Garcia Marquez

I was delighted to be invited to put together this special edition of Journalism Education. It didn't take me long to decide on a topic, since "the story", how we tell stories and how we teach storytelling constitute dominant and consistent themes in conversations with colleagues – both in industry and the academy – as well as a personal enthusiasm.

Storytelling is the journalist's craft skill: Shaped by the tenets of objectivity and accuracy, the news narrative informs the debate and brings us the human stories. If journalism is a craft, then the story is the journalist's work of art – it is 'hard-wired in' (Marr, 2006). Even in a rapidly changing landscape of technological revolution, shifting business models and ethical challenges, one thing remains certain – the story still matters. As award winning BBC foreign correspondent, Fergal Keane reminds us, the journalist is first and foremost a storyteller who is 'trying to tell them what it is like to stand where I do and see the things I see.'

But this craft skill is being challenged on all sides. The demands of the 24/7 news cycle emphasise story – processing, rather than storytelling. Originality – the storyteller's stock-in-trade - is often sacrificed as newsrooms shrink in size and journalists fail to get out of the office. The online environment moves us away from linear storytelling and focuses on the imperative of interactivity. Stories require simplicity and multi media features to engage an audience consuming in byte-size, whilst on the move.

If storytelling lies at the heart of journalism practice, how do journalism educators face these challenges? How do we teach the next generation of journalists to find original stories and to tell them in innovative ways? How do we encourage young journalists to engage audiences through their storytelling techniques? How does investigative, in-depth research and long-form storytelling fit in to this digital context? How do they make sense of the fragments and conversations in order to tell stories that are accessible to others, accurate and fair?

This special edition seeks to engage with these questions through six thought-provoking, peer-reviewed articles and a couple of invited essays, which focus on a specific area and from an industry perspective. I have also included a personal reflection on the challenges we face in narrating the identities of others. The final section contains some relevant book reviews.

Above all, this edition aims to invite discussion and debate about a range of challenges currently facing the role of storytelling in journalism education. It devotes particular attention to the ways in which journalism educators are embracing multimedia and new media approaches to storytelling. I hope that it provides

food for thought and creative ideas for your own research and pedagogic practice and would like to thank everyone who has taken the time to finesse their contribution to this special edition.

Key challenges

The two invited essays provide context– highlighting some of the crucial challenges encountered in teaching storytelling: the phenomenal rise of social media and its impact on our ability to engage audiences.

In *Get digital or die: News storytelling, social media and journalism education*, former Director of the BBC College of Journalism, Jonathan Baker canvasses opinion from industry colleagues to chart a path for journalism educators in the wake of the social media revolution and concludes that the story still matters, but we have to think very carefully about our sources and how we tell it. Peter Jackson, the leading magazine editor of his generation and UK launch editor of *Elle* explains *Why Words Must Paint Pictures*. His compelling essay highlights the power of an evocative phrase or sensuous description in drawing readers in to stories. Utilising his own experience, he paints a vivid picture of how long form storytelling can survive – and thrive - in the digital age.

Telling stories responsibly

Indeed, the theme of journalists' responsibility runs through all of the articles and Josie Vine's contribution sets the scene for this section, providing useful context. Writing from an Australian perspective, she contends that the time spent learning technological approaches to storytelling reduces the time spent learning how to tell stories and minimises opportunity for critical reflection on practice. '*Teaching and learning journalistic responsibility in the post-digital revolution*' utilises a 3 - year case study and a paradigm of cultural-historiography to explore whether the core philosophy of journalism as storytelling has been transformed, or merely the tools with which stories are told. An important focus on ethics, diversity and the imperatives of scrutiny and holding to account underpin research that challenges assumptions about journalistic practice. Brad Gyori, an American now teaching digital storytelling in the UK pursues the theme of integrity as non-negotiable, but challenges journalism educators to interrogate the value of objectivity. Developed with reference to work done by researchers such as Jenkins and Kelley (2013) on reading in participatory cultures, whereby students actively approach texts in different ways to inform their understanding, Gyori offers a 'news remix' model that encourages us to think about the production of meaning, rather than just news production for its own sake. In his article, '*POV X 3: Helping Journalism Students Juxtapose Author, Actor & Audience*'. He advocates an immersive and engaging model, utilising point of view (POV) to develop critical thinking in students learning the art of storytelling.

Industry council accreditation forms an important part of the landscape for journalism education in the UK and Myra Evans shares her research on experiential learning, focused on teaching storytelling in a "classroom as newsroom" context. Her article *Storytelling in the Newsroom: An investigation into practice-based learning methods in the training and employment of tomorrow's journalists* emphasises the importance of the newsday as a route to confidence building, industry engagement and employability.

Two articles follow that focus on the challenges of sense-making through storytelling in a digital age. Australian academic Kate Ames looks at the Gamergate controversy as a way into investigating the challenges for journalism educators in a landscape where fragments of conversation have become stories and conversational narrative has become a dominant form. '*Gamergate, fragmentary storytelling, and news narrative: Convergence, 'conversation', and context in journalism education*' acknowledges that content creation remains central to the journalist's role, but contends that in order to produce accurate and fair stories, the journalists of the future should know how to make sense of social media, not just how to use it. Understanding conversational theory and the re-telling of stories therefore becomes a critical future skill for journalism students. Responsible journalism utilising data and visualisation techniques can arise from transparency, from showing your workings – what the data labs research team at Bournemouth University refer to as the 'layer cake' approach to sharing digital narratives that engage audiences. In "*Visualising Data Stories Together: Reflections on Data Journalism Education*" Anna Feigenbaum et al emphasise that core journalistic principles should not be distorted by the use of data in storytelling, so an understanding of design and audience is important. This project also engages with external stakeholders from NGOs to industry, and globally - illustrating the positive impact that innovative journalism education can – and should - have on wider society. The concluding article engages with notions of responsibility, journalism and storytelling through the lens of trauma training. The core principles of journalism are thrown into sharp

relief in conflict zones and when reporting trauma. Stephen Jukes, former global Head of News at Reuters and Professor of Journalism at Bournemouth University, calls for journalism educators to integrate trauma awareness into their curricula and illustrates how it engages with the key skills of journalistic storytelling – particularly the stock – in –trade of interview technique – issues associated with objectivity, notions of trust and emotional literacy. In challenging normative assumptions around ‘detachment’ *‘Where’s George Bush? University students weather the trauma storm of Hurricane Katrina’* underlines the intensely human nature of journalism, with its emphasis on the importance of human connections. We can only tell stories responsibly with meaning and veracity if we confront and seek to understand ourselves. Emotional literacy forms an equal partner to media literacy when reflecting on the challenges for journalism education and the storytellers of the future.

In conclusion, and ahead of a selection of pithy book reviews, I have included a short, personal reflective piece on a seminar that I delivered this summer at the Salzburg Global Media Academy, a matter of days after the Nice attack when the spotlight was sharply focused on the media’s portrayal of migrants and bi-nationals. Migration was the theme for the academy, providing an opportunity to consider the challenges and responsibilities for journalists in telling the stories of ‘others’. Perhaps above all journalism education should consider the teaching of intangibles such as empathy, compassion and how to avoid superficial generalisations or leaping to judgement. In a complex and fractured world, we need to ask ‘where does the good journalism, the compelling, fair, accurate storytelling reside?’ I hope that this special edition makes a useful and insightful contribution to the conversation.

Dr Karen Fowler-Watt
September 2016

Invited essays

Get digital or die: News storytelling, social media and journalism education

Jonathan Baker, Professor of Journalism, University of Essex

Two years ago, Jonathan Baker left the BBC, where he was Director of the College of Journalism to take up a Chair at the University of Essex and to design an undergraduate journalism course from scratch. It has just completed its first year. In this essay he reflects on the exponential growth in social media as a news source for storytelling, the challenges presented by digital and why, he believes, that there has never been a better time to be teaching young journalists.

The social media revolution has now been a part of the journalist’s life – all our lives – for five years and more. The media can no longer afford to gape at the speed of its advance, or ignore the potentially fatal consequences of a failure to respond.

Ian Hargreaves in his book *Journalism: A Very Short Introduction* claims that as early as 2010 “it was clear to everyone... that newspapers, some magazines and even parts of the television news industry, would have to adapt or die” (Hargreaves, 2014:119). Yet plenty of journalists, and perhaps some of the people who train their successors, are still only starting to learn to love digital.

Social networks exert an ever-tighter grip on our everyday lives, and the ways that we communicate and keep ourselves informed. But in general terms, the media have been slow to understand and to adapt. Perhaps it’s because the new journalism is a young man’s game, and remains opaque to an older generation whose career-long certainties – with their jobs – are disappearing fast. But there is no hiding place; and the implications are no less obvious for the training and education of the next generation of journalists, if that generation is to survive and flourish in the digital age.

The most striking features of the social media phenomenon have been the extraordinary speed and scale of their adoption across the world. The statistics portal Statista projects a figure of 33 million UK Facebook users by 2018, more than half the entire population. In July 2015, Twitter claimed it had reached 15 million active users in the UK, around one person in four. Instagram claims 14 million active monthly users in the UK.

Although these are staggering – and growing – levels of penetration, it is hard to get a sense of how many of those millions are using social media as their sources of news, even if you can establish how ‘news’ is defined in a world of sharing and retweeting.

The Digital News Report for 2016, published by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, says just over half (51%) of its sample of 50,000 people in 26 countries now use social media as a source of news, and for 12% it’s their main source. The biggest change in the last year, it says, has been the growth of news accessed via Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat.

A key enabler of these dizzying increases is another seemingly-irresistible onward march, that of the smartphone. Social media users operate on the move, their mobiles giving them 24-hour access to their chosen networks. The Reuters Institute reports a sharp rise in smartphone usage for news in 2015-16, at

the expense of computers and tablets.

Andrew Hawken, formerly Director of Product for Sky News and now co-founder/CEO of Mesmerise, thinks this trend will quicken. He told me: “If you look at the computing power in these devices, you look at the screen’s resolution and the capacity, it just continues and continues and continues. Smartphone is just huge and will continue to get more important.”

Smartphones are key enablers in a process by which the audience has changed from passive consumer of the products of professional journalists to a community that has the tools to become active news producers. The title of Clay Sharkey’s 2008 book *Here Comes Everybody* neatly captured this phenomenon. Anyone can now be a reporter, commentator, publisher.

And there are gaps for new sorts of providers. BuzzFeed showed the potential for anyone who could master the creation and distribution of content in a social and mobile world. There were some ‘early adopters’ in the traditional media who were quick to grasp this, and others who were slower to see that social networking would have a profound effect on their business model and/or the way they conducted their journalism.

The New York Times, in an internal Innovation Report in 2014, in effect a snapshot of its own digital response, put itself firmly in the slow lane. While giving themselves a pat on the back for the enduring quality of Times journalism, the report’s authors cautioned: “At the same time we are falling behind in a second critical area: the art and science of getting our journalism to readers...this is where our competitors are pushing ahead of us.”

Joanna Geary speaks with considerable authority about those who quickly chose to adapt; now at Twitter, she was successively Social and Communities Editor and Digital Development Editor at the Guardian, and then Communities Editor at the Times – new roles designed to lead the response to the new challenges.

“I think 2009-10 was an incredible time for social media adoption,” she told me. “A lot of journalists got their Twitter accounts and their Facebook accounts and enjoyed the fact they got lots of followers from them and started to learn about how to build followers and build a presence. I think they then thought they had got Twitter and Facebook sorted, and maybe many of them didn’t go down the line of thinking of them as genuine newsgathering tools. That’s started to change now, but it’s still quite a small community of people in the UK who do it really well.”

Journalism is having to adapt to the realisation that the audience has moved elsewhere and will no longer consume what it’s given at the times media organisations feel disposed to provide it. If journalism has to adapt to take account of these new realities, then those responsible for training future generations of journalists have to adapt as well. They have to look to their laurels too, and be confident that they are teaching the skills required for this new world.

Are they responding any more effectively than the media industry? The Broadcast Journalism Training Council accredits many UK journalism courses, and each course has a brief manifesto on the BJTC website. A trawl of more than 20 of these documents reveals only two mentions of the word ‘digital’, and two references to social media. This might suggest that social media and digital skills have yet to be fully integrated into some courses, or given the prominence that their increasing importance warrants. Or both.

One reason might be that it’s still not clear whether social media skills will always require specialist practitioners, or whether in time they will be in the storytelling toolkit of every digital journalist. For now, the general trend seems to suggest a gradual move from the one to the other – although there will probably always be a place for the social expert, just as there is for other sorts of specialism within the wider field of journalism.

Sky News keep both of these options in play, as Andrew Hawken explains: “We have a couple of approaches. While we want everyone in the newsroom to be completely conversant with social media, we want them run at the moment by specialists. They know exactly how to publish to Facebook, they know exactly the best times. The difference between someone just coming in on a rota who hasn’t done it for six months, and having a team of real specialist producers who live and breathe social media publishing every day is huge. We see that every day in the numbers.”

Joanna Geary also sees the emphasis shifting somewhat, especially when it comes to newsgathering as opposed to distribution. “I would imagine most journalists would be able to have at least some abilities to search for and find interesting stories via social media.

“But I think that more forensic mapping and shadow analysis, that side of things – I don’t expect that’s something that will become essential skills for everybody. I think that will be something that will be owned by some sort of ‘social desk’. You are always going to need some sort of specialist in a newsroom who can

understand how to verify multimedia content that is procured online.”

Learning these skills does not necessarily come easily to journalists of a certain generation. That means plenty of opportunity for young, web-savvy journalism graduates, and undergraduate courses should be able to help them seize those opportunities. And newsrooms want them.

Joanna Geary says: “There are so many skills now that are becoming essential to the business that just aren’t really taught in journalism schools. Data journalism and editorial developers are big things. There’s a lot of demand for really good editorial developers, and there aren’t many of them around, and not many courses that are creating them.”

The New York Times is in no doubt about the kind of people it will be looking for in the future: “We need more reporters and editors with an intuitive sense of how to write for the web, an interest in experimenting with mobile and social storytelling, a proficiency with data, a desire to engage readers on and off our site and a nuanced understanding of the shifting competitive landscape.”

Nic Newman is specific about some of the new skills that will need to be developed by the next generation. “Numerical literacy will be more important, and data journalism will be a part of it,” he told me. “But so too will be learning to tell stories visually - and that will include charts, videos, pictures and new formats that combine all these elements together in new ways. You are trying to teach them flexibility in format, and expose them to tools and techniques for gathering and packaging, at the same time as doing the core concepts.”

So the journalists of the future will need a range of skills associated with the digital world - some of them new, some of them traditional skills given a new impetus or direction. All undergraduate courses will have to determine how to provide these in a digital environment which is difficult and even alien to some of those doing the teaching, yet familiar and natural to those being taught.

Those skills will include:

- a knowledge of the geography of social media, what each platform offers and how it can best be exploited in the interests of getting journalism to audiences;
- a willingness to experiment and find new ways of connecting, engaging and informing;
- an ability to produce the sort of content that works effectively on the web - techniques for visual storytelling;
- an ability to handle statistics with confidence, and to understand how to mine, analyse and present some of the wealth of big data available online.

There is one critical point upon which everyone is in agreement: social media and their associated skills may be important, but they in no way replace or sideline any of the immutable virtues and values of good newsroom practice. This is the argument for professional journalism and the importance of its place in the news environment of the future, a pillar of trustworthiness in a messy and ever more complicated and fast-moving world. It’s an oddity of social media, that in spite of our mania for it, our natural scepticism survives. Levels of trust for news on social media remain low.

Jeff Jarvis, head of Entrepreneurial Journalism at the City University of New York’s Graduate School of Journalism is, as his title suggests, an optimist. He encapsulates the challenge for educators:

“We face the challenges every journalism school faces today: how to teach change; how to teach enough tools so students leave proficient in them without letting that rob vital time from the teaching of the basic skills and verities of journalism; how to stay ahead of change in the field while still preparing students for the jobs that exist today. It’s not easy. But there is no better time to teach journalism and no better time to become a journalist. Youth, I tell my students, used to be something to get over. Now youth is an asset. Our students today are not only more technically skilled than we could be, they see the world in new ways. I urge them to guard that fresh perspective and to use it to question and challenge all of our assumptions so they can imagine and build a new future for journalism.”

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Why words must make pictures

Peter Jackson, freelance journalist and publisher

As the launch editor of Elle in the UK, and founder of a successful publishing company, GPS, Peter Jackson has an unrivalled reputation as an innovative magazine editor and publisher. He has shared these experiences for many years with journalism students and in this invited essay, he explains why, in his view, the ability to paint pictures with words is more important than ever in the digital age.

Journalism has never been more vibrant. Set free from the limitation of mere words on paper, the multimedia journalist is a packager of video, audio, photographs, graphics and archive film. The screen may be static but within it people, situations and locations are brought to life before the eyes of the countless million inhabitants of the digital world.

Yet the key element of a story is still words. Website reportage may project a staccato rhythm of urgency but there is no reason why a well-crafted feature cannot be read and enjoyed on screen. If readers will cheerfully engage with a 100,000-word novel from the bald face of an electronic tablet they can surely absorb 2,500 words of compulsive copy.

And there is still a vast market for words on paper – the longer-read features of journals of analysis and opinion, of weekend newspapers and their many supplements and of magazines of every sort. There is still a bright career for journalists who can capture lace facts with mood and atmosphere, turn a memorable phrase, coin an evocative headline.

But the big difference in the digital age is that if words being assembled at any length (on page or screen) are to grip and retain their reader they must make special effort to break free from the impression of serried ranks of solid type and to seek to match the vitality of the new dimensions.

If seeing is supposedly believing, we now inhabit a world of utter belief because everything is made visible to us.

Telephones which once merely carried voices along wires now enable us to look upon the caller. Where radio was sounds coming through a loudspeaker we can now peer into the studio by way of a webcam. The gramophone record, which progressed to the LP that became the CD that has become the DVD means we can watch the artistes perform. Television's zoom lens takes the couch-bound rugby fan into the heart of a scrum 10,000 miles away. The Hawkeye device enables the cricket follower to look through the body of the batsman and see if the ball would have hit the stumps. Medical scanners can portray every part of our physique and enable us to witness the very beginnings of human life within the womb. And man has ventured into space to beam back pictures of Mother Earth – that blue/grey orb floating in the darkness of eternity that poets have spent centuries trying to describe in imagination.

All of which means that journalists of the digital age must also turn their words into pictures

Of course, great writers have always done so. Why are we almost invariably disappointed by the film of a favourite novel? Because the author's graphic story-telling had so caught our imagination we had already filmed the book mentally, cast the characters, inhabited their space, recorded the soundtrack. And suddenly it's become our film, no-one else's.

Caitlin Moran, prolific columnist for The Times and a best-selling author, likens the role of the writer as supplying images to what she terms the "projection screen" within the reader's mind.

Addressing the reader, she writes: "If I type 'dragon' – casually, just six letters, no effort for me – suddenly, a dragon appears in your mind. You have to make it. Your brain fires up – perhaps your heartbeat will speed a little, depending on if you have had previous unhappy experiences with dragons. Perhaps you will have given her golden claws – or maybe you have a fondness for tight, black shiny scales. But however closely I have described her, she will still be your dragon – in your head. ... And no one else will ever see her" (Moran, 2016)

But dragons also roar and prowl across medieval landscapes. So the wordsmith must seek to produce walking/talking pictures against a colourful backcloth.

The digital journalist preparing to shoot a video interview quickly appreciates the added impact of location – how the setting adds significance to the words being delivered into camera. So a written interview must now be more than a record of what was said across a coffee table.

Hollywood PRs notoriously lock celebrities and interviewers in anonymous hotel rooms but in the wider world the writer's choice of location can create an extra dimension.

Where better to interview an offshore fisherman than on his boat? If not at sea then at the quayside when unloading his latest catch – his words punctuated by the shrieks of hovering seagulls and the trundling of rusty winches, the brine still fresh upon his beard, his clothes still carrying the stale stench of long-departed fish.

Where better to interview an old boxer than in the gymnasium he now runs? Fading posters of him in his prime, the contrast between his battered features and the shining eyes of his young hopefuls, the persistent rhythm of thuds against punchbags, the smell of sweat and embrocation.

The availability of archive film gives a website the powerful sense of action, of being there; the equivalent in words is the anecdote – the golden nuggets of feature writing that summon up and bring to life happenings, situations and traits of behaviour.

In its heyday, Reader's Digest used to instruct its writers: "State it – Prove it."

If a rock musician is described as bad tempered, give examples of him hurling a microphone from the stage or trashing a hotel suite. If a racing driver admits to being accident-prone, reconstruct his most miraculous escape. If a playboy is known as a reckless gambler, recreate the scene of the night in the casino he made his greatest loss.

Long before the worldwide web, Gay Talese, generally acclaimed as one of America's greatest magazine journalists, was already urging the case for feature writing to be regarded as an exercise in non-fiction rather than reportage at greater length, for words to breathe colour into the recounting of facts.

In his legendary essay on an elusive Frank Sinatra for Esquire back in 1966 ("Frank Sinatra Has a Cold") he wrote: "When Frank Sinatra drives to the studio he seems to dance out of the car across the sidewalk into the front door; then, snapping his fingers, he is standing in front of the orchestra in an intimate, airtight room, and soon he is dominating every man, every instrument, every soundwave."

Fifty words able to transport every reader into that studio.

More prosaically, Georgina Dawson lives at 23 Laburnum Ave, Ealing – that is a fact.

Georgina Dawson's suburban home is a flaking pebble-dashed bungalow with its front lawn long given over to a celebration of crazy-paving – that is a picture.

Talese's message could not be more relevant today when words have to challenge the imagination if they are to compete in this highly visual electronic world, when they have to illuminate and not merely inform.

Journalists have always been story-tellers. Now they have to think in terms of creating a storyboard which will fully engage that projection screen in the reader's mind.

References

Moran, C., *Moranifesto*, 2016, London: Random House

Articles

All papers in the Articles section are peer reviewed and discuss the latest research in journalism and journalism education. These are intended to inform, educate and spark debate and discussion. Please join in this debate by going to www.journalism-education.org to have your say and find out what others think.

Teaching and learning journalistic responsibility in the post-digital revolution:

A three-year case study of a cultural historiographical pedagogy.

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As this Special Edition indicates, journalism education is increasingly concerned about how to maintain the profession's core skills, particularly the art of storytelling. As this Special Edition's call for papers pointed out, this (and other) core skills are being challenged by the demands of the 24/7 news cycle, shrinking newsrooms, and the online environment's imperative of simplicity and interactivity to keep audiences engaged.

But although journalistic practice has changed dramatically to accommodate the digital revolution, the basic reason for journalistic endeavour has not. Using the core skill of storytelling to ensure a diversity of public voices, to champion the underdog, and to scrutinise and criticise those in power, is just as much the journalistic responsibility today as it ever was in the pre-digital revolution.

And yet, somewhat ironically, in a predominantly skills-based course – such as that at Melbourne's RMIT University – the underpinning theory of journalism and its basic function can get somewhat lost as curriculum plays catch up with multi-platformism, audience interaction and technical skills.

This paper is about its author's use of a formulated cultural-historiographical approach to journalism peda-

gogy in a predominantly practice-based Journalism programme. It starts with an explanation of cultural-historiography as a theoretical paradigm, and its crucial elements related to the learning of journalistic theory through the practice of storytelling, then goes on to examine its relative success or otherwise through a three-year case study of its application in RMIT Journalism's first-year courses.

Introduction

This article is about the formulation and application of the pedagogical approach to RMIT's first-year journalism courses under the university's School of Media and Communication's restructure ('MC2015'). The Journalism programme's first year courses are foundational courses, which set up a professional mindset for success in second and third years, and beyond. This article describes the theoretical underpinning to the function of cultural-historiography theory in post-digital journalism education, particularly in the Australian context, then examines its application and impact as a pedagogy in the lead up to, and including, first-year journalism's 'MC2015' debut semesters. Drawn from Mezirow's theory of Transformative Learning (1997), the cultural-historiographical approach to teaching can, theoretically, change a student's "frame of reference" from being a *scholar* of journalism, to being a *critically reflective practitioner*, through immersion into professional culture and history, and internalisation of professional values and beliefs through the experience of storytelling.

As this Special Edition has pointed out, changes in media habits have profoundly changed the practice of journalistic storytelling. Changes in journalism education logically follow. Students are now taught techniques of storytelling on a myriad of platforms; storytelling skills are developed in long-form, text-form, twitter-form, blog-form, using embedded links, and with sound, and moving and still images. They must learn to tell stories faster, with audience interaction, more than ever before. Journalism industry now demands new skills, altered ways-of-thinking and increased entrepreneurial abilities from our graduates. Journalism education, globally, has looked on these new demands as opportunities to implement innovative educational techniques.

No one disagrees the practice of journalistic storytelling has altered to be almost unrecognisable. But there appear to be distinct divergences in thinking about whether its core philosophy has changed with its practice.

If we listen to journalism scholars such as Queensland University of Technology's Stephen Harrington, previous journalism theories – the old 'Four Theories of the Press' model – are no longer applicable in the new media environment (2012). Indeed, Harrington sees some urgency in "breaking down" disciplinary boundaries and even "redefining" journalism's primary object of study. Harrington calls for a "reassessment" of journalism education's pedagogical and epistemological relationships, away from "specific rigid, professional" journalistic inputs, towards an "ever-growing" range of media outputs.

And there is some merit to Harrington's argument. If we think about what digitisation has done for the underpinning principles of participatory government - with the apparent democratic potential in "digital democracy", "cybercitizens" and "wiki-government" - journalism, as it was previously known, appears somewhat redundant (Keane, 2013).

But we know journalism *isn't* redundant. From within the torrents of information flooding society through the World Wide Web, it is still journalistic storytelling that mediates the flows, and makes sense of the deluge of supposed facts and opinions for the public, so that it can make informed decisions about who holds power. Indeed, it could be argued the professional selection and presentation process of information – and the underlying values and beliefs that informs that selection and presentation – is more important than before.

And yet, in Coventry, journalism academics Shelley Stevenson and Bianca Wright (2014) point out journalism education's "paradigm shifts" - such as those propounded by Harrington (2012) - have unforeseen problems. They argue that time spent on "navigating" technology "reduces" time spent on learning, what they describe as, the "threshold" concepts behind the practice of journalistic storytelling:

Because the threshold concepts become buried in the midst of skill learning there is an obfuscation of the theory necessary to understand how journalism works (2014: 138).

University of Melbourne academic, Margaret Simons warned of this happening as far back as 2007. While cautiously celebrating new technology and the consequent demise of journalism's business model, she also pointed out the situation left a vacuum waiting to be filled:

... just as the printing press made possible the business of media, new technology now makes something else possible as well. The bonds between media content and business are loosening ... everything is changing once again, and the change is full of threat and opportunity (2007: 20 – 21).

The threat Simons identifies is clearly journalism's headlong rush towards bankruptcy. But the opportunities of which she speaks provide potential to allow a new type of journalistic theory – one unshackled from a professional culture of *business*, to one of *journalism*. The problem is that now, anyone – indeed, everyone – can be a 'journalist', even the need for journalistic education and training appears somewhat unnecessary. The more accessible degrees in 'Media Studies', 'Communication' and even 'PR' and 'Advertising' appear to be seen as viable alternatives to Journalism. The thinking appears to be that education in the methodologies of journalistic storytelling is unnecessary, provided the alternative teaches the necessary skills in digital technology.

It's not that journalism education should not encompass skills in digital technology; it's more that in amongst the demands for teaching skills in coding, CSS, HTML, Tableau, XL and Wordpress, we can not lose emphasis on the journalism's micro-cultural professional values and beliefs that define one as 'journalist'. As Simons says:

Affluence and consumerism are not bad, but they are not enough. We need more. We need values and meaning (2007: 20).

Searching for a pedagogy

It was with these "values and meaning" that the 2015 RMIT University first year journalism restructure was concerned. Both previously and under the restructure, first year journalism at RMIT functioned as a foundation to the attitudes and professional practices expected from students in second and third years, and beyond into industry. The paradigm shift the rest of the program underwent was aimed at, what Harrington (2012) calls the "break down" of the disciplinary boundaries, away from "specific rigid, professional" journalistic inputs, towards an "ever-growing" range of media outputs. Although this approach is important to maintain the currency and relevance of course content, it also risked losing the "threshold" concepts within the professional stream of journalism.

So under the 'MC2015' restructure, it was first-year Journalism's function to establish the all-important "threshold" concepts, professional practices and attitudes towards journalistic storytelling in a manner that would ensure they remained with students throughout their academic and professional careers. Consequently, the cultural historiographical pedagogy was developed to alter a first-year journalism student's self-identity from being a *scholar* of journalism, to being a *critically reflective practitioner*.

Rather than concur with Harrington's call for the "break down" of boundaries between journalism and other communication disciplines in storytelling practice, the basic assumption underpinning the cultural-historiographical approach is that journalism cannot be considered 'the media'. As Simons argues, the delineation of journalism from the wider media culture may even be crucial to journalistic storytelling's ability to fulfil its democratic storytelling function:

Media and journalism are not the same thing ... 'Media' is the business of selling audiences to advertisers ... news and drama have older and more important purposes than the media ... [however in] the modern world they are supported by and enmeshed with the media (2007: 20).

As journalism scholar, Angela Romano argued in her study of Indonesian journalism, and its changing culture, during that nation's political shift from dictatorship to a more democratic system in the early 2000s, the practice of journalistic storytelling is underpinned by a distinct subcultural ideology that is different from that of other communication disciplines (2003). Journalism, says Romano, is "imbued with a distinct sense of journalist collectivity" (2003: 9).

Romano further points out these communities function informally, even when the formal mechanisms of professional affiliations are "moribund" (Romano, 2003: 9). In other words, when studying journalism, it is wise to not only analyse the formal, standardised patterns of professional association and interaction, but also the "cultural discussion", or how journalists monitor the appropriateness of their own behaviour through interaction with other journalists (2003: 9).

The recognition that journalism operates as an interpretive community appears to be global. In the US, Barbie Zelizer demonstrates how journalism functions as micro-culture, when she points out reporters absorb "rules, boundaries and a sense of appropriateness about their actions without actually being informed

of them by their superiors" (1993: 221). Similarly, in Australia, John Hurst recognises the existence of a journalistic micro-culture in his anthology of Walkley Award winners:

They're [journalists] an interesting tribe, with their own strange totems and taboos, a close fraternity apart from, yet part of the crowd (1988: 6).

Conceiving journalism as a micro-culture within the macro-cultures of the media and society itself, means we can examine the professional socialisation process of journalistic storytellers through a Cultural Studies paradigm. According to scholars such as Raymond Williams (1966; 1976), Richard Hoggart (1957; 1969; 1970a; 1970b) and Stuart Hall (1976; 1978; 1980a; 1980b), culture – and consciousness of it – is socially constructed, deconstructed and reconstructed through explicit and implicit meanings in cultural products and practices. These cultural products and practices are interpreted and reinterpreted according to the Cultural Studies' concept of "tradition", or the norms and practices that members of a community (in this case, journalism's "interesting tribe") recollect and inherit. Historian Eric Hobsbawm (1998) describes this phenomenon as "memorial narratives" (in this case, journalism's "strange totems" and "taboos"). These narratives are constructed by communities around shared experience from the existing verifiable facts (Hobsbawm, 1998: 354 – 355). A "memorial narrative" affirms the value or meaning of an event, individual or institution or idea by heightening its more celebrated aspects, while downplaying others.

The assumption that culture is synthetic in nature suggests that Australian journalism's value and belief systems are not necessarily predetermined by influences such as political-economic structures, or the demands of digitisation, but by cultural-historiographical factors such as journalism-specific cultural products, narratives, people and the practice of journalism itself. Here we turn to Williams' definition of culture:

Culture is a description of a particular way of life, which expresses certain meanings and values, not only in art and learning, but also in institutions and ordinary behaviour. The analysis of culture, from such a definition, is the clarification of meanings and values implicit and explicit in a particular way of life, a particular culture (Williams, 1966: 57).

It is therefore, foundational to the development of any cultural-historiographical pedagogical approach to identify and analyse the "institutions" and "ordinary behaviour" – or, in Hobsbawm's words, "memorial narratives" – inherent in the "particular way of life" of the discipline's professional micro-culture. In this instance, the "strange totems" and "taboos" belonging to the "interesting tribe" known as professional journalists.

Popular misconceptions about journalism micro-culture, however, could potentially cloud the identification of its professional "ordinary behaviour". Frustratingly, first year journalism students often begin their professional education with these misconceptions dominating their motivations.

The dominant amongst these misconceptions relates to an idea that as members of the 'Fourth Estate', journalists have the same powers and protections as the other three estates – legislative, executive and judiciary. But while other western democracies have a Bill of Rights, the epitome of which is the US First Amendment, Australian journalism has no such official recognition. Consequently, as Julianne Schultz found in her 1998 survey, journalists themselves see the Fourth Estate function as a romanticised ideal, constrained by wider socio-economic "realities" (1998):

Now it [the 'Fourth Estate'] is best considered as an ideal, consisting of elements of truth, multiple meanings and lashings of ambition (Schultz, 1998: 49).

Although the 'Fourth Estate' concept is useful to articulate journalism's role in scrutinising and criticising bodies of power, it isn't helpful in creating critically reflective practitioners. Not only is the 'Fourth Estate' concept a somewhat misleading institutionalised myth, of more significance, adopting the 'Fourth Estate' epitaph does not guarantee journalism any greater recognition or independence.

The same could be said of 'professionalisation'. But we cannot blame students arriving into journalism education with the notion that society will recognise, maybe even support, their storytelling activities as 'professionals'. Until relatively recently, journalism education has actively marketed itself as a pathway to professionalism (Henningham, 1988, 1989; Pearson, 1991). Scholars such as John Henningham and Mark Pearson argue a 'professional' identity is able to resist outside influence, as well as demand respect from those in authority and society itself. In his 1991 comparison between law and journalism, Pearson argues:

If journalism is taught as a profession, by professional tertiary educators, then the products of that education should be able to view themselves as professionals (Pearson, 1991: 107).

Henningham argues that "professional consciousness" can be developed through compulsory journalism education, and membership of professional associations. In other words, journalism "should" not be "any

different” from other professions such as law and medicine (Henningham, 1989: 27).

Except telling stories using a journalistic methodology *is* different – very different – with unique challenges facing the fulfilment of its complex public responsibility. Journalistic storytelling is apparently key to the functioning of a western liberal democracy yet, if done well, attracts neither public praise nor institutional support. The slightly impractical obsession with professional recognition of journalism’s function in – particularly Australian – society, and the inevitable disapproval quality storytelling often attracts, is at the heart of the ‘cultural-historiographical’ pedagogical approach. The ‘cultural-historiographical’ approach recognises that Australia still has no Bill of Rights protecting journalists from legal avenues obstructing them from going about, what academic Meg Simons calls, their “dirty vital work” (2007: 20). Although an implied Freedom of Speech was interpreted in the Australian Constitution in 1992, it is still left to a judge’s discretion whether a journalist should have any further protection from defamation and contempt of court rules than any other citizen (Schultz, 1994: 189).

As Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance (MEAA) president, Christopher Warren reiterated in 2005, a free media “never emerges as a gift” from those in authority:

It needs to be fought for. It never attains a state of perfection, but rather sits on that uneasy fault line of power between a government’s desire for control and continuing pressure from society. Above all, it depends on the preparedness of the media, itself, to push back that line away from the governmental regulation and towards a freer media (Warren, 2005: 3).

Journalism’s post-digital function

In this age of, what Professor John Keane (2013) calls “communicative abundance”, with all its apparent potential for “digital democracy”, “cybercitizenry” and wiki-government”, journalism as a requirement for democracy may appear somewhat unnecessary. And yet, as Keane warns, the “communicative abundance” may not deliver the utopia it appears to promise. “There are certainly worrying counter-trends,” he says. The age of “communicative abundance”, says Keane, is “littered” with rumour firestorms, media bombing and “mean spirited” bloggers. He claims Google has its secret algorithms, and “whole organisations” are “victims” of “spiteful” hacking, spying and denial of services (2011). Keane describes this phenomenon as “media decadence” (2013):

Media decadence is dangerous for democracy ... communication media are used to promote intolerant opinions, protect inequalities of wealth and income and to restrict the public scrutiny of power by encouraging blind acceptance among citizens of the way things are heading (2011).

Perhaps journalism students need to be taught how to tell stories that “push back that line” more than ever. However, pressures on journalists, particularly public expectations for entertainment, commodification of audiences, demands for multi-skilling and audience interaction in the digital environment, resulting in changing world views of journalists themselves, have played out in divergent, and often conflicting value and belief systems. Nowhere was this more apparent than in the employment of private investigators, carrying out ‘journalistic’ duties in the absence of professional discipline, resulting in the 2011 Leveson Inquiry. Although not all journalists knew about *News of the World’s* actions, very few were surprised to learn of its practices. For more than a decade, tactics that were completely at odds with professional ideology, had tacit widespread professional acknowledgement.

This tension between journalism’s fundamental responsibility and its ever-changing socio-political context has contributed to the creation of what Suellen Tapsall and Caroline Varley describe as a “crisis of identity” (2001: v). This “crisis” becomes even more urgent with changing nature of journalistic practice itself, where journalists are now out of the newsroom, often operating as an individual unit, with little or no role-modelling, mentoring or other guidance through the moral morass that is journalistic storytelling.

Because of the vagaries inherent in telling stories using a journalistic methodology, there are several norms and practices that are seemingly contradictory and not easily understood, let alone easily taught, outside of the internal journalism culture. As journalism academic, Dr Michael Meadows, argues, there are “important common practices” required to “make journalism” (Meadows, 1998: 10). The problem is that these “common cultural practices” can appear at odds with journalism’s modern self-identity that is becoming increasingly aligned with other cultural industries in the post-digital era.

The challenge is, at least partially, explaining to well-educated, generally morally upstanding ‘professionals’ (potential journalists) that, as part of their job as journalistic storytellers, they may be required to build

affiliation with sources that could include criminals, crooked law enforcers, drug addicts or any number of down-trodden, dubious and possibly dislikeable characters. In a tertiary education environment, it can be a little uncomfortable explaining why it’s so important to read *that* leaked document, or listen to *that* anonymous source, despite the fact that it could, quite conceivably, land them in dangerous legal waters. Not to mention the difficulties in explaining that gathering information may sometimes require seemingly suspect methods and, when everybody else is running away from that car accident/ bushfire/ tsunami/ bomb blast, it is their job to be running towards it, usually tweeting or filing down their mobile phones at the same time.

And it also up to journalism educators to assure students that if they do find themselves in trouble – legally, physically or psychologically – there is a whole culture of people who understand, and will support them in doing that “dirty, vital job” (Simons, 2007: 17).

Cultural historiography

It is this mindset that the ‘cultural historiographical’ approach aims to internalise into first year journalism students. If we go back to the Cultural Studies paradigm, we know we can construct, deconstruct and reconstruct journalism subcultures through industry-specific cultural products, practices, “strange totems” and “taboos” embroiled in industry-specific “tradition”.

Here, it’s important to remember that “tradition” does not necessarily equate to ‘historical accuracy’. Indeed, if we listen to University of Illinois Journalism historian, John Nerone (1990), emphasis on historical ‘facts’ can indeed be of more hindrance than help to the internalisation of journalism culture:

The concentration on facts is dangerous. Facts are important, but they are not what history is about. History is rather a way of thinking about facts (1990: 17)

Or, as James Carey argues, history, viewed from this perspective, is not “concerned merely with events”, but with the “thought within them” (2011: 24).

Cultural historiography aims to encourage reflective analysis of the “thought” within journalism’s “memorial narratives”, coming from the viewpoints from within the journalism culture itself – in other words, how journalists behave according to their professional ideology. In this sense, it asks students to not only self-identify as journalistic storytellers (as opposed to storytellers of other communication disciplines) from an intensely introspective perspective, but to also recognise past-present relationships.

Cultural historiography starts with the most dominant of journalism’s “strange totems” – that of Enlightenment thought. But rather than explore Enlightenment philosophers as the fathers of, what Nerone (2009: 19) mockingly describes as, journalism’s “grand narrative” – the one that presents the press as the emergent champion of democracy, and the triumph of liberalism over authoritarianism – students are asked to distil their principles to a set of cultural values and beliefs that continue to have resonance with current professional practice.

So while John Milton may have said a lot of things in his *Areopagitica* in 1644, his salience lies in his core “thought” when he put pen to paper. In this case, the “thoughts” behind the *Areopagitica* were in open defiance of Parliament’s 1643 Licensing order, making censorship official (or “pushing back that line towards a freer media”):

Many that be that complain of divine providence for suffering Adam to transgress. Foolish tongues! When God gave him reason, He gave him freedom to choose, for reason is but choosing; he had been else a mere artificial Adam, such as an Adam as he is in the motions (1644/1952: 394 – 395).

Students are then asked if John Stuart Mill had the same “thought” as Milton when, in pieces such as *Liberty of the Press* (1825) and *On Liberty* (1859), he not only advocated defiance of the “magistrate”, but also resistance of the “tyranny of the majority”:

To refuse a hearing of opinion because they are sure that it is false is to assume that their certainty is the same thing as absolute certainty (original italics). All silencing of discussion is an assumption of infallibility. Its condemnation may be allowed to rest on this common argument, not the worse for being common (1825; 1859/ 1962: 68)

In other words, journalistic storytelling tradition is not only based on facilitating and protecting the public sphere from the “magistrate” (or social and political authority), but it’s also about ensuring a diversity of opinion, including opinion that prevailing public opinion deems ‘wrong’.

Students do not appear to have a problem with taking on the “transgressive Adam” identity – after all, that’s kinda like Australian journalism hero, Peter Grete, right? It’s when students are confronted with the idea that protecting diversity of opinion, including opinion that they themselves may deem as ‘wrong’, that they start to undergo what Mezirow would describe as “perspective transformation” (1997: 5).

To do this, we set a series of controversial viewpoints – animal welfare, same sex marriage, tertiary education regulation, etc., – and ask students to then list all the points that go against their own personal values and beliefs. We then come together, as a group, and critically reflect on how we, as journalistic storytellers, can ensure our professional attitudes are fair and balanced to take in all worldviews, including those we may find abhorrent. We then ask them to tell stories, in written form, using the basic journalistic methodology that fairly, and in a balanced manner, represents all points-of-view, including those that students may find abhorrent. As Mezirow (1995) says, transformative learning usually results from a “disorientating dilemma”, triggered by challenging predicament. Here, we are facilitating such a predicament that confronts part of a student’s base personal moral understandings (1995: 50).

However, to make the Enlightenment’s fundamental principles more relevant to students, we contextualize their development in a specifically Australian “memorial narrative”. Unlike the USA or Britain, Australia has never achieved an official, legally binding, “freedom of the press”. Originally, the press in the remote gaol of exile functioned purely as a government organ, edited by the governor’s own hand. Australia’s tradition of press freedom was achieved only after two young British lawyers audaciously smuggled a printing press into Sydney, deliberately neglecting to tell authorities they had started publishing Australia’s first newspaper “without authority”. William Wentworth and Robert Wardell escaped punishment only because the new legislative council was a mere two years old, and not yet functioning (Walker, 1976: pp 6 – 7). In other words, it was only through the defiance and daring of journalists themselves to “push back that line” that Australia achieved freedom of the press. Such audacity has reverberated throughout the generations of Australian journalists, creating a well-established “memorial narrative” of anti-authoritarianism and a defiant commitment to the facilitation and protection of the public sphere from within the institution of Australian journalism itself (Vine, 2010: 271).

Cultural historiography aims to shift students’ frames of reference from being *scholars* looking *into* journalism as an institution, to being *critically reflective practitioners* looking *out* from *within* journalism as a collective of people with similar values and beliefs that have evolved from the Colonial press. Here we aim to create a very real sense of ‘belonging’ to the journalistic culture. By immersing students into journalism micro-culture’s “tradition” at the point of its earliest evolution, they start to view journalism ideology as ‘their’ ideology, how it grew from ‘their’ antecedents, and gain a sense of their own responsibilities as conveyers of this same ideology to future generations of the journalists.

This responsibility is established – on the advice of Nerone – through exploring the “past-present relationship” (1990: 18) between Colonial journalists and students’ own activities as journalistic storytellers. So, armed with the knowledge that ‘their’ profession is defined by industry-specific ideological values evolved over time, students are asked to explore the relationship between ‘their’ antecedents’ values and beliefs with those of present. Here students explore the different sets of current codes of conduct that articulate journalism’s implicit values and beliefs. These include the Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance’s Code of Ethics, the Australian Press Council’s Statement of Principles, Australian Communication and Media Authority’s Codes of Practice, the International Federation of Journalist’s Code of Principles. We then distil these to thematic consistencies. As journalism educators, we know common themes (or “strange totems” and “taboos”) will be centred around:

Fairness (‘transparency’; ‘do no harm’)

Balance (‘right-of-reply’)

Accuracy

Freedom and diversity in the Public Sphere

However, to actually change frames of reference from being a scholar of ‘Fairness’, ‘Balance’, ‘Accuracy’ and ‘Freedom’, to *practising* such values, as Mezirow says, students need to experience them through some sort of “disorientating dilemma” (1995: 50). ‘Cultural-historiography’ facilitates these “disorientating dilemmas” in the students’ very first day of journalism education. This involves, both explicitly and implicitly, treating first year students as practising journalistic storytellers as they walk through the door of their first tutorial. The problem is, however, that these students *are* first years, and cannot be expected to gather and produce stories to professional standards, so opportunities for experiential learning need to be provided in a safe, teacher-guided, environment.

Cultural historiography: teaching ethical storytelling

With this in mind, when the first class finishes with a task that asks students to go out and ‘gather’ ‘news’, using the framework of values and beliefs they have just explored. As teachers, we first draw on our extensive links to industry, and ‘word up’ the external institutions involved – Melbourne’s courts, Parliament, City Council, football clubs and news organisations. However, in order for this activity to function as a “disorientating dilemma” that can shift “frames of reference”, students remain unaware that they are expected. Students are put in a “challenging predicament” where the must gather ‘information’ from these various centres of journalistic activity. This involves their engagement with one of journalism’s most basic cultural practices – introducing ‘*who*’ they are (RMIT Journalism students); ‘*where*’ they are from (RMIT) and for ‘*what*’ they are going to use the information (a tutorial exercise). In other words, students are practising ‘transparency’ and ‘fairness’. Students are required to ask permission to take a photo of themselves outside the institution, which then forms a critical self-reflection presentation the following week, on the journalistic values and beliefs that underpin the process of gathering information for journalistic storytelling.

This is often a student’s first experience of information-gathering, independently learned through real-life experience without teacher supervision – something they will be required to do throughout their three-year degree and in industry. Here, we are challenging their implicit preconceptions that journalists are somehow ‘handed’ stories to them via more senior journalists, or Public Relations machines. This relates to one of journalism’s most fundamental “strange totems” associated with elusive skills in developing a ‘nose-for-news’, and industry’s implicit demand for both friendly and aggressive competitiveness among journalists.

But while competitiveness is certainly an unspoken “strange totem” in journalistic culture, the trait can encourage ‘unethical’ behaviour. The line, however, between acceptable and unacceptable journalistic behaviour is fuzzy, and difficult to understand without undergoing ethically-challenging experiences. In other words students need to experience competitiveness *as it undergoes the process* of altering from existing as an acceptable “totem” to being an unacceptable “taboo”. It is this first tutorial exercise that provides the course’s initial “disorientating dilemma”.

It is natural that journalism education draws on guest speakers from industry to speak on professional “taboos” such as: covering incidences of suicide; maintaining source anonymity; gathering information from victims of trauma; covering crime, and all within a framework of ‘fairness’, ‘balance’ and ‘accuracy’. But the practical application of dealing with these theoretical dilemmas - fundamentally between ‘fairness’ and ‘freedom on the public sphere’ – is, at heart, skills-based and, according to ‘transformative learning theory’, students “must” learn to make their “own interpretations” (1997: 5) in order for true understanding to occur.

So it is with these guest speakers that we start to immerse students into the more challenging of journalism’s “taboos”, related to the coverage of sensitive issues. This means bringing in guest lectures such as representatives from ‘Compassionate Friends’ (a support group for family members of suicide victims), and run the lectures as if they were press conferences. This means we ask students to research representatives prior to the lecture, and develop question schedules in order to write news stories on return to the following class. Other guests invited to our ‘press conferences’ include representative from the Hunter Institute of Mental Health, local government representatives, members from the Muslim and Indigenous communities and the Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma, as well as journalism practitioners themselves. These are particularly sensitive subjects that need to be dealt with carefully. Over the years we have developed strong relationships with such groups, and gain their official ‘informed consent’ in order the run their lectures as press conferences. There is also a risk students may be adversely affected. We meticulously follow Dart Center (<http://dartcenter.org/asia-pacific>) and Hunter Institute (<http://www.mindframe-media.info>) guidelines, warning students of lecture and tutorial content, allowing students to withdraw from participation if necessary and making clear contact details of RMIT and journalism-specific counselling services.

Journalism’s professional values around ‘fairness’, ‘accuracy’ and ‘do no harm’ are particularly challenged in the modern move towards digital journalism, where stories are expected to be told immediately, with very little time for legal or ethical considerations. Again, on the advice of Mezirow (1995; 1997), we immerse students into a “disorientating dilemma” between ethical conduct and immediacy, by asking them to update social media during our ‘press conferences’ on sensitive issues. However, because these *are* first years, and not yet ready to put their storytelling on such sensitive subjects on the public sphere, we set up a G+ closed community, so we can monitor any storytelling that offends industry ethics, or ignores legal considerations.

In classes immediately following each ‘press conference’, students engage in a debriefing involving critical reflection on how to cover sensitive issues within a framework of journalistic ideology, and are then asked to write a basic news story. These set storytelling exercises, done every week, are handed in at the

class's end. This develops the ability to tell stories within tight deadlines - something industry increasingly requires, particularly in the current digitised environment. Along with their G+ community activity, we sub-edit each story to industry standard, and hand them back to students in the following class with individual (and confidential) feedback. We then start each proceeding class by going over common errors in general, and ask students to integrate feedback into the next storytelling exercise. These formative storytelling exercises build up to final summative assessments in both Semesters 1 and 2.

Cultural historiography: teaching political and legal storytelling.

Immersion into journalism's cultural values and beliefs continues on into the second semester of first year, with trips to the Victorian Parliament, and the Melbourne Magistrates Court, where we organise with these institutions to allow students to join the press galleries in action, and provide presentations on expected protocols of behaviour from journalists.

Meanwhile, students spend several weeks working on formative storytelling tasks based on fictional court cases and political debates, culminating in a final summative assessment involving the telling of real-life court and political story narratives, in both social and traditional media platforms. Here we ask students to draw on the Public Record to tell stories about who is being charged with what, the business interests of politicians, where they live, and their family lives. Again, this is a "disorientating dilemma" for students, between 'privacy' and 'freedom on the public sphere'. Students direct their own learning in this course by choosing on which cases and debates to report, and how far to invade the privacy of public figures. These are then assessed according to their application of contempt of court and absolute privilege theory, and their critical reflection on 'trial by media' and the privacy of political figures.

In 2014, we took experiential learning of the privacy of political figures a step further with the UniPoll-Watch project, in which RMIT, LaTrobe, Melbourne and Monash journalism programmes collaborated to cover the November State Election online. Although the online coverage was designed for third year students, we wanted to take advantage of the 2014 State Election and integrate it into first-year curriculum as a 'real-life' storytelling experience. As part of the first-year assessment, we introduced a political research-report, designed for the first-year cohort's third-year colleagues to use in their online political coverage. First years were put into groups of three or four, and each group was assigned an electorate on which they were required to conduct in-depth political and socio-economic research. In a vertical teaching situation, and reflecting industry practice, our first year students' more senior 'journalism' colleagues relied on their research, establishing the importance of 'accuracy'. The UniPollWatch site received 66,839 hits during the four-month period it operated. Like all junior journalists, first-year students are not yet ready to make their reportage public. However, in developing research, exposing the private lives of public figures and contributing to a publicly-available news product, immersed them into the real-life risks of journalistic storytelling.

As part of our cultural historiographical approach's focus on experiential learning, we set up twin online learning environments through the G+ community and Twitter. Half of the five-hour tutorial occurred during ABC TV's programs, 'Media Watch' (a weekly 15-minute 'Fifth Estate' critical reflection on issues in the media, on at 9.15pm) and 'QandA' (a 60-minute panel discussion involving politicians and other public figures, moderated by a journalistic host and in front of a studio audience). To our knowledge, this approach is unique, and was an outstanding success in terms of experiential learning that directly contributed to the wider media landscape. Within a framework of journalistic ideology, students were asked to join the twitter conversation on these programs. First-year students' tweets were broadcast on 'QandA' on several occasions and at one stage the #UJCOMM2657 hashtag was trending, meaning our tweets were extensively retweeted, including by high-profile journalists themselves. Again, these tweets formed part of their final assessment, which also included critical reflection on the challenges to journalism's cultural values and beliefs in a social media context.

Outcomes

Theoretically, the cultural historiographical pedagogical approach should start to internalise professional values and beliefs within journalism students. These values and beliefs cannot be 'taught' in the traditional manner, because they are implicit within industry-specific cultural products and in the experience of journalistic storytelling itself. However, according to the Cultural Studies paradigm, if we immerse students into

journalism-specific cultural products and experiences (the "strange totems" and "taboos"), we can, theoretically, start to construct a journalistic sensibility – a sense of belonging to the "interesting tribe" called journalists - within first year students.

We can start to analyse whether this theory works in practice by examining what RMIT describes as the 'Course Experience Survey' (CES). This survey is administered to all students in each course. It gathers both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data measures each course's 'Good Teaching Scores' (GTS) and 'Overall Satisfaction Index' (OSI), and articulates it as a percentage. This is useful for a snapshot of student approval. But it is the more qualitative data that is gathered in these surveys that is useful to educators in assessing core pedagogy and its application.

Qualitative CES data goes back as far as 2013, when the cultural-historiography pedagogical approach was initially strategically applied to first year journalism courses.

At the end of semester 1, 2013, "interest" and "engagement" were thematic consistencies in response: "What were the best aspects of the course?" Almost 28 percent of responses said students were "interested" and "engaged". This was an encouraging result. However, of more interest to whether the 'cultural-historiography' pedagogical approach achieved its intended aims of developing a journalistic sensibility was the more than 50 percent of comments about the course's "relevance" or "usefulness" to the journalistic careers. For example:

*The course is very closely linked to **our lives** as journalists, and what the industry would expect of us (emphasis added).*

However, surveying the same cohort in their second semester, we can see "interest" and "engagement" thematic consistency had decreased to about 12 percent, to be replaced by 60 percent of comments on the course's industry "relevance" and "use". But of more excitement to those hoping 'cultural historiography' can internalise journalism's cultural values and beliefs, 60 percent of comments indicated students were now feeling part of the journalistic community, often using personal pronouns to articulate their place in the wider news culture. For example, in response to the question: "What are the best aspects of the course?"

*Learning the ethical and legal implications of **my operations** as a media practitioner (emphasis added).*

*I have really felt an improvement in **my journalistic capabilities** in the past semester. While this course has more focus on the regulations of journalism, it allowed **me to develop my journalistic style**. (emphasis added).*

*[The course] makes us feel as if **we are already working in the industry**.*

*[The course] gives us the opportunity to **experience what life is like as a journalist**.*

We're taught to be independent and not rely on our tutor to find stories, just like real journalists.

The following semester (semester 1, 2014), the same pedagogical approach was applied to a new cohort. Here, "engagement" and "interest" continued as a thematic consistency (20 percent), but now comments relating to "values" and "ethics" and their "relevance" or "use" to their future as journalists began to emerge (30 percent). Further, the same number of comments suggested deliberate critical reflection was occurring. For example:

The content is very challenging [and] has really encouraged me to question big concepts and [made] me eager to learn more about tricky scenarios when dealing with ethics.

Semester 2 of the same year, in which our cultural historiographical pedagogy continuing to underpin the curriculum of the same cohort, saw comments related to "interest" and "engagement" plateau at about 25 percent. And again, about 62 percent, articulated industry relevance. And again, the second semester began to show that students felt 'belonging' to journalistic community, through the use of personal pronouns to articulate their place in the wider news culture. For example, in response to the question: "What are the best aspects of the course?"

*Applicability of what we learn to **our industry** (emphasis added).*

*I can really see how the final two assessments [political and court reportage] are relevant ... to what we will be doing in **our careers** (emphasis added)*

And again, there was evidence of critical reflection:

This course made me realise the importance of ethics and regulations in journalism.

Semester 1, 2015, again started with a new cohort of first-year students, who were this time engaging in

a brand new restructured course, with the added curriculum of real-time online teaching through the G+ closed community, and Twitter. About 20 percent of comments related to “interest” and “engagement”. What had increased significantly, however, was the 96 percent of comments related to industry relevance. These results could be directly related to the use of social media to interact with publically broadcast news products and as a storytelling technique:

It has been great to physically practice news, rather than just learning the theory behind it ... I especially appreciated the weekly QandA sessions, and using Twitter as a media platform.

From the very beginning we are treated as journalists, which inherently implies a sense of respect between students and tutors.

And this brings us to the last semester in which data was gathered: semester 2, 2015. This was the same cohort as in semester 1, 2015, whose curriculum continued to be underpinned by the cultural historiographical approach, but this time involved field trips to court and parliament, as well as the learning activities via the G+ community and Twitter during the ABCTV news and current affairs programs, QandA and Media Watch. Here we saw CES comments relating to “interest” and “engagement” plateau to just over 23 percent, and comments related to “relevance” and “use” decrease to about 42 percent. But if we look closely, we can see that comments imply students’ world-views are continuing their journeys from being scholars of journalism, to being critically reflective practitioners. For example:

I have really enjoyed going on excursions to Parliament House and The Magistrate’s Court. It was really exciting to be reporting on real stories and writing them in a way that aligns with the legal and ethical issues that we have been learning in class.

That it’s highly interactive, going and acting like we are part of the Journalism industry. The work is very interesting to do and makes me motivated to do well (emphasis added).

We are all so passionate about what we are doing, and the course recognises and encourages that (emphasis added).

According to the data, the cultural historiographical pedagogical approach can assist in shifting a student’s “frame of reference” from being a *scholar* of journalistic storytelling, to being a *critically reflective practitioner*. However, we can see that this takes more than one semester, and it would be interesting to systematically apply such an approach to second and third years. The problem is, however, that within the demands to teach technical skills in coding, CSS, HTML, Tableau, XL and Wordpress, it is difficult to fully immerse students into journalism’s history and culture, and how to tell stories within the framework of *their* professional ideology. While first year is designed as an introductory year to develop storytelling skills and knowledge of ethics and regulations, the second year is designed to teach the technical skills, and the third year designed so students apply these skills in professional placements and the RMIT newsroom itself. Within this structure, the best we can hope to do is maintain - indeed, perhaps increase – cultural historiographical values and beliefs in first year.

Part of the problem facing the cultural-historiographical pedagogy is the lack of recognition that journalism history has a place in journalism education. In Australia, journalism history is seen as somewhat outside the education of journalism practitioners, and more relevant to academic, rather than skills-based programs. When the author of this paper proposed a text on journalism history, three separate publishers found that no journalism programme in Australia included a course on journalism history, and thus no demand.

This is maybe because of misperceptions about the relevance of journalism history to its current practice. Currently, Australian journalism history is suffering from a lack coherence. There are disparate groups of biographical and autobiographical material on the rise and fall of media empires, their owners, and a few on the journalism “greats”. In other words, we have some research that focuses on names and facts, but this does not take account of ordinary journalists on the newsroom floor, and how the specific, yet all-elusive, journalistic sensibility grew. As Nerone (1990) points out, although names and facts are important to the teaching of history, focusing exclusively on such aspects can be of more detriment than help. The “idiocy of fact”, says Nerone, causes boredom and anxiety, and a ‘will this be on the test’ type mentality (1990: 17). Nerone calls for a different perspective on history, one that approaches names and facts with arguments, one that develops critical thinking about past-present relationships, one that acknowledges ‘the past’ occurs in everyday activity (such as news-gathering, news-writing and storytelling). It is this that a cultural-historiographical approach strives to achieve through experiential learning, so students themselves discover how journalism’s “strange totems” and “taboos” function in practice. The evidence suggests that this approach can indeed internalise a journalistic sensibility to “push back that line” towards a “freer media”.

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POV X 3: helping journalism students juxtapose author, actor and audience

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Abstract

Asking journalism students to create stories with a strong point of view means requiring them to do three things at once. Compelling news writing triangulates between the perspectives of author, actor (the person who is the subject of the piece) and audience. This article examines an in-class activity that prompts students to elaborate on a single story from multiple points of view and then reflect on the choices they have made. This mix of creative collaboration and analysis encourages learners to think and act as “reflective practitioners” (Schön, 1983) while trying on a variety of professional identities related to multiple communities of practice (Gee, 2004).

Introduction: The New Remix

The News Remix is an in-class activity designed to promote media literacy amongst university-level journalism students. This approach is intended to help learners think critically about the media texts they read, view and create via an elaborate role-playing exercise.

Educators in the humanities have long relied on an array of lesson plans that foster complex investigation, including social learning strategies (Bingham & Conner 2010), problem-based learning projects (Barell 2010; Gyori 2013) and POV (point of view) writing exercises. In contrast, Journalism Studies and the field of journalism have, traditionally, sought to treat ideological bias as an obstacle to be avoided rather than an object to analyse.

When speaking of mainstream journalists, Richard Keeble (2005) highlights their “stubborn commitment to objectivity and the belief that ‘fact’ can be separated from ‘comment.’” This, he argues, “flies in the face of the postmodernist critique of the Enlightenment dualities.” Thus traditional journalism has many blind spots. “(It) prioritises the intellect over the emotion, mind over body, head over heart, the objective over the subjective.” What’s more, “by suggesting the pursuit of information can be value free, the ideology of

objectivity also serves to marginalise the ethical and political dimensions of the dominant journalistic culture” (2005, 57).

Ironically, this desire to transcend ideology has become one of the most ideologically engrained aspects of the journalistic field. Changes, however, are afoot. The fragmenting influence of digital media and withering gaze of the postmodern critique have conspired to unsettle the doctrine of objectivity, once considered—if not an attainable goal, at least a worthy ideal to champion and pursue (Tuchman 1978). Therefore, teaching journalism in the postmodern digital age may mean abandoning the Quixotic Grail quest for perfect objectivity. Certainly, students should be encouraged to seek empirical evidence and value eyewitness accounts and expert testimony over hearsay and uninformed speculation, but they must also accept that each news story reflects a complex set of interrelated biases. The notion that journalists are never entirely impartial is nothing new. As Herbert (2000) points out, “Language and subjective selection means there can be no such idea as objectivity in news reporting, even though it is often held up as a goal” (p. 65). So how can we retain journalistic integrity while acknowledging the complexity of the modern mediascape? In an age of citizen journalism, narrowcasting news aggregators, micro-bloggers, Wikipedia collaborators and news forum curators, the notion of a single coherent public sphere based on a shared set of values and beliefs seem little more than the utopian myth of a bygone era. If the Grail of perfect objectivity ever *did* exist, it has long since vanished in a haze of digital artefacts and postmodern deconstruction. Given this heady and often bewildering state of affairs, it makes little sense to urge journalism students to leach all points of view from their work. Instead, a more realistic and perhaps productive approach involves challenging them to identify and analyse multiple points of view, the many complementary and competing perspectives nascent in a single news story, hence the news remix.

This in-class activity builds on work done by researchers such as Jenkins & Kelley (2013) *Reading in a Participatory Culture: Remixing Moby-Dick in the English Classroom*, where students actively approach a text in various ways to inform their understanding. The tactics may be somewhat familiar, but the context is new. The news remix is a novel approach because it creates an opportunity for journalism students to assess and participate in the production of meaning while engaging in informed debate. Complicating and, in some respects, subverting the traditional journalistic ethos, this approach challenges students to write with extreme bias. In fact, it requires them to adopt a wide variety of polarized perspectives slipping in and out of these dispositions like Halloween masks. A group of 20-30 participants select a single news story to focus on. They are then divided into four “teams.” Each team is given a worksheet that prompts them to evaluate the story from a specific perspective. Team one considers they ways that different *authors* might define this story. Team two speculates about the motives and views of different individuals or “*actors*” featured in the story. Team three considers how different *audiences* might respond to the story. And team four discusses the types of reporting that might emerge from different configurations of author, actor and audience. The work that emerges from the worksheet prompts tends to range from sarcastic to deeply insightful, as students demonstrate a strong capacity for critical thinking and a sophisticated grasp of media literacy.

Rationale

I first composed and utilised the news remix in early October 2015 whilst teaching Broadcast Journalism to a group of second year students at Bournemouth University in the UK. Assisting me was a five-page worksheet designed to promote ideological shape shifting. If the goal had been the production of carefully crafted world-class journalism, the activity would have been a dismal failure. But the objective was different. I was striving to cultivate meta-cognition. Alexander & Murphy (2000), explain the value of this pedagogical approach:

“Students who think about their own thinking (a practice called meta-cognition by psychologists) learn better than students who do not employ this strategy. Regardless of your discipline, you can foster meta-cognition by encouraging students to monitor their thinking. You can ask students about their thought process as they conduct their work” (cited in Blumberg, 2009, p. 13).

By prompting students to try on different journalistic identities in specific cultural contexts, the News Remix was tying their actions to experiences situated in the material and social world (Gee, 2004). In other words, rather than reject all biases, they were encouraged to adopt and espouse a wide range of them. This meant fluttering like magpies between different ideologies and communities of practice, while considering the implications entailed by each shift of perspective. My hope was that this complex thought-exercise would promote high-level critical thinking and foster deep learning.

Over the last thirty years, much has been written about the value of participatory education (Alexander & Murphy, 2000; Bingham & Conner, 2010; Blumberg, 2009; Collins & Halverson, 2009; Doyle, 2001; Gee, 2007; Goldin & Katz, 2008; Jenkins et al., 2009; Prensky, 2010; Thomas & Brown, 2011; Trilling & Fadel, 2009; Weimer, 2002). Certainly, students who have grown up with the Internet crave active learning, and teachers who reply too heavily on lecturing run the risk of becoming mere content-delivery-systems. In contrast, effective participatory educators can, potentially, cultivate meta-cognition. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. As education reform advocate Maryellen Weimer points out, “The effectiveness of these more learner-centred methods depends on faculty being able to step aside and let students take the lead” (p. 73). At the same time, teachers must design challenging activities and then effectively guide the learning process (Gyori, 2013). Teachers who manage participatory projects too inflexibly can become mere drill sergeants, whereas, teachers who disappear into the sidelines, may demote themselves to mere spectators. Designing effective learning activities involves inviting engagement and then guiding it with purpose and focus.

As Thomas & Brown (2011) explain, “The new culture of learning is about the kind of tension that develops when students with an interest or passion that they want to explore are faced with a set of constraints that allow them to act only within given boundaries” (p. 81). This *tension* is the key to challenging them to think more critically.

Design

No one can teach a journalist to find her “voice.” But when teachers think like designers, we can create opportunities for multiple voices to emerge. Such activities are what education reform advocate Marc Prensky (2010, p. 66) calls, “epistemic games.” These are role-playing events that urge students to understand and do things from the point of view of a professional. This approach promotes “disciplinary thinking.” (Bain 2004, p. 115), the ability to reason like a practitioner working within a particular professional domain, grappling with concepts related to that role, while adopting a variety of ideological dispositions.

When creating the News Remix lesson plan, it was necessary to take certain practical considerations into account. Each seminar group had 15-20 students who were then divided into 4 teams. Just as parallel processing computers are able to engage in complex tasks far more efficiently than a single computer working in isolation, splitting the cohort into sub-groups created an opportunity to boost the collective I.Q. Each team was asked to focus on a particular facet of the News Remix activity and this allowed the class as a whole to tackle a fairly complex intellectual task far more efficiently.

As psychologist Keith Sawyer (2007) explains, complex tasks can challenge groups to tap into collective intelligence in highly productive ways. Group activities are most engaging when “there is too much work for one person, or because people with different skills sets are needed” (p. 67, 68). What’s more, collaboration is most effective in situations “where new ideas are complex combinations of prior ideas, where the task is new and unfamiliar to the group members, and where new ideas often depend on visualization and abstraction” (p. 70).

Then there is the issue of scale. Each of the sub-groups, or “teams,” had 4-5 students. This seemed a good size for the task at hand. After all, each had to be big enough to remain consistently productive, but not too big, which might tempt less motivated students to shirk and disengage.

As for timing, achieving the right balance was also paramount. If the teams had too much time or too little work, their focus would wane. If they had a great deal of work and a great deal of time, they would grow fatigued. If they had too much work and too little time they might panic and have trouble accomplishing anything. And finally, if they only had only a little time and a small amount of work, the activity would merely touch on superficial issues.

After some deliberation, I decided that during each seminar session, the four teams would simultaneously focus on 4 different portions of the News Remix worksheet for exactly a half hour. Each of these portions contained 4 prompts, and each prompt had 3 components. Because the teams had quite a bit to accomplish in a relatively short period of time, most chose to divide the work between their members with particular individuals or pairs tackling specific tasks related to each prompt. This provided a bonus lesson in spontaneous delegation, a happy offshoot of what I hoped would prove a rigorous but reasonable design-strategy.

An additional consideration involved the developmental level of the participants due to engage in the activity. As second year journalism students, they were conversant with basic editorial practices but were

still learning how to create work with exclusive content presented in an original form. The activity had to be structured to match the emergent skills located with their “zone of proximal development.” Psychologist L.S. Vygotsky (1978) defines the latter as “those functions that have not yet matured but are in the process of maturation, functions that will mature tomorrow but are currently in an embryonic state” (p. 86). In other words, the activity had to ensure that the average student at that year level could stay in “flow,” the psychological state that Csikszentmihalyi (2002) suggests is most conducive to developmental growth. Maintaining flow involves designing activities that challenge learners without overwhelming them. As James Gee (2007) explains, “The key is finding ways to make hard things life enhancing so that people keep going and don’t fall back on learning only what is simple and easy” (p. 3). As long as students are reaching for new knowledge, they are learning. Education scholar Rob Berger (2003) points out a positive correlation between challenging activities and enhanced student performance, hence the value of “higher expectations in everything: more trust, more responsibility and deeper broader accountability” (p. 151).

Process

There is just one correct way to solve an algebraic equation. A maths teacher’s efficacy can be definitively measured by how many students offer identical answers to the same problem. In contrast, a journalism teacher is an abject failure if all of his students cover the same story in exactly the same way. Certainly, there are journalistic standards to memorize and master, and standards are necessarily derived from a process of *standardization*. This means they can be taught and evaluated with the precision and consistency of mathematic formulae. But we must be careful to avoid placing undue emphasis on fixed outcomes (Quantz, O’Connor & Magolda, 2011, p. 152).

The English have a word for something that is so basic it is completely unexceptional. They call it, “bog standard.” The trouble with formulaic teaching is it can easily become “bog standard teaching.” If the goal is perfect uniformity, it is hard to promote excellence. This is why when journalism instructors are not teaching by formula, we should be teaching by analogy. This involves familiarizing students with examples of effective journalism by modelling productive behaviours and prompting them to analyse both exemplary news stories and poorly constructed cautionary tales. As with any form of apprenticeship, some degree of imitation is required. Students often learn most effectively by “observation, imitation, and guided practice” (Collins & Halverson, 2009, p. 50). However, impactful social learning also involves elements of improvisation and invention (Bingham & Conner, 2010). Because some trial and error experimentation is necessary, students are required to struggle, and teachers should be willing to struggle alongside them. This can feel awkward and messy, but that is a good thing. That is how we know that the deep learning is taking place.

Consider a more elegant alternative: providing students with a long list of facts and then to then conducting a pub quiz style Q&A session, keeping score and finally honouring the team with the best rote memorization skills. This activity would be much easier to organise, conduct, and evaluate, but its pedagogical value would be minimal.

An even worse approach would involve asking teams to spend several minutes working together to come up with a single news headline. Because this approach would yoke them mentally to one simplistic task, it would actually diminish collective intelligence and result in “group-think,” the phenomenon that occurs “when a team of smart people ends up doing something dumber than they would have if they were working alone” (Sawyer, 2007, p. 66).

Meta-learning is messy because there are no simple right or wrong answers. What’s more, it involves collaboration, crosstalk, and negotiation. This means “students are no longer passive recipients of knowledge; they are decision-makers about the nature and structure of their own learning” (Barell, 2010, p. 179). Reflecting on the results of a meta-lesson can require as much time and effort as the initial activity. During these debriefing sessions, instructors are challenged to improvise and invent as much as their students. Because there is no way to predict how students will respond to a particular prompt, the teacher must provide spontaneous feedback remaining receptive to criteria and contexts that he or she is first encountering on the fly.

At the same time, some planning and overt instruction is also invaluable. A robust learning process is a mix of premeditation and spontaneous interaction. Rather than accept the false lecture vs. workshop dichotomy, effective participatory educators understand that even the most interactive, hands-on lesson plan often benefits from a well timed bit of old fashioned top-down lecturing. Lecture does not have to be the enemy of participation. In fact, it can be an indispensable ally, as long as it is delivered strategically. Upon reaching

new levels, video game players receive instruction “just in time and on demand.” Likewise, effective participatory education enhances engagement by providing vital information at key moments throughout the learning process (Gee, 2007). During the News Remix activity this involved moving around the room and clarifying key terms and questions for students when they were uncertain how to proceed. There was no need for a long lecture in advance of this process, just a brief clarification of the central goal: telling a single news story from multiple perspectives and then considering the journalistic implications of this process.

Results

Four seminar groups of second year journalism students participated in the News Remix activity. At the outset, each class was asked to suggest a current news story to focus on. It needed to be sufficiently complex to afford multiple interpretive strategies. Allowing the students to determine their own news agenda provided an additional incentive to engage with the assignment. Terry Doyle (2001) explains:

“Whenever possible, we should be giving students choices in what topic they explore as they learn our course materials. The reasons are clear. Choice helps improve interest in the topic. Enhanced interest means enhanced engagement. Enhanced engagement likely means a better outcome. In addition, when students choose the topic, they take responsibility for their decision. They cannot blame the teacher for assigning a boring topic” (p. 83).

Two of the seminar groups wanted to focus on how the Syrian refugee crisis was affecting UK immigration policy. The other two selected a story about (then) Prime Minister David Cameron, an alleged fraternity prank and severed pig’s head, and a report about Wikileaks whistle blower Edward Snowden joining Twitter and acquiring a million followers in less than 24 hours.

As previously stated, each seminar group of 20 was divided into 4 teams of 4-5 students each. Each of these teams was then asked to approach the same news story from a different perspective. For instance, the “team 1” groups were tasked with inventing 3 authors with radically divergent perspectives working in media contexts spanning a wide variety of domains. All of the participants seemed comfortable acting as homodiegetic reporters, active participants in the events they were describing as opposed to detached omniscient narrators. One of these groups categorized its authors in terms of political affiliation: left, right and centre. Another team defined its authors in terms of political engagement: rabid, moderate and indifferent. Still another team invented authors in 3 different geographical locales. The team 1 groups were also required to create headlines written by their fictitious authors. The resulting blurbs ranged from whimsical to reactionary to heart-rending:

“David #Hameron – Allegations of a pigstress”

“Keep Our Jobs. Keep Our Safety. Keep Them Out!”

“I Can’t Lose Another Child,” begs Syrian Mother

Team 1 was also tasked with describing a photographic image that each author might link to his or her version of the story. These also varied in tone from farcical to xenophobic to hopeful, i.e. an illustration of David Cameron in bed with a pig, a picture of a jihadist with a knife staring into camera, or the image of a happy, cheering refugee child safely entering Germany.

Finally, team 1 was asked to consider the rhetorical strategies employed by these authors, specifically whether they were basing their arguments on logic, reputation, or emotion (AKA logos, ethos, or pathos). Some struggled differentiating between these approaches, for instance, confusing a logical argument with one based on perceived credibility. When the entire class reviewed team 1’s analysis, teachable moments such as this emerged, making it possible to explicate key concepts and clarify how they should be applied. An open-ended discussion about any news story might yield similar insights, but because the News Remix compelled students to focus on particular aspects of the same story in specific ways for an extended length of time, it fostered complex and sustained analysis, two hallmarks of deep learning. As one of America’s first education-reformers, John Dewey (1938) states, “Intelligent activity is distinguished from aimless activity by the fact that it involves selection of means—analysis—out of the variety of conditions that are present, and their arrangement—synthesis—to reach an intended aim or purpose” (p. 84).

For the “team 2” groups, intelligent activity meant focusing on 3 different narrative “actors.” Specifically, they considered how placing different individuals at the centre of the same story might influence its focus, framing and impact. The protagonists these teams selected were differentiated in a variety of ways, by profession (business man, journalist, politician), political position (PM, Lord, MP) and type/degree of

notoriety (celebrity, politician, layperson). When tasked with locating quotes expressing the unique views of each individual, these teams went online and located a variety of actual soundbites. Some expressed deeply personal views such as this quote from a Syrian father:

"I don't want anything else from this world. Everything I was dreaming of is gone. I want to bury my children and sit beside them until I die."

Others were comparatively dispassionate and pragmatic, such as this quote from a Member of Parliament.

"Bournemouth is the wrong place for the 155 refugees to stay. It could damage tourism."

The Team 2 groups were also compelled to consider the influence of personal psychological drives, specifically how conscious and unconscious motives might shape dramatic conflicts and narrative stakes. This involved them taking intuitive leaps that could not necessarily be supported by empirical facts, but it also allowed them to contemplate the motivational wants and needs of specific individuals. As for conscious motives, they suggested things such as career advancement, freedom of the press and raising awareness. Delving deeper to speculate about unconscious motives, they focused on the influence of spite, greed, compassion and vanity. Viewing a single news story from so many different perspectives compelled the student teams to question their own biases and explore many different subject positions. This involved a process of cultural "negotiation: the ability to travel across diverse communities, discerning and respecting multiple perspectives, and grasping and following alternative norms" (Jenkins et al., p. 97)

For the "team 3" groups, negotiation meant inventing 3 disparate audiences and then considering how these demographics might react to and engage with the same news story. Audiences were broken down according to geography, age and political views. The team 3 groups also composed user comments written by members of these imagined audiences. These tended to express varying degrees of sympathy, practicality and fear. Additionally, they identified a wide range of news sources trusted by their audiences, including magazines, blogs, newspapers, radio, TV, web forums and social media.

Finally, the team 3 groups considered how particular aspects of the story might challenge or affirm the social norms that served to define their proposed audiences. Some team members struggled with this prompt. They wondered if it was prejudicial to suggest particular demographics typically think and behave in predictable ways. For instance, is it fair to say that senior citizens are generally more suspicious of immigrants than young people? This led to a discussion of stereotyping and the challenges of defining collective identity. Some of the social norms that the teams tied to their audiences were: nationalism, economic security, tolerance of diversity and opposition to censorship.

The "team 4" groups had the most challenging task of all. They were expected to create and analyse three different configurations of author, actor and audience. For instance, they were asked to consider the journalistic implications of an "aligned configuration" where all three shared the same basic ideological assumptions. Most expressed concerns that this would result in deeply biased, simplistic reportage. Reviewing this response along with the rest of the class, I asked, "But what if the author, actor and audience all agreed that racial discrimination is unjust? Would that necessarily be bad journalism, or propaganda?" This led to a reconsideration of the aligned configuration and an acceptance that it might not automatically result in dogmatic posturing.

The next combination considered by the team 4 groups was a "polarized configuration" wherein author, actor and audience were at ideological loggerheads, expressing radically opposed views. Most of the teams were concerned that this lack of consensus could promote unproductive ideological clashes. During the class discussion, however, some students pointed out the value of productive dissent and debate.

The team 4 groups were also asked to envisage a "complex configuration" wherein a more nuanced analysis defies easy categorisation. In this scenario,

author, actor, and audience partly agree and partly disagree about particular points related to the news story in question. When considering the journalistic implications of the complex configuration, many of the team 4 members suggested that covering a story with this degree of subtlety and sophistication would be extremely difficult, yet it would also yield the most carefully considered and credible journalism.

Discussion

Structuring in-class activities that allow students to collaborate in this manner is more important than ever. As Goldin & Katz (2008) explain, the labour market increasingly values "the highly analytical individual

who can think abstractly" (p. 353). Unfortunately, as Arum & Roksa point out, the current emphasis on standardized testing and rote learning in many schools has undermined development of these essential 21st century skills. If educators want students to be competitive in today's design-driven economies, we need to find new and productive ways to consciously cultivate meta-cognition.

Decades ago, when media scholar David Buckingham first began teaching, student production was "seen to be at odds with the radical political mission of media education" (p. 125). In time, however, Buckingham decided it was possible to design learning activities that "involve a dialectical relationship between doing and analysing – or, to put it in media education terminology, between 'practice' and 'theory.'" (p. 133). In a similar sense, Sir Ken Robinson rejects the notion that production and critique are rigidly opposed. In fact, he places them under the same pedagogical umbrella, naming them "the two modes of creativity," specifically, "playing with ideas" and "making judgments about them," AKA "generative thinking and evaluative thinking" (p. 134). By designing activities that require students to simultaneously compose and reflect, we are helping them to master what Donald Schön (1983) calls, "reflection-in-action" (p. 133). Schön elaborates:

[A creative professional] "does not keep means and ends separate, but defines them interactively as he frames a problematic situation. He does not separate thinking from doing, ratiocinating his way to a decision, which he must later convert to action. Because his experimenting is a kind of action, implementation is built into his inquiry" (p. 68).

While engaging in the News Remix activity, journalism students were encouraged to learn by doing and also to reflect on this unfolding process in real time. The combination of action and reflection made it possible for them to generalise from their immediate experience to future situations. Thus, by engaging in a short but focused in-class activity, they developed new modes of invention and inquiry. They also found opportunities to expose and examine hidden biases while acquiring conceptual tools that will help them become more productive, creative and analytical journalists in the years to come.

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News Remix

Goal: to consider how a single news story is influenced by multiple points of view. Because there are many types of authors, actors and audiences, there are many ways to tell the tale.

STEP 1: Identify a topical news story. Discuss key details.

STEP 2: Student-teams download worksheets complete their portion of activity. They will look at the story from the perspectives of different authors, actors, audiences or combinations of all three.

(30 minutes)

STEP 3: Class discusses results. (30 minutes)

Team 1: AUTHOR (rhetoric)

• Invent 3 authors. Name them here and briefly describe their perspectives on the story and personal biases. Consider perspectives from different geographic regions and different types of news sources, including professional, alternative and amateur.

• Invent a headline for each author that expresses his or her perspective.

• Identify a key image that each author might focus on.

• Define each author's primary mode of persuasion: logical, testimonial, or emotional (logos, ethos, pathos).

Team 2. ACTOR (psychology)

• Identify three different central characters based on actual figures involved the story. Name these "actors" here and briefly describe their personalities.

• Locate actual quotes (taken from online sources) that best express each actor's perspective.

• What does this person want (conscious motive)?

• What does this actor need (unconscious motive)?

Team 3. AUDIENCE (sociology)

• Imagine 3 target audiences with different perspectives and briefly describe their response to the story.

• Invent a web comment from a member of each target audience.

- Suggest which news source(s) each audience trusts.

- What social “norm(s)” is each target audience most interested in protecting or challenging?

Team 4. POV X 3 (journalism)

- Aligned Configuration - Describe a version of the story where the author, agonist and audience share the same perspective and biases. Consider the journalistic implications of this approach.

- Polarized Configuration - Describe a version of the story where the author, agonist and audience have opposing perspectives and biases. Consider the journalistic implications of this approach.

- Complex Configuration - Describe a version of the story where the author, agonist and audience partly agree and partly disagree about particular points. Be specific. Consider the journalistic implications of this approach.

- Compare and contrast the relative strengths and weakness of the three approaches outlined above.

Storytelling in the newsroom: An investigation into practice-based learning methods in the training and employment of tomorrow’s journalists

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Abstract

In order to prepare students for a career in journalism, teaching must be done through practice-based learning. The integration of theory, practice and reflection as advocated by Kolb(1984) provides a solid pedagogical framework for courses seeking to prepare students for a career in the industry. This research looks at the experiential learning undertaken during the Broadcast Journalism Training Council’s accreditation requirement of practice-based news days both at Coventry University and the University of the West of England. It found that news days had huge benefits for the students in “doing it for real”. They were able to experience the pressures of being a working journalist whilst being allowed to make mistakes in a safe environment. It also shows that the incremental autonomy experienced on news days and re-

reflection sessions, incorporating theory and practice, led to a deeper level of learning for the students.

Key Words: journalism education, pedagogy, Kolb, training, simulation learning, experiential learning, practice-based learning, news days.

Introduction:

What is the best way to teach journalism at Higher Education level to prepare students for a career in the industry?

The Broadcast Journalism Training Council (BJTC), the industry accreditation body, requires that all accredited courses include ‘news days’ in their teaching. A news day is a hybrid of simulation and experiential learning where students become practising journalists. Whilst the purpose of those days is clear, that students should learn to become journalists by working to a real live brief or deadline driven day, there has been no research regarding the best way of achieving that aim and how the students perceive them.

BJTC Requirements stipulate that a news day must be a minimum of six hours long, should start with a news meeting, setting the agenda and culminate in the creation of an up to date bulletin, and/or a magazine of fresh and re-versioned stories as appropriate to intended audience and platforms of transmission (BJTC, 2015). Current guidelines advise:

“...a minimum of 15 news days a year for a course of up to a year and for longer courses there must be a minimum of 15 days per academic year; the exception being the first year of a course where students should have ample workshop opportunity to acquire the skills and knowledge in all the various elements of a news production day. (BJTC, 2015, p11)

This evolving form of news media pedagogy is being undertaken on 70 courses in the UK at 40 different institutions and has implications on the changing priorities for the education, training and employment of tomorrow’s journalists. While this industrial news production model of pedagogy is backed by industry, academics have asked how valuable it is in the changing world of journalism (Mensing, 2010 and 2011).

This research, encouraged by the BJTC, addresses this knowledge gap by using qualitative data from students at the University of the West of England (UWE), Coventry University, both BJTC accredited courses, and former UWE students now working in the journalism industry. It draws upon the experiential learning literature of Kolb (1984) and others more specifically concerned with journalism education (Steel et al, 2007) who have called for further study in this area.

At the University of the West of England news days have been integrated into the modular teaching structure. Students undergo a series of workshops to learn the basic skills for six weeks and then put them into practice through news days in the final six weeks of both semesters. At level one, students learn basic TV and radio newsgathering skills. At level two the broadcast skills are increased considerably and mobile reporting and editing is introduced and at level three news days focus on tri-media: radio, TV and online. Students rotate through a number of newsroom roles including reporters, news editors or producers, presenters, bulletin editors, gallery director and forward planners aimed at giving them a feel for all the roles in the newsroom and how they integrate together.

Similarly, news days at Coventry University are designed around an incremental approach allowing students to gradually learn the skills needed throughout the three years and progressively ramping up the requirements. At level one they focus on radio and online skills with news days integrated into the module and then building up to a full week at the end of the second term. At level two news days progress to include TV and are integrated at a modular level followed by a week at the end of term one and another at the end of term two. For level three students, news days are based around future ways of working and are multi-platform, video, audio and words all produced for emerging online formats, including social media.

At both universities, as the students progress through the course the level of autonomy is increased and the scaffolds around learning are gradually removed.

Context:

The pedagogical theoretical framework for these courses is Kolb’s experiential learning cycle (Kolb, 1984). The learning cycle draws upon four main bases that the learner must engage with: concrete experience; reflective observation; abstract conceptualisation, active experimentation and then the cycle returns to concrete experience. It builds on the premise that practice will be adjusted based upon the reflection and the theory building. The learner can engage with the cycle at any stage. Kolb drew upon earlier work by John Dewey, Jean Piaget and Kurt Lewin. All start with the premise that experience is essential to the experiential learning process and that it is possible to integrate theory and practice through reflection.

Brandon (2002) said that experiential learning could open new areas of knowledge for journalism education as well as helping to improve courses for students. She called for studies in this area to include news editorial employees of newspapers, news editorial employees of television and educators in print and broadcast journalism, as well as students enrolled in courses. She wanted to discover whether courses addressed students’ career aspirations, encouraged initiative, offered training that would lead to different job positions, allowed input, used mistakes as learning opportunities, provided frequent feedback on performance and encouraged the use of knowledge gained in other learning settings (Brandon 2002, p65). Some of these areas are addressed in this research.

In May 2005 Steel et al embarked on a study with 50 post-graduate journalism students and eight post-graduate students of political communication in the Department of Journalism Studies at the University of Sheffield. They undertook a one-off real-time newsgathering exercise to cover the general election producing material for TV, radio, newspapers and the internet. They worked as “real” journalists reporting and analysing the results. Students were interviewed afterwards to elicit their responses to the experiment. They categorised their findings into five themes: Anxiety, confidence, group organisation, convergence, doing it for real – managing the pressure.

Steel et al raised questions about how “educators manage the balance between throwing students in at the deep end so that they resolve problems and learn through doing, yet on the other, still retaining sufficient control to guarantee that they experience a positive and productive outcome.” (2007, p.333). This research adopts a similar methodology to Steel et al and attempts to answer some of the questions posed.

They called for further research by journalism educators into “the practice of teaching journalism in all its aspects.” (2007, p.332). In particular, they called for research which would critically examine approaches to learning and teaching convergence, the relationship between academic content and practical components, in particular how scholars can relate theory and practice. They also called for further empirical research into experiential learning in journalism and for it to be a central component of journalism studies.

A similar study, two years later by Kartveit from the Danish School of Media and Journalism, examines Kolb’s learning cycle as a pedagogic approach in practical journalism training (Kartveit, 2009). This work concluded that experiential learning offers a comprehension setting of how practical journalism training can be implemented and has great potential for learning at several levels (2009, p.46). Greenberg (2007) also looked at Kolb’s experiential learning cycle in journalism education but as a solution to the theory-practice divide that has developed as journalism practitioners continue to enter the academic world. She concluded that practitioners would gain value by engaging with theory to give the experiential learning cycle the chance to explore its fullest potential and that theory-based disciplines should look at alternative theoretical frameworks and examine their own response to feedback from practice (2007, p.302).

Integrating theory into practice is one of the main components of the news days at the University of the West of England. Following the transmission of the programme and publication of the web material there is a detailed feedback session which asks students to reflect on the theory and practice of the day’s activities. The researcher was particularly interested in how this is perceived by students. The news day experience however, is predominantly driven by the BJTC guidelines and achieving the accreditation requirements and list of journalism skills which are entirely practice-based and do not include critical reflection. It relies upon an industrial news production model and the creation of a simulated newsroom environment. This kind of journalism education has been welcomed by those with backgrounds in industry but critiqued by others. The call to reinvent journalism education is not new. (Dennis, 1984, Medsger, 1996, Reese, 1999, Reese and Cohen, 2000, Carey, 2000, Adam, 2001, MacDonald, 2006, and Deuze, 2006, all cited in Mensing, 2011). Mensing (2010& 2011) calls for journalism schools to consider alternatives to the transmission-driven in-

dustrial model and advocates a re-alignment with democracy and community. Zelizer, 2004, points to the accreditation standards shaping the curriculum of journalism schools and, like Greenberg, describes a rift between journalism educators and scholars.

Little research has been done on student perceptions of news days but recent discussion at the Association of Media Practice Academics in Birmingham (2015) suggested a growing interest in how these days are perceived both by students and academics.

This research attempts to analyse the usefulness of courses based on experiential learning models, by asking students about their experiences and perceptions of the courses. It pays particular attention to the role of reflection, both in a practical and theoretical context using data from student experiences and perceptions.

Methodological approach:

The research uses a series of focus groups and semi-structured interviews with journalism students at the University of the West of England (UWE) and Journalism and Media students at Coventry University, both BJTC accredited courses. It also uses data from a semi-structured group interview with three former students of Journalism from the UWE now working in the journalism industry.

Twenty participants took part in the study overall. Four focus groups were held in Coventry with undergraduate students, ten first years, four second years and one third year. One semi-structured group interview was conducted at the University of the West of England with two third year students. The three former UWE students were all working as video journalists and had graduated the previous year (2014). The aim was to ascertain whether the practice-based skills and experiential style of learning had enabled them to secure roles in industry as journalists, what about news days they found useful if at all and how they had used reflection to improve their practice.

Participants were invited to take part via emails to all students in their year groups. Their participation was self-selecting so has a subjective effect on the results as those who enjoy news days are more likely to volunteer to take part in a research focus group about them. This was kept in mind when analysing the data.

Questions were designed to build upon the work done by Steel et al (2007) in earlier research into experiential learning in journalism whereby qualitative reflective responses were elicited. It was decided that in order to be able to draw comparisons or contrasts and also to attempt to answer some of the questions that it poses in its call for further research, a similar model needed to be applied.

Initial questioning focused on what students enjoyed and didn't enjoy about news days and how, if at all, they felt they were preparing them for industry. In response to earlier focus groups, follow-up questions were developed for later groups along the lines of reflection on practice, the link between theory and practice, being "thrown in at the deep end" and the balance between student autonomy and lecturer involvement in news days.

The focus groups/interviews were audio recorded. They were then transcribed and coded into themes for analysis. Analysis was done using grounded theory involving the construction of theory through the analysis of data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967 cited Croucher and Cronn Mills, 2015) using a combination of both approaches.

Themes were broadly identified using Owen's steps for analysing transcripts; recurrence, repetition and forcefulness (Owen 1984 cited in Croucher and Cronn- Mills, 2015,200). Topics that occurred in more than one group or by more than one person in the same group were identified as themes.

Findings & Discussion:

A wide range of themes emerged of which four were identified as recurring. These will be discussed below. Analysis will be given and examples of student responses included to back up the themes.

Doing it for real – getting hands on:

This was the most prevalent of the themes to emerge from the research with 12 references to the concept of doing the job for real.

Students at both universities and those now working in journalism reported positive experiences to actually doing it under real time constraints.

...it represents how it would be in the real world, like, if you were to be on ITV, BBC or any of those outlets. So I think it's a great experience and a great practice for us to do beforehand. So, when we do go out there we've really got the experience and we've got the techniques and all of that. (R5)

Many participants commented that doing the news days had improved their confidence both with technical skills and personal skills. Many also commented on how taking part in the news days allowed them to make mistakes in a real, yet safe environment. This was particularly prevalent among those who were now working in journalism.

I think definitely going out into the city and doing news gathering and filming and making all the mistakes that you need to at that point. (R18)

The sense coming from the participants now working in journalism was that the news days created a safe zone, an area where they could experience the real-life pressures of the newsroom but be allowed to make mistakes. This echoes Brandon's theory that experience allowed students to use the mistakes made as learning opportunities (Brandon, 2002).

The news days at both universities also gave the students the opportunity to reflect upon their mistakes in a safe environment, something that they may not have space for when working as a journalist in the "real world". This was appreciated by those now working in industry.

...we obviously had time before we went on air here [refers to place of work] to sort of hone things a little bit more and get used to the workload a bit, but having that platform is vital (R17).

This was also one of Steel et al's themes (2007). They point out that the learning was not only related to the technical aspects of the process but what the students learned about themselves which was more powerful given that the students had been "plunged in at the deep end" (Steel et al 2007, p330).

News days at Coventry University and UWE follow a pattern of gradual build up in that expectations and the broadcast programme length is often increased as the students gain confidence and skills throughout their course. In addition, having to undertake 15 a year means that, although the students are to some extent "plunged in at the deep end" as the unpredictability of news means that often the students don't know what to expect, there is often a gradual build up which Steel et al's post-graduate students weren't able to experience with the one-off election night coverage.

Kolb's experiential learning system (1984) requires students to experience carrying out a skill, reflect upon this, conceptualise and build a theory and then actively experiment, hence repeating their concrete experience. The repetition of news days at UWE and Coventry University meant that students had had the opportunity to reflect, theorise and revise their practice. This meant that the levels of anxiety and stress felt by students in Steel et al's research were not as evident by students in this research as they were gradually immersed into it and after a few weeks became more confident. Repeatedly doing it mitigated the fear factor. Some levels of stress and anxiety were expressed by students at lower levels but it was evident from the research that once students had experienced more news days they grew in confidence.

Lecturer involvement:

In the conclusion to their study Steel et al called for further research into how educators manage the balance between throwing students in at the deep end so they learn through their mistakes while ensuring that the process was positive and productive (Steel et al, 2007,333).

Although lecturers and technical staff at UWE and Coventry are always on hand to help and guide students the overall aim is for the students to run the news days themselves and learn on the job.

The BJTC requires students to be "in charge and running the news day with tutors acting as executive editors and providing feedback in a safe learning environment." (BJTC 2015, p11).

This research showed that opinion was split around year groups about whether lecturers should be more or less involved in the day. Level one students were calling for more staff involvement and more skills workshops before being let loose on news days. This contrasted greatly to the responses from level two and three students who seemed to appreciate a more hands-off approach. This could be attributed to the fact that they had experienced more news days, had greater levels of confidence and were more technically able. Some said that they had learnt more from having to work it out for themselves.

I think one of the nice things about being very autonomous is that you do figure out more stuff on your own than you think you would. Because I think the hands-off approach is nice because I make a lot of mistakes

that are really stupid, and once I've made them once I'm like "Okay, that was really stupid." I'm aware that's really stupid and I'm probably never going to do it again. If a tutor had caught that earlier and told me not to do it, it might not have sunk in in the same way (R16).

The concept of providing more support at an earlier stage and gradually removing it is often referred to as instructional scaffolding. It is used to provide temporary support to promote learning when concepts and skills are first being introduced to students. The theory was first introduced by Jerome Bruner in the 1950s when studying children learning a language and developed in his studies in the 1970s (Wood, Bruner and Ross, 1976).

The results from this research point to the benefits of this kind of incremental autonomy and that that is recognised by the students once they have reached the third year of their studies. However, those in the lower years were less confident and called for more scaffolds to support them. As students developed their skills and gained confidence as they progressed through their degree programme the requirement for the scaffold was less.

Students from both universities also called for feedback from lecturers to be integrated throughout the day rather than at the end of the day, allowing them to reflect and improve on their practice at the same time.

Repetition and reflection:

Repetition and reflection is at the heart of Kolb's experiential learning cycle (Kolb, 1984). The learning cycle operates in the premise that students touch four bases in the process, experiencing, reflecting thinking and acting. Students can engage with the cycle at any point and the starting point for individuals is often different. This model forms the basis of news day pedagogy whereby students learn how to do something, put it into practice through concrete experience, reflect upon this, theorise and then practice it again. This was borne out strongly in the data from this research.

Students all agreed that repetition improves their skills. Even when asked by the researcher whether doing it week in week out or for consecutive days became boring, the students disagreed and said it definitely increased their skills and improved their confidence.

I think the first few weeks was, like personally I did panic. Like, "how am I going to find a story? one a week?" And then when you actually think about all the other journalists who are actually working, they have to find one a day. And then once you get the hang of it, it was really easy, like we were finding three or four ideas a week, and then like, it's up to you to decide "Oh which one do I want to put up on [the course website]?" (R13)

Students at UWE engage with 15 news days each year on a week to week basis. Lecturer feedback is offered formatively throughout the day on a one-to-one basis as problems arise but more formally at the end of the day in a summative session following the TV and radio broadcasts and the publications of the online material. Feedback focuses around the practical issues relating to content but also some of the theoretical concepts that students had been introduced to in other modules on the course.

Often the students are asked to remember how many stories they had pitched in the morning news meeting and how many made the final cut in the programme. They were asked to reflect upon why some stories made air and others didn't and reflect upon news values and the news editor's role as gate-keeper (Manning White, 1950, and Shoemaker, 2009). Students were asked to take notes and to go home and reflect on the feedback in preparation for the following week's news day.

At Coventry University news days are integrated into the curriculum during the earlier parts of the term and culminate in a week for each year group at key stages at the end of the term with feedback offered at the end of each day. Students at both universities are expected to reflect on their practice through a piece of written work.

...those little bits at the end [referring to the critical reflection essays] do, sort of, allow you to bring in what you did know. What you'd learned from other people about the industry, critically evaluate the mistakes you made and how that would affect it in the real industry (R17).

Student responses in the research varied in relation to feedback. One student said he would have preferred intermittent feedback throughout the day rather than at the end so that he would be able to reflect and im-

prove his practice during the day.

I know it's difficult when you've got a deadline breathing down your neck, but feedback throughout, because if I've got an interview in the morning, do the interview in the morning, get it edited by say one o'clock and then I've got another interview at five o'clock and I get feedback on that interview in between, that will tell you where you can go right or wrong and prepare you for the next interview (R2).

Others called for more one-to-one reflection rather than a group session at the end of the day although admitted that this would be very difficult to achieve practically.

Respondents who were now working in the journalism industry spoke positively of the opportunity to reflect at the end of the day, but said that not all students in their cohort had engaged with it. Those who were keen to go into the industry often took their reflection sessions further and engaged in a deeper learning/reflection experience outside of the classroom environment whilst others chose not to engage.

"...the students who are keen, I mean for example a group of us would go to the SU [Student Union] after every news day, but we'd talk about the news day. So it was like an extension of that reflection session" (R18).

This highlights the limitations of this study in that the respondents were self-selecting and hence would be more likely to be those who enjoyed news days and were willing to reflect deeper. It would be interesting to gauge the opinions of those who weren't as enthusiastic about news days and did not wish to pursue a career in journalism or journalism related industries. How did they find the reflection process? was it useful or simply an added thirty minutes at the end of an already long day? Further research into this would be welcomed.

Preparation for Industry:

According to the BJTC website (BJTC, 2015) "Accreditation brings big benefits to employers, trainers and students." But do the 15 news days a year required by the BJTC prepare students for industry and if so how? Respondents were asked whether they felt the news days prepared them for industry. For most (17 of the 20) the responses were based upon their experiences on work placement or their perceptions of the industry from what they had seen and learnt as they were still students at the time of the research. Some students, particularly the level one students were unable to offer opinions on this area as they felt they had not had sufficient experience of the workplace or news days to comment. The three graduate respondents however, were able to reflect upon their current roles as video-journalists in industry.

It became apparent that the students perceived that their news day experiences had not only prepared them for what to expect on work experience but also helped them get the placement in the first place.

...the practical side was really beneficial because it helped me to get a placement ... last summer ... I worked in a TV station. To be honest it was really useful (R1).

I just feel like I know what to do pretty much, the nice thing is that even though I don't consider myself particularly talented on the TV or the broadcast side, I feel like I could go into a broadcast newsroom and know what to do (R16).

For the graduates now working as video-journalists there was glowing praise for the news days in preparing them for their current jobs.

...everything that we've been taught on our news days is pretty much everything that we do every single day. So, like, news days alone are probably one of the most beneficial things for us because it's more practical. And obviously we're out and about doing practical things every day that, to be honest with you, news days have probably been the one thing that's really done it for me, anyway (R19).

These respondents pointed to some differences between news days and working in industry namely working in pairs on news days, for health and safety reasons, whereas in the "real world" they were often expected to work alone. They pointed out that the workload is heavier in industry than it is on news days and discussed how the incremental approach on news days by increasing the workload and the autonomy was useful, but once they had graduated and were working in industry they were "in at the deep end" and there was no gradual build up. They also called for more live reporting in news days as they said this was common-place in their current roles but they had not had a lot of experience of this on their course. Notably the graduates now working in industry and the third year students from both universities called for more news days rather than fewer. They commented on how the more they did the more confident they felt.

Conclusion:

The study was inspired by a notion amongst the researcher and her colleagues at UWE that they thought what they were doing on news days worked in preparing students for a career in the industry, however there was no actual research into how the students were perceiving it or whether it was beneficial to them once they were in the world of work. This study goes some way to filling that knowledge gap.

It has shown that respondents who engaged with this research, albeit self-selecting, perceived many benefits of the experiential learning style embodied in news days.

Firstly, the benefits of “doing it for real” were widespread across the research and students vocalised about how they perceived that the news day experience replicated industry and therefore was an advantage to them in obtaining work placements and also would assist them if and when they were to work in industry.

Secondly the incremental autonomy that comes with the scaffolded learning approach employed in news days developed a deeper level of learning where students came to discover the answers for themselves and learnt from their mistakes. It also allowed educators to manage the difficult balance between throwing students in at the deep end whilst retaining sufficient control to ensure a positive learning experience that Steel et al, 2007 raised.

Thirdly the respondents saw news days as a place to safely make these mistakes that they may not have the luxury of when working in industry and valued the experience of being able to do this in a controlled environment. This was particularly prevalent amongst those who had graduated and were now working as video journalists.

Finally, there was a surprising amount of self-reflection that emerged from the study with students valuing the opportunity to critically reflect often using lessons learned in other parts of the course and from the feedback on news days. They were appreciative of the skills and used this as a place to reflect. Although this study does not attempt to address the apparent rift between journalism educators and scholars that others have referred to (Mensing, 2010, Zelizer, 2004, Greenberg, 2007), it shows the value of integrating theory and practice through the reflection element of Kolb’s learning cycle that Greenberg suggests.

One of its limitations however is that ultimately those who chose to participate tended to be students who were engaged with news days and hence wanted to talk about them. Further studies with students who were less engaged would be valuable to ascertain how they felt the days could be improved. It is hoped that through this small study further research will also be carried out into how the skills learnt on news days can be transferred into other professions as well as journalism allowing students maximum opportunity of securing work in a highly competitive sector. Studies with employers as to the value of news day skills and experiences when employing journalism graduates would also be fruitful.

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Gamergate, fragmentary storytelling, and news narrative: Convergence, 'conversation', and context in journalism education

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Abstract

Fragments of conversation dominate contemporary media. These conversations occur in the form of comments, sound bites, tweets, and commentary on social media platforms. In this context, it is hard to make sense of an issue. Telling stories has always been a way for people to make sense of the world, but there is a difference in the way storytelling occurs in conversation and long-form narrative. Despite the tension between both forms of storytelling, there is a space for both in contemporary media, but incorporating understanding of conversational storytelling is rare in journalism education. In 2014, '#gamergate' as an issue dominated the gaming mediasphere in a way that highlighted how conversational voices on social media became 'news' in a more traditional narrative sense. As an issue, #gamergate was unique in the length of time it remained current (over three months) in specialist and general media, and it demonstrated the appropriation of the story in an ongoing way by a com-

munity of citizen and specialist journalists. In considering the way mainstream media was marginalised as the issue developed, this paper considers #gamergate as a case study and argues there are lessons learned for journalism educators in identifying what should be privileged when teaching storytelling that can help make sense of fragments in digital contexts.

Introduction

Contemporary media is dominated by fragments of conversations, which occur in the form of comments, soundbites, tweets, and commentary on social media platforms. Social media users engage with issues, and use hashtags and handles to interact, and the nature of the issue will determine the volume of conversational traffic.

Keeping up with conversations, and determining any associated news value or public interest can be incredibly difficult because an issue can 'take off' at incredible speed. That issue can then disappear almost as quickly, as another rises to take its place. Understanding the function of conversations in the public sphere, and the way in which they integrate with and are appropriated by journalism, is a challenge for the profession as conversational narrative emerges as a dominant form of storytelling. Telling stories has always been a way for people to make sense of the world, but there is a difference in the way storytelling occurs in conversation and longform narrative.

This article considers the relationship between conversation and news discourse by examining the Gamergate debate, an online 'war' between journalists and the gaming community. Gamergate refers to an issue-based hashtag which emerged on social media in mid-2014. It started as a blog post in August 2014 and became a debate between gamers and journalists/journalbloggers. Central to this debate were arguments about ethics in journalism and gaming, and the treatment of women in the gaming community. The Gamergate 'movement' is "difficult to define and torturously complex" (Burgess & Matamoros-Fernández, 2016, p. 83). A number of scholars have already reviewed Gamergate from different perspectives, or used it as a case study within which they have explored related issues. For example, Chess and Shaw (2015) have provided an 'insider' account as feminist gaming scholars on conspiracy theories, Gamergate, feminism and masculine hegemony with relation to a conference they organised in August 2014 that was affected by the debate. Burgess & Matamoros-Fernández (2016) examined a week of Gamergate debate in early 2015, based on tweets using the hashtag 'Gamergate', to explore the way in which issues emerged in social media and were linked to networks. Massanari (2015) used Gamergate as a case study to explore the way Reddit enables activism. This article also reviews Gamergate as an illustrative case study, but examines the link between online conversation and mainstream media practice.

I came to the debate early as someone interested in online communities and broadcast talk. The Gamergate hashtag attracted my interest in late August 2014, and I focused on the ways online conversation around the hashtag was integrated into news discourse. At that early stage, it appeared that only online gaming journalists were interested and narrative was polarised and opinion-based. My initial interest was in a semantically-based study, looking at specific discursive practice by gaming journalists. The issue did not subside and it became evident as time passed that the general media had been sidelined and played a minimal role in what retrospectively has been dubbed an "online culture war" (Wheaton 2015). I became interested in taking a broader view to explore the relationship between online conversation and traditional media. Two specific research questions emerged to drive the analysis and discussion: can theories associated with conversational narrative be applied in a convergent media environment? and, what does this mean for traditional journalism practice and educators?

This article is therefore conceptually-based. In illustrating specific points, it draws on data collected as follows: tweets (and blogs linked directly to these tweets) using the 'Gamergate' hashtag collected between 18 August and 30 November 2014 using the search engine Topsy, and media stories accessed via a database search (Factiva) using the keyword Gamergate during the same period. The article first provides an

overview of the first few months of Gamergate coverage, It draws on theories of conversational narrative generally that may be applicable to online conversation, and then specifically considers these in relation to Gamergate, and convergence and journalistic practice more generally. It considers lessons learned for journalism and consequently educators about privileging information in a conversationally-focused environment as a way of making sense of fragments in digital contexts.

Gamergate - a Hashtag

Although the relationship between game developers and gaming journalists had been brewing for years, the start of Gamergate can be tracked to a blog post by a man called Eron Gjoni on 16 August 2014. Gjoni created a blog via wordpress called “The Zoe Post”. The post was the retelling of a story. The story was that of Eron’s break-up with his girlfriend Zoe Quinn. Quinn is a games developer known for her text-based game called “Depression Quest”. The post was a mix of text-based reflection and graphics which were screen shots of text-based chat conversation. Gjoni asserted that Quinn had become involved with a games reviewer Nathan Grayson. Gjoni’s post included snapshots of conversations between Quinn and Gjoni. These snapshots revealed Quinn’s concern about her relationship with Grayson and Grayson’s reviews of her game. The blog called into question the relationship between games development and reviews by gaming media.

On August 17 (the following day), a gamer called Mundane Matt uploaded a video titled ‘Hell Hath No Fury Like A Lover’s Scorn’ to YouTube. MundaneMatt is an anonymous YouTube personality. At the time, his avatar was a skull and he described himself as: “a Youtube personality who rants about movies, games, etc... Liked by a few, disliked by others. Either way its gonna be a party. :)”. □□Mundane Matt’s video was a 15-minute in-depth critique and commentary on Gjoni’s post. He retold the story for his followers. In doing so, he incorporated his opinion about what had happened. Mundane Matt had strong views about the potential corruption of gaming journalism, and made much of the relationship between a games developer and a games reviewer that had been alluded to in the original “Zoe Post”.

From this initial point, a number of key events occurred to mobilise comment and action. Notably, these ‘events’ were public comment within a community network, and these comments polarised around two issues: the treatment of women in gaming, and the ethics of journalism. For example, Zoe Quinn, the subject of the original Zoepost, complained about MundaneMatt’s post. Quinn claimed she was ‘doxxed’—that is, identifying information with malicious intent about her was published, although this was disputed by a number of commentators. There was immediate response by the gaming press, and commentary built within the gaming community more widely. The issue was picked up by 4chan, the “web’s most mysterious, yet undoubtedly popular, forum site” (“What is 4Chan - Mashable explains”) which ensured its wider distribution. During August, feminist and videoblogger Anita Sarkeesian published a video blog on her YouTube channel in which she reviewed the way women were used as objectified in video games (“Women as Background Decoration: Part 2 - Tropes vs Women in Video Games”). Actor Adam Baldwin is then credited with having come up with the Gamergate tag on 27 August 2014 (see Chess & Shaw 2015; Massanari 2015) when he tweeted links to YouTube videos ‘Quinnspiracy Theory’ which talked about the attempt within the gaming community to silence concerns about ethics in journalism. The following day, a series of articles were published in gaming specific media and community comment mobilised.

The way in which Gamergate developed as an issue from this point has been considered, and analysed in specific detail by Burgess & Matamoros-Fernández (2016). Broadly speaking, more and more stories were retold, particularly via YouTube, Medium, and blogs, supplemented by conversational commentary on Twitter. As stories were retold, the focus of commentary changed. Key characters emerged as ‘thought leaders’, and pro and anti-gamergate sides emerged. Those who had no prior interest in the issue were ‘drawn in’ to making comment:

If you haven’t heard of Gamergate, lucky you. If you have, and you have an opinion about it, you probably fall into one of two camps. You are in the camp that thinks it is a web-based movement of gamers upset about a perceived lack of ethics among video-games journalists. Or you are in the camp that thinks it is a web-based campaign of harassment against women who make, write about and enjoy video games, masquerading as a movement of gamers upset about a perceived lack of ethics among games journalists. (Wofford 2014)

And random consumers, like me, who had no prior relationships in this scene nor stake in this fight but who are shocked and revolted at the cancer consuming our hobby. (Chu 2014)

What is significant for the purpose of this article is that by early September 2014, despite more than a million tweets being posted against the Gamergate hashtag, interest from mainstream media remained minimal. One of the first articles in *The Guardian* (Stuart 2014) was an opinion-based piece in the technology section that was consistent with the theme of retelling a told story, adding opinion and commentary to the mix. Stuart wrote:

The last fortnight has seen that powder keg explode. A spiteful blogpost by the ex-lover of indie games developer Zoe Quinn, and the launch of the latest Tropes vs Women video by Sarkeesian, which analyses the sexist depiction of women in some games, have led to reams of appalling threats and abuse online. Both women have feared for their safety. Games writers have been seen to close ranks and defend the developers, criticising the gamer community, which has responded by huddling around the Gamergate hashtag on Twitter. Questions have been asked about the close relationship between development studios and games critics – sometimes to a ludicrous extent, with charts and diagrams posted online showing the connections between key figures. (2014)

Stuart was a games writer for *The Guardian* and his article makes note of his membership of the gaming (and gaming journalism) community. His story was about the ‘war’, so it was the conflict within the gaming community that was newsworthy. The tag line for the article was: “The last fortnight has seen a raging battle between self-identifying gamers and games writers and critics. Does it have to be this way?” (Stuart 2014).

It wasn’t until mid-October that mainstream journalists picked up and attempted to report on Gamergate. Their interest was sparked when prominent gaming blogger and feminist Anita Sarkeesian cancelled a talk she was scheduled to give at the University of Utah after she was threatened by so called ‘Gamergaters’ because she was concerned for her safety. This was covered widely in gaming media (Starr 2014; Wingfield 2014). Mainstream media then engaged with the debate, and attempted to catch up. For example, an article on the *Times* website titled “What Is Gamergate and Why Are Women Being Threatened About Video



Figure 1 – One day of Gamergate (20 November 2014).

Games?” started:

The online movement Gamergate, which has been brewing since August, took a frightening turn this week when feminist commentator Anita Sarkeesian was forced to cancel a speech at a Utah college following a

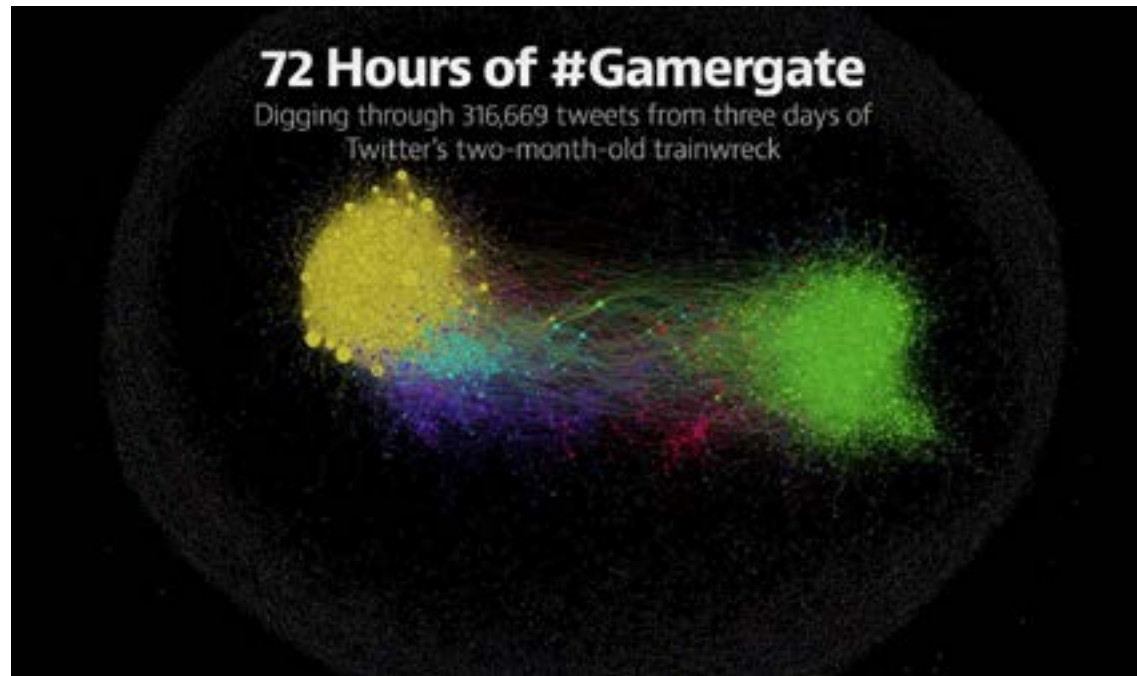


Figure 2 - '72 Hours of Gamergate' [Andy Baio, Medium - <https://medium.com/message/72-hours-of-gamergate-e00513f7cf5d> (October 21 - 23)]

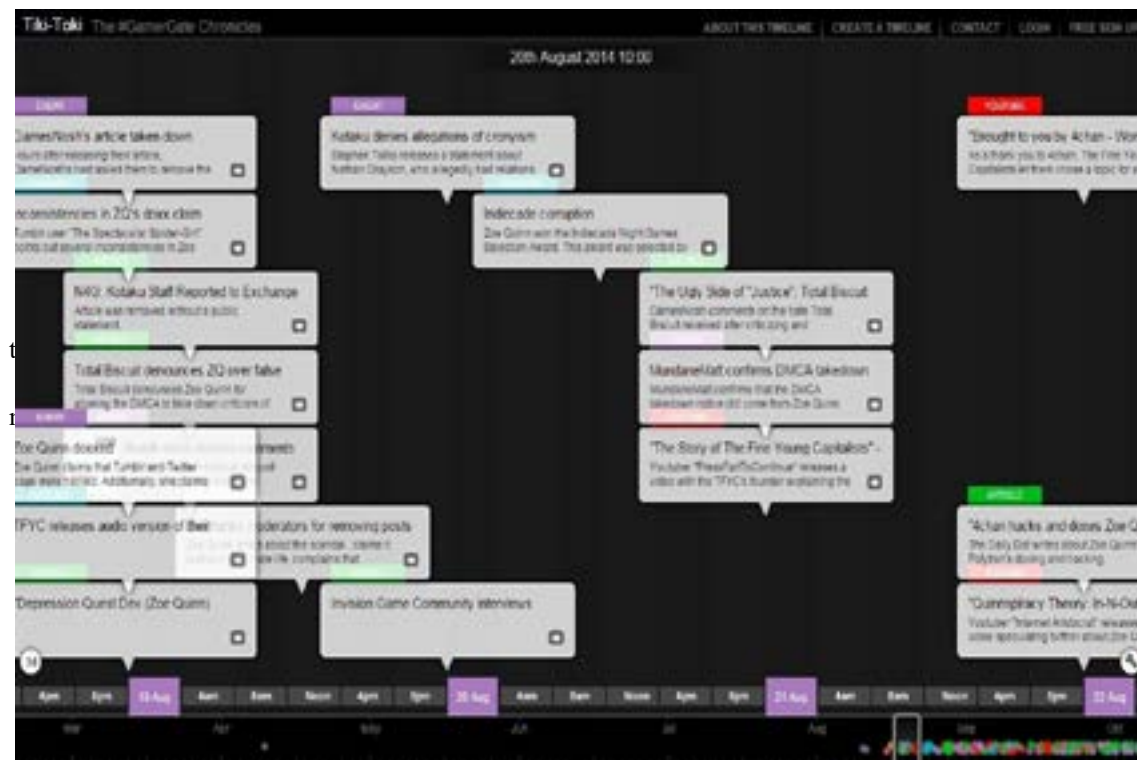


Figure 3 – The GamerGate Chronicles [<http://www.tiki-toki.com/timeline/entry/336432/The-GamerGate-Chronicles/>]

Articles

referred to as something to which participants could orient or align. For example:

GamerGate wants to pretend that the world they see is the “real world,” with no subtext or damaging systems in place that impact people who aren’t them. (Kuchera, 2014)

Gamergate is convinced that there is a massive left-wing cabal in games journalism out to destroy traditional games culture. (Chu, 2014)

Interest was global, as indicated by a screen capture of 18000 tweets on a single day (Topsy.com, 20 November 2014, see Figure 2).

As commentators within the general news media and specialised media attempted to make sense of what ‘it’ was, varying attempts were made to make sense from a narrative perspective, in a range of forms (as an example, see Figure 3).

The story became told in fragments, articulated within the gaming community. They were re-told without context or basis. For example, the following quote from @_icze4r was made in an interview with Mike Diver, writer for online media website www.vice.com (Diver, 2014). @_icze4r was at the time one of the key contributors or influencers via Twitter to the debate:

I came into it without even reading Eron Gjoni’s Zoe post, and I have to admit something here: I have no desire to ever know what was contained in that post. I came into GamerGate because of Leigh Alexander’s piece on “Gamers are over”; Zoe Quinn and Anita Sarkeesian are not even in the periphery of my focus when it comes to GamerGate. All of that takes away from why I’m in GamerGate: it’s not relevant to what I’m doing. I myself have tried to get Zoe Quinn’s “dox” removed from a website (unsuccessfully), and I’ve been reporting death and rape threats to Anita Sarkeesian, so consider where I’m coming from. (@_icze4r in Diver, 2014)

The quote is of interest because it refers to reasons for initial engagement with the issue (“I came into GamerGate because...”), and the reason given was a response to a piece published on a gaming media site *Gamasutra* by Leigh Alexander (2014). The quote makes specific reference to characters in the story such as Anita Sarkeesian and Zoe Quinn. Most significantly, the quote reflects a disengagement from the original event and reflects a moving on from the original source: “I came into it without even reading Eron Gjoni’s Zoe post, and I have to admit something here: I have no desire to ever know what was contained in that post.” Ultimately, this quote and others highlight that the conversation itself, and fragments of the conversations became the story.

It became clear that the mainstream media was sidelined -- it was simply too hard to pick up the sequence of events, or make sense of this fragmentary conversation, so coverage of the issues and events was sustained by specialised gaming media and citizen journalists. This was despite the fact that there were very important issues that needed to be explored, with consequences that had far-reaching impact. For example, as a result of Gamergate and pressure by members of the gaming community, organisations such as Twitter, Intel and high-profile gaming magazines changed their policies to ensure greater transparency (see Billy D 2014). While the period of analysis central to discussion in this article lasted three months, the Gamergate hashtag remains active, and in mid-2016, still recorded an average of more than 20,000 tweets per day.

Gamergate involved the appropriation and reformulation of specialist knowledge within a community of interest—those interested in video game playing, developing, and writing. Gamergate called into question the professionalism of journalism. Stories were written and told by bloggers and journalists whose expertise ranged from quasi-professional to industry specialist across a range of media forms, demonstrating convergence in action. Accordingly, analysing Gamergate provides an opportunity to reflect on journalism practice, which will be the focus of the next section.

Convergence and context in journalism

The past decade has been dominated by reconsideration and reconfiguration of journalism practice (Coddington 2014; Deuze 2005; Donsbach 2014). Journalism textbooks are full of ‘how to do’ convergence. It is well-recognised that we need to integrate digital reporting, broadcast, print, and data analysis into journalism programmes, and some have also reinforced the need to educate students in cultural and liberal studies (Anderson 2013, 2014; Cherian 2011). The latter argument, which calls for an appreciation of cultural and social context in journalism practice, is one that is theoretically easy to make but harder to apply. How do journalists action and make sense of context? How do they appropriate and articulate stories that demonstrate an awareness of context in a converged media environment?

Articles

Analysing Gamergate demonstrates the complexity of this problem. A mainstream journalist approaches a possible story with two primary questions: What is the story? Who cares about the story? In very simple terms, teaching undergraduate journalism writing is based on a few premises: a) that there will be an event or issue on which a news report is based; b) there will be ‘a story’ on which a longer narrative piece can be dedicated into which a range of sources can be integrated; c) a story needs to be verified as accurate; and d) a range of sources is required to ensure perspectives on a story give the issue or event some balance. Being able to do this in the “brave new world of internet communication” (Donsbach 2014, p. 662) is complex. Donsbach proposed five competencies for journalists in this new environment:

A journalist should:

- (1) possess a keen awareness of relevant history and current affairs, as well as analytical thinking,
- (2) have expertise in the specific subjects about which he or she reports,
- (3) have scientifically-based knowledge about the communication process,
- (4) have mastered journalistic skills, and
- (5) conduct himself or herself within the norms of professional ethics.

(Donsbach 2014, p. 667)

Further, Donsbach argued that:

All citizen journalists’ activities, bloggers, activists, or social media fans forwarding links to news sites cannot replace the two core functions that professional journalism brings to society; that is (1) sorting out the relevant parts of reality, checking assertions about these, and relating them to other parts of reality in the present and past; and (2) building commonly accepted platform for social discourse credited with trust by society. (Donsbach 2014, pp. 673-674)

Donsbach’s assertions are noble, but Gamergate illustrates that being able to sort out the relevant parts of reality, check assertions, and building a credible platform are extremely difficult. Mainstream media became sidelined because it was simply too hard to pick up the sequence of events, or make sense of this fragmentary conversation. Mainstream media had to simplify the issue into something easy for consumers to understand:

In the eyes of the popular media, it doesn’t matter. Al Jazeera, the New York Times, NPR, and Stephen Colbert are focusing the spotlight instead on the violent threats and abusive comments from anonymous YouTube commenters, Redditors, Twitterers, and other social media denizens. (Foster 2014)

Hollingworth argued further that the role of journalism was generally under question:

But I also think it’s about far more than just games. I’d suggest it’s not even just about the apparent conservative versus progressive conflict that we see playing it in our own houses of government, down to tabloid papers and backyard conversations. Of course, it is all of those things, but at its heart, it’s a manifestation of the friction between Old Media and New. It’s a generational rift between old ways of reporting – and consuming – news and media in an age struggling to cope with a quantum shift in what it means to be a media organisation. (Hollingworth 2014)

Discussion about Gamergate demonstrate that consumption and conversation are related. Mass amorphous commentary on an issue, often in the form of social online conversation, drives the media cycle but what to do with that conversation remains problematic.

Conversation in journalistic practice

Conversation and journalism are synonymous to the extent that journalistic practice is reliant on interviews which are then integrated into stories which can differ in structure and approach depending on genre. Different organisational principles influence the way news stories are structured and the way a source’s voice is integrated into the story (Corner 1995). An interview has been the dominant form of voice-based news gathering practice, and is a specific form of institutional talk with a defined function (Clayman, 1990; Clayman and Heritage, 2002; Ekström 2001; Heritage & Greatbatch 1991). However, rather than speech-based narrative being a remembered sequence of events (Labov & Waletzky 1966) or an account of an event, ‘speech’ is now text-based, in the form of comment, that occurs via the public sphere that is the internet. Speech in this context is often conversational in that it takes place using turn-by-turn sequences (Sacks 1995) and is interactive, and responsive.

The use of the term ‘conversation’ has been routinely associated with journalism (Anderson, Dardenne, & Killenberg 1996; Hermida 2011; Kornelius 2001; Meadows 2001), but in the form of metaphor. What specifically constitutes conversation and how it is integrated and applied as journalistic practice is contested and loosely defined (Marchionni 2013). In a staged experiment in conversational journalism conducted in the late 1990s, Risto Kornelius questioned whether the metaphor of conversation or dialogue could offer insights into a ‘more useful’ method of journalism (2001). The study was to determine whether stories could emerge from conversation around an issue (in this case, the issue was finance). The study’s findings identified the orientation to values in talk (“‘Values’ is something about which everyone can be an expert” 2001, p. 35) and the self-construction of roles which were played out in ‘public’. Kornelius argued at the time that current forms of journalism were “not well equipped with modes of stories to report a conversation” (2001, p. 38), and he suggested “the precondition for developing the genres is that there will be new kinds of extratextual situations in which the citizens, journalists, politicians and experts meet and are exposed to each other in new ways” (p. 49). He argued that a better understanding of conversation could provide better understanding for journalists of social interaction and organisation. The 2016 world of journalism as we all know is a vastly different place to the one that existed in 2001, and since Kornelius’ experiment, internet-centrality within the public sphere has become a reality. However, the relevance of the findings of his study resonate loudly.

Conversation has become associated with ‘public’ and ‘democracy’ in journalism research, and the genre to emerge related to ‘voice’ is that of citizen journalism, referred to in the early 2000s as public journalism. Theorisation of conversation as interaction, however, in journalism has been limited. In practical terms, analysis of conversation has been limited to use in broadcast talk where conversation analysis as a specific form of ethnomethodological research used in pragmatics has been applied to examine social interaction in media contexts. Ekström argued more generally for the use of conversation analysis in journalism studies (2007), and there is precedence for its use and usefulness (Lawson 2008). Conversation analysis, however, is potentially limiting because of its reliance on formulaic turn-by-turn interaction (Sacks 1995), and Gamergate reflects a more complicated picture, one that reflects the results of the talk-based focus group experiment conducted by Kornelius. Taking a linear, turn-by-turn approach to studying conversation and teaching it as conversational practice for journalists has limitations.

However, Gamergate demonstrates that media conversation generates stories. During Gamergate, professional journalists were held to account, and sidelined as conversation bypassed them when the issue became appropriated by community ‘influencers’ using media platforms such as YouTube and Twitter to make public comment. It was, in a sense, a revolution about journalism started by citizen journalists, but at heart of the conversation was an issue/series of issues as opposed to an event. As per Kornelius’ study, conversation about Gamergate oriented to values, and participants self-constructed roles as they contributed to cultural debate.

Ultimately, Gamergate was an uprising by “people formerly known as the audience” (Rosen, 2006) as a social grouping who as former passive recipients learned that they could interact with journalists and others online: “What was once a lecture was turning into a conversation, a two-way exchange, not always civil, in which the professional journalist did not always get the last word” (Daly 2012, p. 439). The question arises, therefore, as to what journalists need to know and be able to do to remain relevant and engaged in cultural debate? Challenges for journalists and journalism educators in the digital era are well recognised (Deuze 2005; Mensing 2011) and I propose that an understanding of conversational theory and how stories are retold (and why we retell them) is a critical ‘futureskill’ for journalists. This also responds also to Donsbach’s assertion that scientific knowledge of how people communicate is a requirement for journalists in the current environment (2014).

Conversational narrative

Neal Norrick’s work on conversational narrative provides a good starting point for considering the ways theory relating to conversational storytelling might be applied to journalistic practice. Norrick’s work has examined orally-based conversational storytelling in a range of contexts (2000). He has considered talk for an overhearing audience, first-time and retold stories, and explored conversational storytelling as an interactional achievement. In doing so, his work considers the way in which tellers introduce stories to attract listener interest, and ‘gain control of the floor and ensure understanding’ (Norrick 2000, p.1). Norrick examines the techniques conversational storytellers use to retell a story for a ‘newly arrived listener’ as opposed to retelling the same story for a different audience (p. 68). His work is useful because it explores specifically

how participants in conversation engage in interaction, and provides a framework for rhetorical organisation of conversational narrative as a performance.

Norricks work is based on orally-based interactions, but like Kornelius' study (2000), it is possible to see parallels in online interaction. There are three key elements of conversational storytelling that could be seen in Gamergate: response stories, alignment and stance, and story retelling. Response stories are parallel stories told in response to an initial telling, such as "this is what also happened to me". The 'response story' as parallel experience was a feature of Gamergate coverage (as examples see Day 2014; Rachel M 2014; Wilbur 2014; Wu 2014). According to Norrick, sharing response stories lays "claim to parallel experiences, and often to shared values and feelings as well" and in doing so ratify the teller's membership in a group as the initial teller (2000, p. 115). They are written in the first person, a feature of conversational storytelling, and they demonstrate the recounting of personal experience. These response stories occurred from within the gaming or associated community (such as acting) and took a range of forms from blogs to opinion columns.

Alignment and stance refers to the attempt by a teller to influence the audience to their point of view: "Tellers typically seek to achieve this end by means of evaluative comments around and within the story itself which convey their stance toward its characters and content" (2000, p. 116). Norrick notes that tellers clearly identify their stance and motivation in the telling of a story. In journalistic writing, we are familiar with this idea as opinion pieces, but in Gamergate stories, as Norrick has found in conversation, alignment and stance was overtly stated from the outset. The following examples are the first paragraphs of alignment stories:

If you're a person who cares about video games and also happens to care about other people, you should denounce "Gamergate." You might have heard that it's a movement about ethics in video game journalism, but in practice it's a months-long campaign of harassment against women and progressive voices that's just the latest in a long history of online abuse amplified by reactionary right-wing media trolls. (Sottek 2014)

Games aren't very fun these days. As anyone paying even tangential attention to videogames likely knows, the medium is in the throes of a misogynist backlash so virulent it often could be described as terrorism. (Hudson 2014)

The deliberately provocative stances that aligned the writers to a position clearly worked in attracting attention and engagement through the act of sharing. For example, Sottek's article was shared 2093 times via Twitter and attracted 1654 comments, while Hudson's article was shared 3006 times on Facebook and attracted 864 comments (as at date accessed, 2014). We know from conversational storytelling that "conversationalists routinely align themselves through matching their response stories with foregoing ones" (Norrick 2000, p. 125). In Gamergate, this was evident in the way the story was retold. Bloggers and gaming journalists in particular would produce response stories which would in turn prompt further response. We know that the ways in which participants engage in conversational storytelling is closely associated with group membership (Norrick 2000). By engaging in stance-based conversation about Gamergate, journalists and bloggers demonstrated that they belonged to a particular type of community, one based on values – you were either pro-gamergate or anti-gamergate. The dominance of values-based discussion further reflects Kornelius' research (2000), but as Kornelius might have predicted, finding the story was hard for mainstream journalism which was trying to summarise and find a neutral position.

Finally, the retelling of the story was a feature of Gamergate and has arguably contributed to its longevity. Norrick notes that in conversational storytelling, stories can "remain substantially intact from one telling to the next. This suggests that tellers redesign a basic story for the audience present, rather than reconstructing a narrative from the ground up for each new audience" (2000, p. 69). The repeated narrative and sameness of stories about Gamergate became a point for discussion and comment ("Gamergate: Much ado about nothing" 2014), so understanding the reasons for retelling and the way context frames and influences the ways stories are retold is potentially useful for journalists. For example, there's an increasingly strong argument that students need to learn how to integrate digital conversations and make sense of the fragmented in the "narrative as sense-making" form. Ezra Klein, editor-in-chief of Vox Media touched on this when he acknowledged the success of the video "How the Euro caused the Greek crisis" (2015). He noted that Vox readers normally preferred text heavy narratives and 'explainers' but:

...the video has "been watched about 4 million times on Facebook — including, I would guess, by millions of people who don't read Vox and aren't typically interested in detailed explanations of European monetary policy but who, on that particular day, really did feel confused by the news, and so suddenly became our audience. (Klein 2015).

This could be seen as summary long-form journalism that starts the retelling of a story for different audi-

ences.

This article has only just touched on key points to illustrate the potential for understanding how people interact with one another conversationally in relation to an issue. It is relevant because the role journalism plays in an internet-centric media environment has been problematised for over a decade but more questions about practice than answers about how to do journalism effectively remain. What makes the news doesn't happen anymore – it 'emerges', and a journalist's job is now often to catch it quickly as it emerges before anyone else does. While traditional news values based on considerations of news judgement are still relevant, much more is going on. Being able to predict what is going to be 'the story' based on convergent and concurrent conversations about an event or issue (or even non-issue) is a new skill. Martin Hirst, in his analysis of Twitter use in the Arab Spring, acknowledged that journalists often don't know what a story is about until it is on top of them and are influenced by the "bias of convenience" (Hirst 2012). That is, they produce what they have and know. The problem for traditional journalists is that there is a significant risk that once an issue emerges, it may be quickly appropriated by a community and is, therefore, no longer new and newsworthy.

It is also not enough to simply practice convergence and work with data. Data analytics provide only one tool, and practising 'sensor journalism' (Waite 2013) simply results in more data being added to an already huge pile. We don't just need to teach students how to use Twitter; we need to teach students to make sense of Twitter, interact with communities, and anticipate the direction of an issue. We can easily see how many tweets are published against a hashtag, but teaching students about connections, networks, influencers, and how to find and make sense of the news in this environment is also required (see Coddington 2014). Issue mapping in sociocultural contexts, as noted by Burgess and Matamoros-Fernández (2016) may well become a critical skill.

These are all arguments we're familiar with. However, privileging an understanding of conversational storytelling and why/how people interact can help because journalists need to be content-creators as well as conversation facilitators. It is not simply about convergence, moderation and curation, but about genuine understanding of why people seek to engage in public space – creating spaces for interaction, and writing to elicit meaningful response. While we can (and should) argue about what conversation really is, there is much to be learnt from considering conversational storytelling from a theoretical perspective, because it helps us consider what should be privileged in the new media space. This may be finding the new story or finding ways to retell the story in a way that promotes a sense of involvement in the drama. This presents a fundamental challenge for those of us aligned with journalistic traditions founded on notions of independence.

Conclusion

This paper has considered Gamergate as a case study to illustrate the way in which mainstream media were sidelined in public conversation that dominated the media sphere. It also broadly considered the way stories emerged from online conversations, and the way these were retold. The development and interactional pattern may have been predictable if we applied theoretical concepts based on previous conversational work (Kornelius 2000; Norrick 2000), and there is a lesson here for us moving forward. Gamergate demonstrated that mainstream journalism, in attending to issues in a traditional way—trying to find the story and report the story—found itself ultimately disengaged from the story. Mainstream media's attention focused on single significant events, or summarising the conflict to help the disengaged or non-related public 'catch-up' with the issue. We can continue to teach journalism students the traditions of writing, research and reporting, and we can talk about doing convergence but there is also much we can learn from considering theories of interaction learned from orally-based conversational storytelling in the digital era. The alternative is to remain sidelined when a public gets engaged. The challenge is to balance knowledge and skill in practising objectivity with knowledge and skill in interaction and engagement. This will enable future journalists to make sense of, and privilege, appropriate information that seems to come out of nowhere, as was the case with Gamergate. In an increasingly complex communication environment, this will remain an important role.

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Visualising data stories together: Reflections on data journalism education from the Bournemouth University Datalabs Project

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Introduction

More and more journalists are turning to data-driven storytelling techniques as a way to both interpret and communicate news using data. To date, discussions regarding the expanding field of data journalism, and the associated novelty of data storytelling tools and practices, have primarily taken place in industry forums and blogs, rather than in academia.

The earliest forms of data journalism go back to the late 18th and early 19th century reporting on domestic trade, education figures, and mortality rates (Rogers, 2013). With the rise of the computer in the 1950s, data driven journalism or Computer-Assisted Reporting (CAR) as it was referred to, emerged. CAR mainly focused on statistics in answering journalistic question (Lewis, 2015). It wasn't until the 1980s and 1990s that data driven journalism made its way into the newsroom after Pulitzer Prize winning stories paved the way for a wider use and the acceptance of data journalistic techniques (Coddington, 2015). Today, innovation in data journalism predominantly takes place in the newsrooms of the Guardian, the BBC, the New York Times and the Washington Post. Due to the costs of doing high quality, innovative data journalism, these well-funded newsrooms continue to lead the way.

Offering a useful summary of recent developments in data journalism education, Hewett (2016) argues that higher education institutions have been slow to incorporate digital training and the rise of data journalism into their curricula. While industry publications are calling for these skills, as outlined in reports by Nieman Lab, Journalism.co.uk and PBS MediaShift, the formal adoption of such pedagogy remains limited in both the US and the UK. Filling the gap in professional knowledge bases, projects including the Data Journalism Handbook (<http://datajournalismhandbook.org/1.0/en/>) and the Data Driven Journalism website (<http://datadrivenjournalism.net/>) offer open educational resources for self-directed learning (Hewett 2016).

Yet these online tools alone cannot, and should not, take the place of enhancing the journalism education offered in Higher Education. Addressing the "constraints and influences faced by journalism education in teaching data journalism" Hewett (2016) summarises the particular interdisciplinary challenge that data journalism faces:

The development of data journalism education may be impacted more profoundly and/or immediately than other areas of journalism education because of its interaction with other fields – notably statistics, computing, data science and visualization. For 'mainstream' journalism education, these may be an optional extra; for data journalism, they relate to its core functions (p.3).

As news rooms become increasingly interdisciplinary, so too must journalism education. Research in major newsrooms conducted by Weber and Rall (2012) emphasised this significance of knowledge exchange and skill sharing across disciplines as journalists, designers and programmers collaborate.

In order to embrace collaboration and begin to address the interdisciplinary challenges facing data journalism education, in January 2015 we established the Bournemouth University Datalabs project. The aim of the project was to develop a sustainable, iterative model for co-creating a curriculum on data storytelling

for journalism education. To accomplish this aim, we brought together a multidisciplinary, cross-faculty team of researchers and students that worked in collaboration with journalists and external stakeholders. We combined expertise from journalism studies, media and communications, geography, computer science and data analytics to identify and problem-solve key issues in data storytelling, particularly around questions of data gathering, analysis and visualisation.

Using an action research approach (Greenwood and Levin 2007), we designed a programme of activities that could work across existing knowledges to co-create “the ground for new learning for all participants” (p.107). The activities were organised around key problems in the field as they are encountered through the data storytelling process: data gathering and cleaning, analysis and visualisation, including geographical and social network mapping. In the workshop space, as well as afterwards through survey responses and recorded team reflections, knowledge generation arose out of participants’ “conscious attempts to solve practical problems” (p.108). This active research approach enabled journalism students to work alongside researchers, professional journalists and NGOs to explore the possibilities and challenges associated with the communicative power of visualisations, maps and related interactive digital media for telling data stories on sensitive subjects of societal importance, such as policing, crisis, migration and human rights.

In this article we briefly reflect on current educational and professional challenges facing the emergent area of data storytelling and offer a pragmatic, reflective analysis of our Datalabs project. Covering the opportunities and obstacles our participatory workshop model provides, we share some key insights that arose out of our collaborations toward building interdisciplinary journalism education. We conclude by exploring how this model can be utilised by other universities and organisations in order to encourage the growth of data journalism within journalism education and training.

The Challenges of Data Storytelling in Journalism

With the recent growth of open data and big data, it has become more important for journalists to understand and access the datasets made available by governments and organisations in order to use this newfound commitment to transparency as a way of holding power to account. Likewise, Freedom of Information laws have created new opportunities for journalists to access data (Bowles et al 2014). However, datasets are often large, messy or complex, making it difficult to interpret and analyse in order to find the stories that matter. This is one of the key challenges that face the growing field of data journalism. Paul Bradshaw (2015) discusses how the rise of such novel practices, including “networked and interdisciplinary modes of collaboration; global publication; an increased reliance on visual communication; and new forms of user-driven storytelling using interactivity and/or personalisation” bring up new conflicts between ethical principles (p.203). Proactive principles of seeking truthful and accurate information must be balanced with restraining principles related to privacy, protecting sources and accountability.

Echoing some of these concerns, with big data particularly in mind, Boyd and Crawford (2012) stress the importance of signalling that big data is not always better data. Issues of accuracy and claims to objectivity can be misleading. Indeed, journalists’ fraught relationship with statistics is both longstanding and well documented, and reflects “a vast misunderstanding, underestimation and ignorance of the nature and the role of statistics in daily news work” (Nguyen and Lugo-Ocando, 2016 p. 4). Despite this, statistical analysis rarely forms part of any journalism programmes, neither in Higher Education nor within professional training courses. That is, ensuring journalists move beyond use of statistics as a rhetorical device (McConway, 2016), to developing “a permanent determination to question data and a basic level of statistical reasoning” (Nguyen and Lugo-Ocando, 2016 p. 5) in new and innovative ways (Hewett, 2016).

Likewise, in their comparative assessment of data journalism education across six European countries, Splendore et al (2016) concluded that future journalism training in Higher Education should provide knowledge and skill acquisition around issues of transparency, accountability and journalism ethics. This new terrain of data journalism creates new challenges for journalism educators who must make extra effort to balance how we teach on issues of transparency, accuracy and stylised storytelling in data-driven reporting and visualisation.

Challenges to Gathering Data

While open data initiatives have led to a proliferation of what kinds of stories people can tell with data,

sensitive issues often have no straightforward data source. Where documents are available, they are often scattered across agencies and organisations. Moreover, data on sensitive topics is often kept hidden, deemed too confidential to be made open. This ‘uneven transparency’ raises important questions about the duty to document (Larsen and Walby 2012), particularly in regard to security issues where obtaining health and human rights information on vulnerable populations (for example prisoners, detainees, or those living in conflict zones) becomes difficult, trumped by a greater interest in keeping data protected for proclaimed ‘national interests’.

In other cases, data is simply not recorded or not recorded in any structured way. Efforts in recent years to aggregate police killings in the United States are one prominent example of how data can be effectively crowd-sourced. For this project information was mined from public media and police reports, then verified through online and offline sources by journalists on the Guardian’s ‘The Counted’ project, in efforts to create an interactive dataset (Gray et al 2016). While incomplete and likely dotted with inaccuracies, in such cases some data is better than no data (or no disclosed data). The participatory process of collecting this data, and then curating it through visualisation in a way that was both emotional and user-friendly, engaged a diversity of readers, including campaign groups like Black Lives Matters, and public health researchers at Harvard, who called for police killings to be deemed a public epidemic. Such citizen generated and civil society data can be used as an advocacy tool, putting pressure on organisations and governments to establish better public data protocols, and at times, shape new practices and policies (Gray et al 2016).

Challenges to Visualising Data

Employing visual narratives, interactives and maps can help vitalise complex data sets. Research has found that visualising data can help audiences process complex information and enables them to make comparisons, while personalisation aids engagement and connection with the issue (Green and Myers 2010). Research in this emergent area has pointed to the importance of bringing narrative and rhetorical skills into data visualisation practices (Hullman and Diakopolous 2011), as well as to the need for data visualisations to be well contextualised and situated in broader articles (Kosara and MacKinley 2013). Delineating types of visualisations and testing their success on readers, Segel and Heer (2010) have called for more research into reader engagement, noting the promise of eye-tracking studies and monitoring user interaction with data visualisations.

Recent work by Helen Kennedy and the Seeing Data team (visualisingdata.com) is paving the way toward audience studies of data visualisation. Combining focus groups that used Talking Mats with visualisation diaries, the Seeing Data team found that statistical and language literacies, confidence, available time, previously held opinions and the source of visualisations all effected how people see data (Kennedy et al 2015). Echoing previous research (Segel and Heer 2010, Hullman and Diakopolous 2011), the Seeing Data team highlighted the importance for data visualisation design to convey emotion, trust and well thought out user-experience (Kirk et al 2016). Such research on reception studies can usefully inform data journalism pedagogy and professional practice.

Just as research on data visualisations remains sparse, there is also a gap in the literature on cartography in the media. The use of static and interactive maps in journalism is proliferating, yet research on cartography remains almost exclusively within the field of geography. Little contemporary work has been published examining connections between cartographic practice and their connection to media audiences or journalism education (Churchill and Stege 2006, Demirci and Zeliha 2015). This means that while maps are proliferating in the news, there is currently a lack of journalistic education on how power inequalities can get embedded and reproduced through these visualisations. As Doug Specht (2015) writes, “there has been much research into the modes of knowledge construction through geographical and cartographic artefacts, and much of this points to classical linear constructions of knowledge by experts that is then imposed upon the other” (Specht 2015, p. 236). To understand maps from a critical perspective it is important to learn about how spatial knowledge and geographic information is codified and symbolised (visually represented). Yet the historic links between cartography, colonisation, military invasion and Western Imperialism rarely comprise part of journalism or data journalism education. Incorporating critical cartography into journalism education is a crucial component of enhancing data storytelling and visualisation practice in data journalism.

In relation to digital cartography, online platforms like Google Maps have transformed ways in which people relate to visual representations of geographic space. From Google’s Street View to ArcGIS’s StoryMaps

platform, people are engaging their geographical imaginations to produce personalised visual representations of spaces that matter to them. Likewise, people use RSS feeds and APIs to dynamically draw information from web and social media data sources to create real-time map visualisations and mash-ups (Crampton 2009). Such interactive visualisations are often populated with user-generated or crowd-sourced content, engaging the activity of citizen scientists and citizen journalists. For example, maps that allow a reader to drill down into how issues affect their local area, tap into individuals' curiosity and motivate them to engage more deeply with a story (Wilson 2011). These practices open up new opportunities for civic authorship and challenge the idea of cartography as fixed, objective and authoritative (Dodge and Kitchen 2013). Yet, without journalism education that incorporates critical cartography, all this digital map-making runs the risk of reproducing unequal and marginalising power relationships.

This increased emphasis on mapping and visualising data has brought with it the need to pay more attention to the importance of understanding design principles (Segel and Heer 2010). Storytelling with data involves implementing design techniques and expressive practices in order to give data context and meaning in ways that connect to different audiences. Alongside basic principles of graphic design, iconography, colour theory and user experience design must be brought together (Kirk 2012). Researchers have found that as with advertising or the presentation of statistics more broadly, data visualisation has also been found to enhance persuasion, particularly when viewers do not hold strong initial attitudes on a subject (Pandey et al 2014). This is an important area of consideration for journalists.

In contrast to more traditional areas where data visualisations are used, such as economics or scientific visualisation where graphics are intended for highly trained audiences (Gershon et al 2001), in news journalism visualisations are targeted at wider publics. This means that visuals must communicate complex information to everyday audiences that often do not have specialist expertise in these areas. News audiences come with differing types and levels of personal skills, education, and tastes that journalists need to accommodate in their production of data visualisations. For these reasons, Hullman and Diakopoulos (2011) call for an increased responsibility for designers to consider how visualisation choices can manipulate user interpretations.

Challenges to Skill Development

In addition to the specific challenges of gathering and visualising data, like the introduction of any new skills in a newsroom, visualising data requires time and resources. While we have seen a rise in the number of free and user-friendly software tools, handbooks and online resources in recent years, financial and time pressures facing both newsrooms and the education sector make it difficult to integrate these new techniques and tools into everyday practices and routines (Hewett 2016, Splendore et al 2015). Moreover, unless a news organisation is already aware of new technologies in the field of data journalism, they are unlikely to be able to access this software and training material in the first place. Traditional structures for journalism training and funding often prohibit exposure to or adoption of new technologies and practices.

The Bournemouth University Datalabs Project

Addressing this emergent field of data storytelling and its importance to the future of journalism education, the aims of the Bournemouth University Datalabs project were to:

Bring together a multidisciplinary, cross-faculty team of media, data science and GIS researchers and students to work in collaboration with journalists and digital designers.

Establish a sustainable training model for data literacy, data-driven research and data storytelling.

Co-create resources and output targeted at journalists to maximise impact.

Our team at Bournemouth University worked with our NGOs, journalists and digital designer stakeholder partners to run hands-on data aggregation, visualisation and digital storytelling workshops designed specifically for addressing civic and humanitarian issues. The BU team comprised of:

Dr Anna Feigenbaum, PI (Senior Lecturer in Digital Storytelling)

Dr Einar Thorsen, CI (Principal Lecturer in Journalism and Communication)

Dr Phillipa Gillingham, CI (Senior Lecturer in Biogeography)

Dr Shelley Thompson (Senior Lecturer in Corporate and Marketing Communications)

Dr Dan Jackson (Principal Lecturer in Corporate and Marketing Communications)

Dr Nathan Farrell (Lecturer in Communication and Media)

Dr Hamid Bouchachia (Associate Professor, School of Design, Engineering and Computing)

Dr Brad Gyori (Senior Lecturer in Digital Storytelling)

Oz Demirkol (Senior Research Assistant)

Daniel Weissmann (Senior Research Assistant)

Laura McKenna (Research Assistant)

Alongside the interdisciplinary team at BU we worked with:





CVG Design - a New York based Graphic Designer specialising in community art as urban intervention.







Jay Cassano - an independent journalist covering the intersection of technology and politics.

Julio Molina Montenegro - an award-winning filmmaker with over ten years of international experience in the fields of documentary, sound recording, post-production and media technology.

Our Partner Organisations

Coordinated by John Horne, a doctoral candidate at Birmingham University and organiser at the NGO Bahrain Watch, our diverse stakeholder partners came from journalism organisations, digital design teams and human rights NGOs.

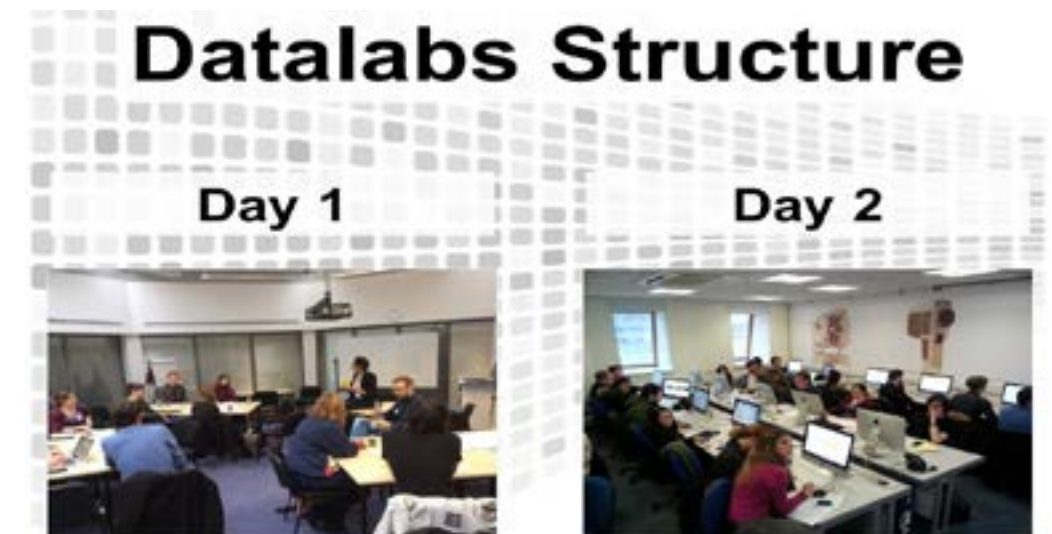
	BAGGAGE	Brixton based community initiative monitoring neighbourhood gentrification and housing struggles.
	Bahrain Watch	An independent organisation that seeks to promote democracy, equality and social justice in Bahrain, through evidence-based research investigations and advocacy.
	Bureau of Investigative Journalism	Research, investigations, reporting and analysis which is of public benefit by undertaking in depth research into the governance of public, private and third sector organisations and their influence.
	Campaign Against Arms Trade	UK-based organisation working to end the international arms trade.

	Corporate Watch	Independent research group, investigating the social and environmental impacts of corporations and corporate power.
	Corruption Watch	An investigative organisation that details and exposes instances of corruption and their subjective and objective impact on democracy, human rights and development across the world in order to precipitate strong action against it.
	IRIN News	Independent news agency delivering unique, authoritative and independent reporting from the frontlines of crises to inspire and mobilise a more effective humanitarian response.
	Minute Works	A multidisciplinary graphic design studio specialising in sustainable communications.
	Occupy Design	UK collective set up as part of the Occupy movement in London in 2011. Organises workshops and the production of visuals for, and with, a number of grassroots social movements. Crisis graphics for crisis times!
	Omega Research Foundation	Non-profit research foundation providing rigorous, objective, evidence-based research on the manufacture, trade in, use of, military, security and police (MSP) technologies.
	Reported.ly	A global team of journalists covering stories of international importance through social media and citizen networks with a focus on social movements, civil rights, conflict and human rights.

	Small Media	An action lab helping the free flow of information and creative expression in closed societies, with training, technology and research initiatives that focus in Iran
	Tactical Technology Collective	Non-profit organisation, working since 2003 to advance the use of information and digital technologies by advocates and activists worldwide.
	Tear Gas Research Connection	Research project bringing together existing knowledge around tear gas and the impacts less lethals have on people and their lived environments. Working with international researchers, NGOs, journalists and tactical technologists, we contribute to news reports, public debate and policy-making on the safety and social impacts of tear gas technologies.

Original Datalabs Workshops

As a team, the first set of workshops we hosted were three 'Datalabs' on-site at Bournemouth University. Each Datalab ran for two days, consisting of an interactive masterclass and a discussion-based workshop on Day 1, followed by a guided computer lab session on the afternoon of Day 1 and into Day 2. During these lab sessions, students, staff and external stakeholders worked on live datasets using free and open source software for data analysis and storytelling.



Data Scraping and Cleaning – Monday March 16 and Tuesday March 17, 2015

This masterclass and workshop introduced participants to tools and techniques for scraping data from the web. We went over how you format and organise data in spreadsheets. Discussing basic methods for data storytelling, the workshop provided training in how to find data stories within datasets.

Datasets: TheyWorkForYou.com data on MP profiles

Tools: import.io & openRefine



Data Visualisation with Mapping – Monday April 27 and Tuesday April 28, 2015

This masterclass and workshop introduced participants to a variety of mapping techniques and technologies. Offering a beginner lesson in the principles of GIS, participants learned how to work with base maps, data layers and symbolizing to present spatial representations of data. On Day 2, participants were introduced to social network mapping, using Twitter APIs to map the use of hashtags.

Datasets: UK Parliamentary Constituencies

Tools: QGIS & CartoDB



Digital Storytelling with Data – Thursday May 14 and Friday May 15, 2015

In this masterclass and workshop session we introduced participants to the emerging interdisciplinary field of data storytelling. We explored different forms of digital narratives and discussed the principles behind storytelling with data for diverse audiences. In the workshop session we reflected on the ethical questions that come with turning numbers in narratives. Following this we delivered a hands-on lab session digging for stories in a data set that could be visualised using the tools we had introduced at the first two Datalab sessions.

Articles

Datasets: MP travel to MENA region

Tools: import.io, openRefine, CartoDB

Subsequent Datalabs Activities

Drawing on our experiences with our initial Bournemouth-based Datalabs workshops, we then hosted a series of events both at Bournemouth University and in London. These events were designed around the project aims, bringing together a wider network of partners from the local and national community.

Mapping for Justice

2 June 2015, with Richmond, American University in London

In this public showcase and discussion, we explored how investigative reporting on a wide variety of social issues, from drone strikes to council house evictions, can use mapping and GIS techniques to tell data-driven stories. From oral history to Twitter data-mining, our featured mapmakers use a range of methods to make social issues visible. We discussed how - whether made with paper and pen, or on open source digital platforms - maps can reach broad audiences and engage with people's geographic imaginations. Attended by 80 people, this public engagement event was co-hosted with Richmond the American International University in London.

Turning Numbers into Narratives: An introduction to digital storytelling with data

14 May 2015, Interdisciplinary Research Week, Bournemouth University

In this masterclass, we introduced participants to the emerging interdisciplinary field of data storytelling. Drawing on a range of contemporary examples from documentary journalism, we presented a variety of digital narrative structures that can be used to tell stories with data. Guest speaker Malachy Brown from reported.ly, who use social media to report on human rights and social justice around the world, discussed how journalists can use social media tools to conduct investigative research and find news beyond the mainstream. With over 50 participants from across all faculties of the university, as well as outside, our event drew together insights from the fields of communications, journalism, geography, psychology and data science.

Data Storytelling Workshop

12 November 2015, ESRC Festival of Social Science, Boscombe

In this masterclass and workshop, we introduced participants to the data collection tools and methods of data storytelling. Using a dataset from migrant crisis case, we discussed the differences of good and bad data, inaccuracies in data recording and other problems journalists face while working with data. After presentations on narrative structures and character creation, drawing from the same example, participants were given different migrant crisis actors and asked to work in teams to write a story. With the participation of 25 professionals from NGOs, academia and local councils, we wrapped up by discussing the challenges and strategies in pulling together data from Web.



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BU Datalabs Training - Policing and Human Rights

13 January 2016, Centre for Excellence in Media Practice, Bournemouth University

In this training workshop, we introduced undergraduate and postgraduate journalism and politics students to the ways of finding relevant and accurate data on policing and human rights through the use of advanced Google searching. We then provided training in how to navigate published FOI requests and their provided documentation for producing data-driven stories. At the workshop we also covered some of the pitfalls of data collection in sensitive areas, such as policing and human rights, in relation to how the reliability of data and challenges of working with unstructured vs structured data.

BU Datalabs Hackday - Policing and Human Rights

9 February 2016, Journalism School, Bournemouth University

At this hackday students who attended the training session put their new skills to work, producing a report commissioned by the Council of Europe. During the hackday we investigated reports on member states of the Council of Europe between 2006 and 2016, digging into human rights investigations on the excessive use of tear gas on peaceful and civilian protesters. Our final report detailed key findings regarding human rights concerns, deaths and injuries related to tear gas, and the lack of adequate and transparent data recorded on police use of force. Recommendations made in this report, with our stakeholder partner Omega Research Foundation, were subsequently adopted by the Council of Europe.

Creating the Datalabs Format

We designed our datalabs activities to adopt the principles of a hackerspace and of an open-space learning environment. Combining the collaborative, problem-based dimension of a hackerspace with a lab-based learning format, our workshops offer participants hands-on experience and insight into applied use of data storytelling tools and techniques. After the workshops we solicited feedback from participants using survey monkey. Facilitators held a de-briefing meeting where oral feedback on the events was recorded through minute taking. We also followed up with our stakeholder partners, receiving updates on their uptake and use of data journalism techniques and technologies in their storytelling practices.

Datalab as Hackerspace

Traditional hackerspaces were first established in Germany in the late 1980s as “places in the community where local programmers can collectively meet, work, and share infrastructure” (Borland 2007). Based around a community of programmers with an interest in developing their computer skills, these hackerspaces were relatively homogenous, drawing together people with similar backgrounds and experiences (Cavalanti 2013). This shared work culture and background among participants created a high creative output as the programmers could work creatively with a community of complementary skill sets, mind-sets and languages, to co-create and learn from each other. With the hackerspace in mind, we first brought our partners and participants together to present the tools we would be using in the hackerspace format the following day.

However, unlike a hackerspace, where participants typically have a similar proficiency and experience with digital communications technologies, our Datalabs aimed to accommodate a broader range of abilities and backgrounds. With participants coming from journalism, geography and data science, skillsets and vocabularies were highly varied. This meant utilising scaffolded tool training (Hmelo-Silver et al., 2007), in which we took participants on a step-by-step guided lesson in how to use data gathering and visualisation tools at the beginning of every workshop.

Challenges & Opportunities

McLoughlin and Lee (2008) argue that during interdisciplinary workshops: “learning focused on knowledge creation and networking, offers the potential for transformational shifts in teaching and learning practices, whereby learners can access peers, experts, the wider community, and digital media in ways that enable reflective, self-directed learning” (2008 p19). This aspect of a transformational shift in learning practices was evident as we had to guide our partners and stakeholders not only on the same technical skill level in relation to computer programming and computer literacy, but also to a shared understanding of the language and vocabulary used across fields of digital media, GIS and data science. Even seemingly basic terms are prescribed different meanings across these approaches to working with data. For our partners and stakeholders to communicate effectively within our interdisciplinary workshop environment, shared definitions and understandings were key. Although it comes with challenges, this focus on knowledge co-creation and networking is facilitated by personalisation, participation and productivity (McLoughlin and Lee 2008).

There is personalisation in the form of learner choice, learner agency and customization. The open-space aspect of Datalabs provided these features, particularly during the day two sessions where participants could work autonomously, or in self-selected groups, on their own datasets.

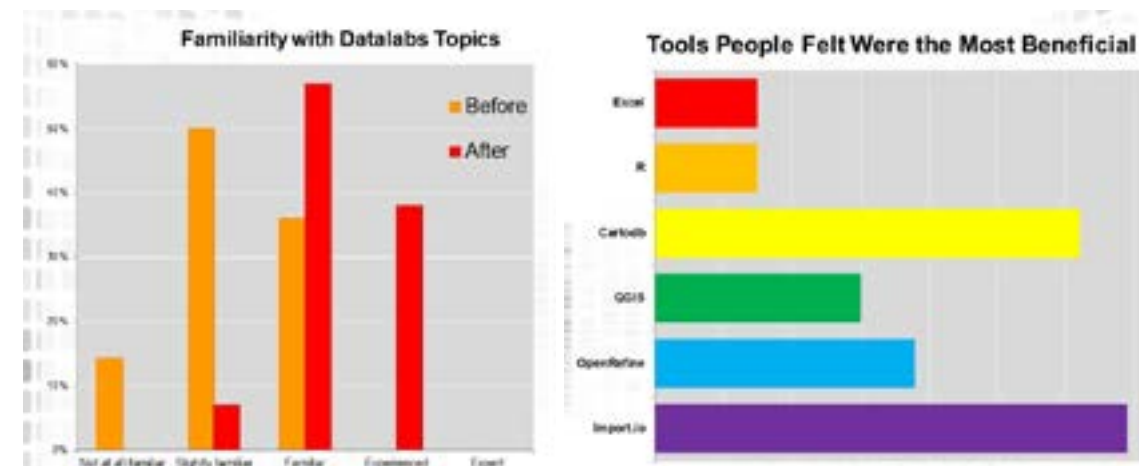
Furthermore, autonomy did not hinder participation. As there was no instruction on the second day, Datalabs’ participants encouraged communication and collaboration. This autonomous, hackerlab style time and space, encouraged partners and stakeholders to test and apply their knowledge and skills gained during the scaffolding learning sessions. Here they moved beyond using the provided sample datasets to generate and experiment with their own datasets (or indeed generating new ones) both individually and in collaboration with other Datalabs participants.

McLoughlin and Lee (2008) also emphasise that the purpose of this approach to pedagogy “is to enable self-direction, knowledge building, and learner control by providing options and choice while still supplying the necessary structure and scaffolding”. As the community “spend[s] time together, they typically share information, insight, and advice. They help each other solve problems. They discuss their situation, their aspirations, and their needs. They ponder common issues, explore ideas, and act as sounding boards.” (Wenger et al., 2002 p4).

This description by Wenger (2002) was reflected in our experience during the self-directed, open-space learning during day two of Datalabs. Overall, and as evidenced in participant feedback, we found that although the mixed format of scaffolded learning on day one plus open-space learning on day two seemed quite challenging at the beginning, once participants became comfortable with the format, the blend of taught and autonomous lab sessions worked well.

Feedback from our Datalabs participants showed that most people’s familiarity with the tools and concepts taught during the workshops increased substantially, with most participants becoming familiar or experienced by the end of their sessions (below left).

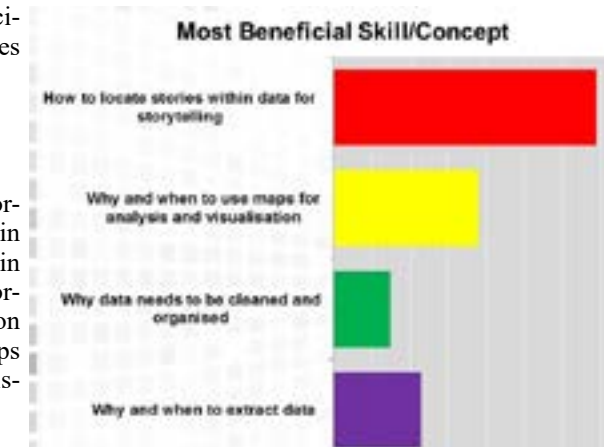
In terms of the tools participants found CartoDB and Import.io most beneficial (below right).

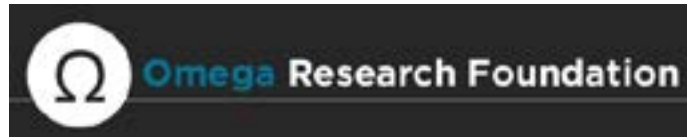


Whereas, in terms of concepts and skills participants found it most beneficial how to locate stories within data for storytelling (right).

Stakeholder Output

Our stakeholders’ output varied as different organisations have different needs and resources in terms of adopting tools and techniques covered in the Datalabs. Here we want to highlight two organisations that stand out in terms of building on the knowledge gained in the Datalabs workshops and applying these skills to better illustrate the issues they are concerned with.





Omega Research Foundation

Omega's focus is on the manufacture, trade and use of military, security and police technology. They work with news feeds, arms expo data and trade data. This made tools such as Import.io for data extraction and Open Refine for cleaning datasets, most beneficial for them. By adopting these tools, they are now pulling data from exhibition lists and RSS newsfeeds, and comparing datasets from different sources. This has allowed them to create more responsive blog posts and press commentaries that can follow the news in real-time. For example, using StorymapJS, Omega aggregated stories on use of force in the Occupied Territories during an escalation of conflicts in September-October 2015. Using geo-location and photography to construct a narrative of force escalation, the storymap brought the feel of force escalation to life.



IRIN News

A humanitarian news organisation, IRIN focuses mainly on crises and humanitarian catastrophes. Although having made use of tools for extracting and cleaning datasets which were part of the early Datalabs session, IRIN primarily uses existing statistics from humanitarian organisations. Their primary aim is however, to narrate and contextualise data, embedding visual and interactive elements into their stories. This helps build audience engagement with what they are reporting. Therefore, tools such as CartoDB and Tableau were most suitable to capitalise on visualisation and narrative aspect of data storytelling.

Since our Datalabs workshops, IRIN has increased its use of data visualisation and data-driven storytelling. Using data provided by the World Health Organisation, IRIN News was able to create a map indicating regions and countries where the Zika virus is being transmitted and those where the outbreak is over. In addition, using data provided by Nature, IRIN News was also able to create a map that shows the spread of the Aedes aegypti mosquito, the mosquito responsible for transmitting the Zika virus. The use of these mapping tools allowed IRIN to link two different data sets, that of the Zika virus outbreak and that of the spread of the Aedes aegypti mosquito.



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Key Insights

Creating visualisations and stories with data comes with a number of challenges. Throughout our experience with the Datalabs project, we aimed to confront, explore and address these challenges, leading to crucial insights into both how we think about data storytelling, as well as how we put it into practice together. Below we highlight four areas that emerged from our work with Datalabs that warrant further consideration in relation to data storytelling - either within the context of journalism education or practical application within industry.

Different Tools for Different Stages

Teaching tools and techniques does not only mean training people in the use of each individual tool, but also, helping people understand how these tools are used in combination with each other along the process of data-driven storytelling. Different stages of the data storytelling process require different tools. Sometimes there is a linear flow—from scraping and cleaning to visualising—but other times you must return to your dataset and dig for new stories or angles. This requires a flexible approach to the use of different tools at different stages, as well as the ability to identify which tool or technique is most appropriate for the data available.

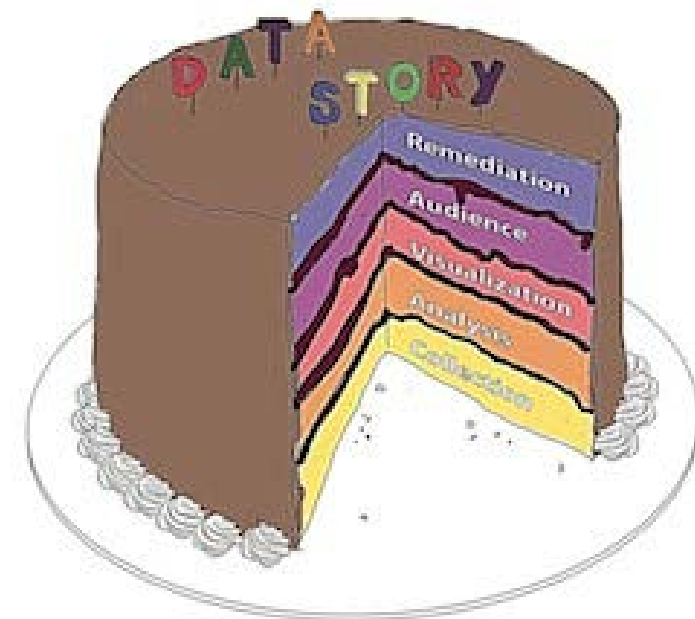
Choosing the Right Type of Visualisation

Different data stories require different visual languages and storytelling techniques. Not every dataset can be or should be visualised into a map just because it has geo-locations in it. Nor does a good visualisation necessarily have to be digital. Analogue visualisations can be just as powerful as digital ones, if not more so (Cohen 2015, Rivas 2015). The challenge is not only to be able to use the tools proficiently, but also to know when to use which tools and what its limitations are for the story you are trying to tell.

One of the most significant challenges in data-driven storytelling is sequential and cumulative distortion. In every stage of the data storytelling process, from gathering information to circulating a visualisation on social media, distortion almost inevitably comes into play. This might arise from missing data, mis-recorded data, or information displayed out of context. It can happen when designs exaggerate representative symbols, for example the sizes of bubbles or the scale of bars. Distortion might also occur in the analysis, where subject positions shape the interpretation of findings and this becomes codified in the data story.

Distorted data

In the process of our project we began to imagine this problem as a layer cake. Each stage of the data storytelling process can add these new layers of distortion. While from a storytelling and design perspective, the motivation can be to frost the cake beautifully, covering over crumbs and smoothing out surface. But



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ethics and responsible practice demand that while we want to make the cake as presentable as possible, we should not be afraid to reveal the layers inside. It is only by slicing the cake open for our audiences, and providing them with the recipe, that we can foster a transparent and accountable culture of data storytelling.

Visualising Sensitive Subjects

In addition to these data challenges, working with data that deals with human rights abuses, corruption, torture and crisis, provides important insights into the particular challenges that telling data stories about sensitive subjects brings. For these sensitive issues, in which the subjects represented already face difficulty in having their voices heard and experiences shared, digital storytelling comes with additional risks. When working with charts, maps, iconography and pictograms, it is particularly challenging to represent and visualise complex issues like death, torture or suffering in a way that is both accurate and ethical. When giving visual narrative to such sensitive topics, it is crucial to approach visualisation design with respect for those affected, to protect privacy when necessary, and to avoid turning victims into numbers in ways that lose their humanity.

Conclusion

While steps have been taken in recent years to build data journalism curriculum, there remains a need for more reflection on how best to teach data storytelling skills and technologies diverse journalism education environments (Hewett 2016, Splendore et al 2015). Within this article we have sought to outline our experiences of developing an interdisciplinary model, alongside external stakeholders and journalism students, to co-create data storytelling curriculum for journalism education. Our aim has been to illustrate both the pedagogical goals and practical considerations to their implementation, so as to illustrate how such a model could be adapted by other universities and organisations in order to encourage the growth of data journalism within journalism education and training.

At the heart of developing data journalism education is the task of balancing truth, accuracy and transparency with engaging storytelling for news audiences. It is crucial that we educate next generation journalists not just to tell data stories, but to tell them responsibly. In other words, to encourage journalists and journalism educators not to just serve the cake, but to serve the cake sliced open. To mitigate distortion, we advocate transparency around data storytelling processes and data sources. Where it does not unduly jeopardise privacy, publishing a guide to your process of data storytelling, along with the raw datasets used, is good practice and helps the data storytelling community reflect and grow. Readers should be able to see what goes into the data storytelling process. This includes notes on your sources (collection), transparency about limitations on what the data covers and a reflection on any assumptions that you made about data validity, calculations and correlations (interpretation), as well as notes on how design and usability choices have influenced the presentation of data (visualisation).

This ‘slicing open’ is not meant to predetermine audience interpretations, but rather should be seen as a virtue of data-driven storytelling. To further capitalise on the potential for different audience interpretations, source data can be made available in ways that encourage people to create their own visualisations and analyses. Taking personalisation and drilling-down further, readers are able to mash-up and manipulate original data. These user practices can create further insights and initiatives. The question then, is how to best celebrate these of forms of remediation, while mitigating the pitfalls of distortion? One potential solution for this would be to encourage users to display the same transparency and caveats in their re-mediations as are included in the source material. Such a system would be akin to, or potentially even utilise, creative commons attribution licences.

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Where's George Bush? University students weather the trauma storm of Hurricane Katrina

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Abstract

Even hardened journalists can experience psychological strains when covering harrowing news stories of conflict, disaster and human suffering. Over the past 10 years, the incidence of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in war correspondents has been well documented and awareness among mainstream news organisations of the dangers to mental health posed by prolonged exposure to such reporting has risen. But how does a group of student journalists – the next generation of news professionals - cope under pressure when confronted with a realistic role-play scenario depicting the chaos and personal trauma of a natural disaster? And what are the implications for the learning and teaching of the core skills of journalism and story telling? This paper, based on observation and questioning of a cohort of postgraduate journalism students taking part in a complex exercise built around the 2005 Hurricane Katrina catastrophe, explores two main areas: firstly, the personal experience of students interviewing actors portraying victims and survivors of the hurricane; and secondly their practice

of journalism when confronted with interview subjects themselves displaying symptoms of distress. The exploration is complemented by an analysis of the multi-media reporting produced by students taking part in the exercise, assessing the extent to which journalism's objectivity norm is upheld under pressure and the way in which the students frame reporting of the Hurricane Katrina disaster.

Introduction

It is the instinct of a journalist to show the unvarnished truth of an event; hovering over suffering and snatching portraits of grief, in order to try to convey a story as accurately as possible and get a visceral reaction. There's an old, rather disturbing adage from American TV news; "If it bleeds, it leads". Any feelings of guilt, for asking an intrusive question, or filming someone else's horror, are suppressed until the job is done. Once home, uncomfortable memories are often filed away, not to be laid bare and unpicked. – Sian Williams.

Shania is trembling, huddled in a blanket and has been unable to sleep for days. A gaggle of reporters is crowded around her, pressing their microphones and cameras into her face. She says little until one of the journalists places a comforting hand on her shoulder; biting back the tears, she starts, fitfully, to tell her story, of how the floodwaters surged into her New Orleans home, of how she sought refuge on the porch roof as the torrential rain beat down; and of how her eight-year-old daughter Felicia slipped out of her arms into the rising tide and was lost to the torrent of waters gushing down the street.

Realistic as this may seem, Shania is in fact a professional actor, taking part in a complex recreation of a scene from the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, one of the five deadliest hurricanes to strike the United States, claiming more than 1,800 lives. The reporters are postgraduate students of journalism at Bournemouth University taking part in an exercise to introduce them to reporting on what in the jargon has become known as a "traumatic news event." Over the past 10 years, incidence of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in war correspondents has been well documented and awareness among mainstream news organisations of the dangers to mental health posed by prolonged exposure to such reporting has slowly risen. Most recently, the focus has shifted to those journalists working on social media hubs in newsrooms, the so-called "digital frontline", handling the graphic images that today make up a large proportion of user-generated content. But this article explores a different group of journalists – those who are still students and who represent the next generation of news professionals. How do they cope under pressure when confronted with a realistic role-play scenario depicting the chaos and personal trauma of a cataclysmic natural disaster such as Hurricane Katrina? And what are the implications for the learning and teaching of the core skills of journalism and story telling? The article is based on the observation and questioning of a cohort of 17 postgraduate journalism students¹ and explores two main areas: firstly, the personal experience of the students interviewing actors portraying victims and survivors of the hurricane; and secondly their practice of journalism when confronted with interview subjects displaying symptoms of distress and trauma. The investigation is complemented by an analysis of the multi-media reporting produced by the students taking part in the exercise, assessing the extent to which journalism's objectivity norm is upheld under pressure and the way in which the students frame reporting of the Hurricane Katrina disaster.²

1 The students are part of Bournemouth university's School of Journalism, English & Communication (JEC).

2 The author ran the exercise in conjunction with Gavin Rees, the Director of the Dart Center for Journalism & Trauma in Europe, together with academic staff from the School of Journalism, English &

Still a taboo subject

There is a sense by which talking about trauma is still a taboo subject, not least because of journalists' fear that admitting to their own distress will be interpreted as a sign of weakness in the highly competitive and macho culture of news and will harm their career. As Phillips observes (2014: 47), journalists operate in a field where their news organisations are competing with others and where they themselves are competing with their peers (for the attention of audiences and for the attention of those who can boost their careers). The fear of admitting what could be construed as mental weakness as a journalist was highlighted in a recent survey conducted by Eyewitness Media Hub³ into the dangers of suffering secondary trauma from working with graphic user-generated content in the newsroom (2015). The survey quoted anonymously one social media journalist who said:

"I feel uncomfortable talking about trauma to the management because I don't want to appear as if I am not coping and I don't like to admit I have been changed mentally. I am in a vulnerable place in my career. The bosses say 'impress us, impress us', I feel like I cannot say 'no' to looking at stuff because I want to do well in my career and I can only do that if I say 'yes' to everything. I feel my career would be jeopardised if I raised this with my managers."

In fact, there is nothing that says only foreign correspondents sent to cover wars in distant places or those now working on social media hubs are likely to be exposed to traumatic news stories and material. On the contrary, as Simpson & Coté (2006: 2) point out, almost every journalist, whether working on a local newspaper or for a domestic broadcaster, can expect to interview those caught up in violent or traumatic news stories during the course of a career, including car crashes, child abuse and domestic crime. Put simply, many journalists find violence on their doorstep on their local news beat. And as Sian Williams⁴, the experienced BBC foreign correspondent and news anchor has observed, there is something deeply ingrained in journalism that pushes death and destruction to the top of the news agenda and about the thirst for what she calls 'portraits of grief' (2014).

While the ravages of the Balkan wars during the 1990s put physical safety or "hostile environment" training on the agenda for the larger news organisations, so the news agenda of the past 10 years has set in train a period of reflection on how the media industry should be addressing issues of trauma – from pervasive international conflict (the Arab Spring, Iraq, Syria and the graphic propaganda images of al-Qaeda and ISIS) to the harrowing domestic crimes of sexual abuse (engulfing the Catholic Church worldwide and, in Britain, causing serious questions to be asked at the BBC). The damage that exposure to such story telling can wreak on individual journalists is now well documented, thanks largely to the pioneering work of South African psychologist Anthony Feinstein and the U.S.-based charity the Dart Center for Journalism & Trauma.⁵ Feinstein's first major study of 140 war journalists found that they had significantly more psychiatric difficulties than journalists who did not report on war. In particular, the lifetime prevalence of PTSD was similar to rates reported for combat veterans, while the rate of major depression exceeded that of the general population (Feinstein et al, 2002). Another study found that around one third of journalists questioned had had to announce news of death to family or friends of a victim (Pyeovich et al, 2003). Such investigations have tended to focus on the mental wellbeing of individual journalists or types of journalists affected and has paid less attention to the potential impact of such issues on the editorial decisions journalists make, whether they reflect their own emotions and, in short, on the actual practice of journalism. That role has been filled mainly by the Dart organisation, which has paved the way for training of professional journalists in newsrooms and issued a series of best practice guidelines focusing on how to cover traumatic news. Communication at Bournemouth University.

3 The survey, released on December 10, 2015 at the BBC in London, focuses on user-generated content and its impact on journalists. The survey is based on 122 responses from journalists around the world.

4 Sian Williams is perhaps best known for her time spent hosting BBC television's morning breakfast news magazine from 2001 to 2012 but it was a stint reporting on the Asian tsunami in 2004 and the Kashmir earthquake the year after that prompted her to reflect on her profession.

5 The Dart Center for Journalism & Trauma is a U.S.-based charity housed within the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia University. It functions as a resource for journalists and journalist students addressing two aspects of trauma: how to report well and responsibly on traumatic news and how to cope with stress and pressures stemming from that news. The author of this paper is a trustee of the Dart organisation and chairs its operations in Europe. He has been able to draw on his own experience as a journalist and his work over more than 10 years with Dart.

Devising an exercise for students of journalism

If ever there was a time to introduce trauma awareness into university curricula, it is now. While it can be argued that journalists have always been exposed to trauma by the very nature of covering the catastrophic and disturbing events that make up what we generally regard as news, social media has raised the stakes and brought new risks. On the “digital frontline” journalists are often sifting through a torrent of distressing user-generated images in what used to be considered the safe environment of the newsroom. Graphic footage of terror attacks – most recently on the streets of Paris and Brussels – is becoming all too frequent and civil conflict in Iraq and Syria has brought the suffering of refugees into the heart of Europe. Higher Education can no longer afford to ignore this since increasingly in the United Kingdom, and historically in the United States, entrants into journalism are coming from undergraduate or postgraduate university courses. The days when journalists were hired “off the street” are becoming far less common.

The few surveys that have been conducted show that both in the United Kingdom and the United States there is a clear gap in provision of such training for university students of journalism. A benchmark study conducted by Richards & Rees⁶ focused on the United Kingdom and found across the profession “a striking inattention to questions about the emotional impact of journalists’ work” (2011: 851). Most recently, the Eyewitness Media Hub survey, which focused on the risks posed by user-generated content, concluded (2015):

“Universities are failing, with very few exceptions, to warn their students and employees respectively that they are likely to encounter distressing imagery if they work with eyewitness media. This applies both to older and more recent graduates. We found that universities are not integrating teaching or even awareness raising of vicarious trauma into the postgraduate degree curricula. This lack of attention to vicarious trauma is evident despite increasing awareness within all of the professional sectors examined that the work is often traumatic.”

There is a similar picture in the United States. A study by the University of Maryland’s journalism academics in 2009 found that the vast majority of ‘J-Schools’ surveyed did not offer stand-alone courses on trauma. This, they concluded was all the more shocking after the 1999 Columbine High School massacre, Sept 11 attacks in 2001 and Virginia Tech shootings in 2007:

“In the aftermath of such events, you would think America’s best journalism schools—those that train students for careers in the nation’s top print, broadcast and online newsrooms—would have turned to teach their students how to responsibly cover violence and conflict. You’d be wrong.”

Some 75% of the 106 accredited U.S. journalism programmes did not then teach their students how to cover violence and interview survivors of trauma. The majority of academics surveyed did agree that it was important to cover such issues. But there were two main obstacles: many felt unqualified to teach the material, while some also said they could not shoehorn additional modules into their already tight timetables. The study found that only those faculty members who had worked as journalists themselves felt sufficiently confident to tackle such teaching. A subsequent U.S. survey in 2011 by Weiss found that 93% of the 33 journalism academics who responded said that their department did not offer any form of trauma training for their students. This gap in provision is all the more surprising since those who work for the emergency services, or first responders as they are called in the United States, have long benefited from comprehensive training programmes. Journalists are often on the scene first or at least at the same time as emergency crews so it seems odd that journalism has been left out of the equation.

It was out of these considerations that the idea of a role-play exercise for Bournemouth University journalism students was conceived, a form of problem-based learning that would require the students to make decisions on the run as they would in the real world of news gathering (Burns, 1997: 60). As Meadow’s observes in reflections on education in Australian journalism schools (1997: 100), this prompts students to confront and solve practical problems faced in the reporting of everyday stories.

A first attempt at creating a role-play scenario by the Dart organisation’s Rees and the author of this article has been used several times at Bournemouth University and was based loosely on a growing fear in the UK [following the July 7 bombings](#)⁷ in 2005 that terrorism was about to become a commonplace event on the

6 Bournemouth University’s Prof Barry Richards led an Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC) -funded project entitled Emotions & Journalism to investigate attitudes towards emotional literacy in conjunction with research fellow Gavin Rees, now the director of the Dart organization in Europe.

7 The incident known as 7/7 was a series of suicide bomb attacks on the London underground and a bus during the morning rush hour. 52 people died and more than 700 were injured.

streets of London. In this imaginary scenario, a bomb explodes at a London football game between rivals Chelsea and Arsenal. Chaos ensues and, in the role-play, journalism students are tasked to interview the injured, rescue workers and a security guard (all played by professional actors). As Rees observed in a reflection on this exercise, for many of the journalism students this was, however “unreal”, their first professional encounter with extreme distress (2007: 65). And he concluded that one thing clearly worked: by the end of the exercise, those students who had shown the most emotional “savvy” collected the best material. The aim of the workshops that ran on the football stadium scenario was not to give definitive answers or rules on how to cover trauma. Rather, the aim was to introduce the ideas and allow the journalism students to learn for themselves what worked and what did not work when interviewing victims and survivors of trauma.

But there was something unsatisfying about this first scenario. If anything, although challenging emotionally for the students, the story was too simple: a bomb explodes, there are casualties and – if the right questions are asked of those caught up in the attack – it quickly becomes apparent how the bomb was smuggled into the stadium. Not all the students uncovered the truth, often they were too flustered or simply failed to listen to the clues emerging in their interviews. But as authors of the project, we decided we needed a scenario that was far more complex and afforded a far greater span of emotions.

The opportunity to pursue that came through a chance encounter with a former BBC journalist turned academic, Kate Wright, who had worked on the Hurricane Katrina story as a news producer.⁸ Together with Rees, they crafted a scenario based on her first hand experience in the Houston Astrodome, at first sight bizarre in that it is located some 350 miles away from the scene of the disaster. But in fact 25,000 inhabitants of New Orleans were evacuated to the giant stadium in Houston where conditions quickly became difficult in the extreme. Not only were many of the evacuees suffering from the trauma of the flooding after the levees had burst in New Orleans, there was a spate of scare stories alleging theft, violence and rape at the Houston Astrodome. It is into this emotionally charged scenario that the journalism students are plunged⁹. And instead of there being one simple story (how was the bomb smuggled past security), there are many different strands to pursue, all of them revolving around four main characters with complex backgrounds – Chantelle Green, a 46-year-old New Orleans resident, alone, abandoned and her hard earned home under water; Aaron Jackson, 19, an African American mechanic, often in trouble with the police, he had scraped together money for a car workshop, also now under water; Shania Williams, a 23-year-old African American woman who has lost her child Felicia, aged 8, to the flood waters but managed to rescue her younger daughter Nerese; and finally Nisha Mitra, a young Asian-American woman who used to live in New Orleans and who is working as a volunteer in the Astrodome for an evangelical church movement. Added to this cast of characters is the feckless John Temperley, spokesman for FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency that was so heavily criticised for its slow response to the disaster. The complexity of this scenario is vastly more demanding on the organisers and on the actors, but, as the subsequent analysis shows, it is capable of generating an emotional intensity that can be extremely challenging for students of journalism with little depth of reporting experience.

Part of devising such a complex scenario required a clear understanding of the aims of the exercise and articulation of the learning outcomes. The academic team felt that after completion of the workshop, students should aim to:

Identify a range of responses which traumatised people may exhibit in interview scenarios;

Consider and begin to apply appropriate interviewing strategies according to the needs and reactions of different kinds of interviewees, incorporating active listening techniques;

Evaluate when it might be ethical to terminate an interview, or refrain from using interview material, because of risks to the interviewee’s well-being or legal considerations;

Understand the importance of remembering journalistic norms, such as checking out allegations and/or rumours for veracity, evaluating sources’ reliability, and attributing source statements clearly and accurately, even when under emotional pressure;

Be aware of the need for self-care during, and following, interviews with traumatised people;

Experience, and begin to evaluate, ways of “opening” and “closing” interviews with traumatised people, bearing in mind the need to obtain informed consent from an interviewee; their own personal and professional boundaries; and issues regarding their own and others’ emotional well-being;

8 Dr Kate Wright is a senior lecturer in Journalism & News Media at the University of Roehampton.

9 The scenario is set on September 2, 2005, two days after the first evacuees began arriving in the Houston Astrodome from New Orleans.

Consider some of the reasons why journalists might approach aid workers and officials in crisis or disaster scenarios – as valuable interviewees themselves, and as ways of “fixing” other interviews, or obtaining other kinds of information;

Be able to select interviewing strategies to cope with aid workers and officials which might be different from those which are used with survivors of an incident;

Make sound editorial judgements about the form and content of journalistic pieces based on interviewing experiences and the needs of specific outlets; exhibit a grasp of different kinds of journalistic form (e.g. news stories or human interest pieces) as well as professional practice regarding attribution, selection of quotations, story ordering and factual accuracy;

Show an understanding of mistakes made or difficulties encountered during the exercise and reflect upon ways in which lessons could be learnt from these in future.

While this set of learning outcomes is ambitious, the team felt it was appropriate for postgraduate students and that it was important to have a basis on which to evaluate, and if necessary adapt, the scenario for future use. It was also felt that postgraduate students should be able to engage in a debate about the merits of taking an “objective” or more “engaged” stance towards crisis reporting. Additionally, the academic team was keen to use the exercise to inform the building of a more comprehensive curriculum around trauma and journalism (discussed later in this article).

Logistics - throwing students in at the deep end?

The Hurricane Katrina workshop was played out over two half days during term time. In the first session, the students reported on the scenario, interviewing the characters in turn and covering an impromptu press conference by the FEMA spokesman. They then had four days to produce broadcast news bulletins before the second workshop to evaluate their work and reflect upon their practice. The first question posed to the academic team was whether to throw the students into the deep end (a “sink or swim” strategy) or to brief in full on trauma and journalism before starting the exercise. The team settled on a halfway house, concerned that the students needed to be advised of the potentially distressing material they would be handling. This was based on experience from running the football stadium scenario which, although less complex and more of a “straight” news story, clearly had unsettled some students who took part in it. It was made very clear to the 17-strong cohort of postgraduate students that they could set aside the exercise at any time if they felt distressed. A handful of the students had worked professionally as journalists before, but the vast majority had come onto the course after studying a different discipline at undergraduate level. The 30-minute briefing included basic information about trauma, including the fact that it is normal for journalists to feel disturbed when working on traumatic material. It also couched the workshop and subsequent discussions firmly within the framework of sound journalism practice and how best to report on victims, perpetrators and communities caught up in traumatic news. In the final analysis, the students were told that it was about good, responsible storytelling.

As a prelude, the academic team asked the students to fill out a short pre-workshop questionnaire exploring their ideas about how they might handle such news stories. In their 2011 paper, Richards & Rees drew attention to what they called the talismanic status of objectivity and how emotion was widely viewed in normative journalistic discourse as contaminating objectivity (2011: 863). Clearly, five years on, little has changed if measured by this cohort of students where such attitudes appeared to be deeply ingrained. When asked generally about the main role of news reporting, the majority responded with the need to inform the public, often using words and phrases such as balance, impartiality, objectivity and freedom from bias. When asked more specifically about how they would report on a train crash (as an example of a traumatic news story cited in the survey), the majority felt it would be important to uphold the principles of objectivity and that a journalist should cut him- or herself off from their feelings and be detached. The actual practice of the role-play exercise would prove that this was not quite as easy as it sounded on paper and, in fact, would prove to be counter-productive.

The students were then divided into four news teams and briefed on the basic facts of Hurricane Katrina. As part of this, they were shown a bulletin from the BBC 10 o'clock news on September 1st, the day after the first survivors were evacuated to the Houston Astrodome and the day before that designated for the role-play exercise. By this time in New Orleans the waters had stopped rising but there was a surge in looting and Louisiana's governor Kathleen Blanco called on the White House for help. The BBC's correspondent Matt Frei portrayed in almost apocalyptic terms a city on the brink of collapse. “This place,” Frei said, “looks and

feels like a Hollywood disaster set, but it is very much for real, there are a lot of people on the streets with guns who shouldn't have them.” At one point, the BBC news package shows an inhabitant breaking down in tears as she pleads on camera for President Bush to send in help:

“We need somebody to come into this city to help us, we need the National Guard Mr Bush, please send somebody down here to help us, they're raping babies, raping women, killing people, we got no food no water...”

The BBC report reflects the rising criticism of the American President at the time for failing to visit New Orleans earlier, citing the inhabitants refrain of “where's George Bush?” (he actually arrived the next day), and sets the scene for the evacuation to the Houston Astrodome.

With the background established, and a sense of the magnitude of the disaster portrayed through the BBC News bulletin, the students were divided into four teams, each equipped with cameras, given a reporting task by their “news editor”, one of the academics. Two of the teams were asked to investigate the highly inflammatory quote contained in the BBC report that women and babies were being raped. Did the story stand up? They needed to deliver their own take on it. The other two teams were given a different brief, asked simply to come up with a fresh angle on the story which by this time was moving into its second week.

Learning very quickly on the job

Of course, any such exercise requires what Samuel T Coleridge called the “willing suspension of disbelief.”¹⁰ Needless to say, it is difficult to recreate a superbowl stadium crowded with 25,000 hurricane survivors on a university campus in a corner of southern England. But a cavernous room and a few props (blankets, mattresses and cardboard boxes) helped convince all but a couple of the students to suspend their disbelief and to immerse themselves in the exercise. Each of the teams was accompanied at a distance by an academic tutor or a member of the Dart team – they were close enough to monitor the interviews but had strict instructions not to intervene. Each team then approached one of the four actors and conducted an interview for no longer than 10 minutes. Some of the students were visibly disturbed by what they encountered, with one team clearly apprehensive about even approaching the Aaron character who was displaying aggression and hostility towards those queuing up to interview him. There followed a short debrief with their tutor before they rotated on to interview the next character in the scenario. After the second round of interviews everyone was brought together for a quick check that the tasks were understood. The teams were then plunged into an impromptu press conference (suitably cramped and chaotic) with the FEMA spokesman before moving on to cover their remaining two characters and a final debriefing.

So how did the students cope with the task of interviewing those caught up in a traumatic news event and what were the lessons learnt? And what was the impact on them? What follows is based on the author's observations of the news teams in action, coupled with feedback from the students, the actors and the Dart Center's Rees. This was of course primarily a teaching exercise but in terms of research, the author was able to assess the outcomes against three benchmarks: his own experience as a foreign correspondent and editor with the international news agency Reuters; a growing body of research and best practice guidelines assembled by the Dart organisation; and the surveys conducted by the students before the exercise.

Clearly, in the first interviews the lack of some basic craft skills hampered the teams. Time spent huddled around an interview subject fiddling self-consciously with cameras and tripods, and staring at equipment (and *not* the subject), led to predictable problems – valuable time was lost and the teams found there was little appetite to be interviewed. Each of the teams learnt this lesson quickly, sorting out the technology well ahead of their second sets of interviews and introducing themselves properly to those they were interviewing (the “opening” referred to in the learning outcomes). It is remarkable how quickly the basics can be established in a “live” reporting exercise when the first attempt ends in frustration with little usable material.

But the real learning was to come in the practice and subsequent discussion of interview technique, including the concept of empathy and what is in effect emotional literacy¹¹. Although today the interview is seen

¹⁰ The poet and philosopher Samuel T Coleridge coined the term in 1817. He maintained in his work *Biographia Literaria* that if a writer could inject “human interest and a semblance of truth” into a story, the reader would suspend judgement about its plausibility.

¹¹ Richards (2007: 84) draws a distinction between ‘emotional intelligence’ usually associated with Daniel Goleman's 1995 work of the same name and ‘emotional literacy’ associated with authors such as Susie Orbach (2001) and in Britain with the organization Antidote. While emotional intelligence usually

as core component of modern journalism, it wasn't always so. It was only during the first half of the 20th Century, as the profession of journalism emerged, that a number of practices, techniques and unwritten rules developed. Waisbord lists these as including the inverted pyramid form of writing, bylines, clear attribution of sources, the use of shorthand plus the *interview*¹² (2013: 133). These practices established a norm in Anglo-American journalism that is captured (though often poorly defined) by the word objectivity (Maras, 2013: 5). The interview quickly became an essential tool of the journalist, alongside and complementing the reporter's eyewitness account (Simpson & Coté, 2006: 98). And as part of that transition, ordinary people joined celebrities as subjects of interviews, particularly if they were swept up into suffering through fires, earthquakes, crime and other tragedies (ibid).

Reflecting these norms, the students had generally agreed in their survey responses before the exercise that they needed to uphold principles of objectivity and maintain a detached stance in their interviews. But they swiftly realised that the actual practice of interviewing survivors or victims of trauma might be different. Indeed, this clearly requires a different approach from when prising information from a reluctant politician or holding a tight-lipped government official to account. The students learnt that only by building a rapport with their interview subject could they elicit a response from the characters. They learnt to build an element of trust in a variety of ways, always introducing themselves and their organisation, often kneeling down to be at the same level as the interviewee and asking open questions. Some of the characters, such as Aaron, were, as stated earlier, intimidating at first and the students were visibly shocked and said later how uncomfortable they had felt. Other characters, such as Shania were reluctant to relive for a stranger the story of how her daughter died in the floodwaters. Only those teams who were able to establish an empathic rapport succeeded in breaking through the anger or gaining an insight into the personal grief of the character. For Rees, the concept of objectivity is a clear barrier to interviewing and the perceived tension between detachment and personal feelings is not an "either-or choice". Journalists should realise, he maintains, that an interviewer should not attempt to block out the human connection:

"I think when people start their career they have zero guidance on how to (conduct interviews). And that's partly because of the traditional notions of objectivity are so solid. So a journalist who's entering the career tends to get stuck in this dilemma of, 'Oh my God. What am I going to be? Am I going to be a professional journalist or am I going to be a human being?' As if somehow entering the profession means that you need to cast off a certain kind of empathy¹³, a certain kind of emotional awareness, and become some sort of objective recording machine. But real journalists who are doing this job know that doesn't work. And so they might not have a theory about it but that's not what they do in interview situations, so they tend to be empathic."¹⁴

The exercise was designed explicitly to explore such issues around interview techniques and to tease out some of the ethical questions. This was done in discussion with the students immediately after the exercise, taking in the views of the actors (as those who had been interviewed) as well. One of the key lessons was that witnesses or survivors of trauma may well be in shock and in no fit state to be interviewed. Certainly the character of Shania, as played during this exercise, was deeply distressed and arguably should not have been interviewed or, if so, with extreme sensitivity. The actor portraying Shania said she would only "open up" if she felt the team were treating her with respect and not "sticking a microphone in her face." Sometimes traumatised witnesses can be confused and unreliable, this was certainly the case with those characters talking about the rape story (in fact the scenario was written in a way that *none* of them had witnessed anything directly). Sometimes the smallest gestures helped to establish rapport. Students learnt that they were able to give the survivors a little bit of control back over their lives by allowing them to determine *where* they would be interviewed.¹⁵ Equally, those reporters who displayed empathy and demonstrably showed their ability to listen were often able to build rapport and open up a "better" story. Above all, Rees emphasises the

refers to qualities within individuals, emotional intelligence may have a more relational connotation such, as for example, Antidote engages in with schools. Antidote defines emotional literacy as: "*the practice of interacting with others in ways that build understanding of our own and others' emotions, then using this understanding to inform our actions.*"

12 My italics.

13 Simpson & Coté (2006: 102) define empathy as being the capacity to walk in someone else's shoes and to appreciate what the other person is enduring.

14 In discussion with the author.

15 Typically, someone caught up in such as natural disaster feels they have lost control over their lives, contributing to the sense of distress.

need for emotional literacy in journalists, crucially an awareness of one's own feelings (2007:68):

"Much recent psychological research suggests that the more people are aware of their own emotional processes and responses, the better they are at adapting their behaviour and reading others' emotional states."

Some students missed Shania's story because they were so intent on pursuing their news desk brief that they didn't listen properly and failed to spot the clues in her narrative (she spoke of her two children but said only one was with her. So where was the second one?).

Producing the news bulletin

When it came to converting their interview material into a 90 second broadcast news bulletin, the teams had several days to reflect and construct the final product. As such, there was no deadline pressure, something that could easily be built into a future running of the exercise and would have markedly increased the nervous tension. The students were helped in their production task by being able to incorporate "B-roll" footage from the Associated Press (AP) so long as for copyright reasons it was not posted online into the public domain. None of the teams chose to present to camera and all used a mixture of footage from their own interviews and the AP, introducing their own captions to designate those they had interviewed. Setting aside again some of the craft skills (which included sometimes poor sound quality and lighting), the students showed a sound grasp of journalism and avoided the most obvious trap surrounding the story that there had been widespread cases of rape. The two teams that had been asked to test these rumours decided to their credit that they did not have enough evidence to "stand the story up" as a result of their interviews. The evidence had, at best, been at second hand and based on rumour and hearsay. Instead, the two teams each settled on a more straightforward – and more responsible – angle, reporting on how women had voiced widespread fears for their safety and relaying criticism of the authorities' inability to reassure them. Both stories were, however, presented in a tentative style, reflecting what the students reported as nervousness at challenging the expectations of the news desk. The scenario had been deliberately written to highlight the atmosphere of the time which was rife with rumour and scaremongering. But none of the four main characters, or the FEMA spokesman, had any first hand evidence of such violence. In fact, many of the news reports of the time later proved to be inaccurate or wildly exaggerated and were partly based on emotional television appearances by the New Orleans police chief Eddie Compass. He later conceded that he had heightened fears by repeatedly talking about crime being out of control. With hindsight it was clear that he was under intense professional and personal pressure. He said:

"There were reports of rapes and children being raped. And I even got one report ... that my daughter was raped. In hindsight, I guess I heightened people's fears by me being the superintendent of police, reporting these things that were reported to me...but there was really no way for me to check definitively ... so I repeated these things without being substantiated, and it caused a lot of problems."¹⁶

There were two key lessons for the students here. The first underscored the need to uphold solid reporting of fact rather than be sucked into rumour. The second highlighted the reality that interview subjects suffering from stress and trauma are not always reliable witnesses. The other teams had been asked to seek a fresh angle and recounted stories of personal tragedy, one of them producing a moving piece of radio alongside the television bulletin. There were also stories that were missed, not least plans to close the Houston Astrodome because of overcrowding and to charter cruise ships as alternative temporary accommodation for the evacuees. Nobody picked up on the absurdity of relocating traumatised flood victims on water...

Conclusion

This exercise was borne out of a conviction that more should be done in university journalism education to highlight the need for responsible coverage of traumatic news, both in terms of the impact on those caught up in such events and on the journalists reporting on them. It succeeded in bringing the issues to life for the students and also provided clear pointers to the sort of elements which could in the future make up proper coverage of trauma in a university curriculum.

Although such exercises are clearly not "real" and have limitations, some of the students who took part

16 Cited in the New York Sun newspaper: <http://www.nysun.com/national/police-chief-says-he-exaggerated-post-katrina/38268/> Compass resigned as police chief at the end of September 2005.

in the Hurricane Katrina role-play were taken back by the intensity of the emotions generated. That in turn justified the decision to preface the first day with some caution and a discussion of self-care. When measured against the learning outcomes, the actors succeeded in exposing the student journalists to a wide range of emotions from extreme distress to desperation and anger.¹⁷ For their part, the students realised through the hands-on nature of the exercise that a slavish adherence to the norms of objectivity and distance did not always work and that a more empathic approach was sometimes needed to build a rapport with the interview subject. That in turn generated a better story. Challenging the normative assumptions around detachment and the need to calibrate interview strategies to take account of the emotional state of the subject turned out to be one of the key lessons. There was a common assumption that all the interview subjects, because they were on hand on the day, were actually in a fit state to be interviewed. To their credit, the students posed that question in the debriefing session afterwards which led to a wide-ranging discussion of ethical issues, including, for example, when it might be appropriate to touch a person you are interviewing. Several students did in fact attempt to comfort those they were speaking to by placing a hand on their shoulder, a gesture that in some cases did create a more trusting atmosphere.¹⁸

To what extent then did the Hurricane Katrina exercise point to the possible elements of trauma awareness that might be incorporated into university journalism courses? Judging by the students' reaction, the key to engagement is in prioritising the day-to-day relevance to practice and the actual reporting of news. The exercise suggests that there should be at least five elements to a more comprehensive course, specifically covering issues of journalism practice that are otherwise little discussed in the normal curriculum:

A general awareness of trauma, including the historical context but crucially a basic psychological understanding of the sort of responses traumatised people may show in the aftermath of catastrophic events;

A comprehensive guide on interviewing vulnerable people and victims of trauma, including the building of emotional literacy and means of safeguarding interviewees' mental wellbeing;

Consideration of ethical issues and how the normative values of journalism are likely to be challenged when covering traumatic news stories;

A guide to self-care for journalists, including an awareness of typical symptoms of trauma and ways to reduce risk. This should consider not just those journalists working in the field as reporters but also those handling distressing user-generated content in the newsroom;

A broader, academic reflection on how news organisations cover traumatic news stories, including natural disasters, conflict, terror and the often overlooked areas of crime, sexual abuse and domestic violence.

This list is by no means comprehensive but would provide students with a fully grounded overview of the sort of experiences they will face as actual journalists, enabling them to work more efficiently but also to protect their own mental health. The Bournemouth sessions represented only a step on the road to such a broader-based curriculum. But even those students who had been sceptical at the outset agreed that they had a better understanding of trauma and had gained at least a basic insight into how to interview vulnerable people. And what had started as an exercise in covering trauma, turned out to have been a task that underscored the importance of core journalistic skills and the art of story telling.

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17 The ability of the actors to engage the students in the exercise was key. Poor acting in one run of the football stadium scenario conducted with a previous cohort had undermined the impact of that exercise.

18 In the author's experience there is no simple answer to this question. Sometimes it works, sometimes it does not and each situation has to be assessed on its merits.

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Personal Reflection:

Narrating identities: Journalists and the stories of others

Karen Fowler-Watt

In July I was invited to the Salzburg Academy on Media and Global Change, a three-week seminar where students and faculty gather annually from all over the world at the beautiful Schloss Leopoldskron to work together to create innovative media projects, often collaborating with NGOs and non-profit media organisations. The seminar is an intense experience, which many students (and academics) describe as life-changing: bringing together over 100 students and faculty from the United States, the UK, Middle East, Africa, Far East and Europe.

But what can such an interactive and immersive environment teach us, as journalism educators? In bringing this special edition of Journalism Education to a conclusion, I wanted to reflect briefly on this question and on one of the constant themes that ran through the weeks in Salzburg – how media frames and tells the stories of migration, conflict and suffering that are dominating today's news agenda.

One of the long-serving faculty members at the seminar series, Dr Roman Gerodimos, believes Salzburg's success lies in its openness and the ability to break down cultural barriers:

"While the unique beauty and historical significance of the surroundings play a key role in inspiring participants to engage, imagine and create, it is the mechanics of the continuous, free, open and intensive interaction amongst students and faculty that brings down barriers and promotes intercultural understanding. The curriculum of the Academy combines media and digital literacy, journalism education, global current affairs, history and conflict, human rights, activism and civic engagement, entrepreneurship and production skills."

One of the key factors, he says, is how the curriculum has kept evolving year after year and the amount of energy that is invested throughout the year to make sure that it incorporates and creates space for cutting-edge pedagogy.

"For the faculty, the Academy is a lab and hub of innovative practice and intellectual stimulation," he adds. "For many students it is by far the most diverse, international and open-minded environment they will ever find themselves in. The transformative nature of this experience is reflected in the strength and longevity of the networks and relationships created during the three weeks, which create a ripple effect beyond the lifetime of the Academy."

This year, for the 10th anniversary of the seminar series, the theme was migration: our discussions and workshops were given added resonance by the horror of the Bastille Day attack in Nice, which had taken place only days before we convened. It was a constant point of reference, as students were urged to consider how the media frame stories, how migration is represented in words and pictures, with a focus on storytelling. It started with the students' own stories, encouraging them to embrace the concept of 'civic imagination' and the notion that we can only create a better world if we can first imagine what it might look like.

In quoting J.K. Rowling, Professor Henry Jenkins set the tone in his keynote, saying:

"We do not need magic to change the world. We carry all the power we need inside ourselves already. We have the power to imagine better." (Rowling, quoted by Jenkins, 2016).

In the first few days of the seminar, a knife attack on a Munich train (attributed initially to a migrant) provided a timely reminder of the importance of thinking about how we label people and events and of the power wielded by journalists, of the imperative to tell the stories of others responsibly. I was reminded of a book I read recently, 'Voices from Chernobyl', where the author, the journalist Svetlana Alexievich, took herself out of the narrative, allowing the harrowing stories of the survivors to speak for themselves and, in doing so, relaying powerfully the sense that they had each been transformed by this disaster from 'a normal person' into a 'Chernobyl person' (Alexievich, 2006).

This provided a basis for my own talk, given in the first week of the seminar on a very warm July evening, in the atmospheric Max Reinhardt Library: the title was 'Narrating identities: Journalists and the Stories of Others'. Putting this together, for an audience from diverse backgrounds, also encouraged me to reflect on how we, as journalism educators, teach storytelling. One of my objectives was to encourage the students (postgraduate and doctoral students) to go back to their groups having considered the importance of the interview as an immersive and empathetic experience, rather than an exercise in 'smash and grab', whereby the journalist raids the memory bank of the interviewee in search of that elusive 'soundbite'. Alexievich's (2006) immersive, 'quiet' approach, giving voice to her interviewees, has much to recommend it here. Another aim was to encourage the students to interrogate the shibboleth of objectivity, acknowledging that we now live in an 'autobiographical age' (Plummer, 2001), which affords the journalist as storyteller the opportunity to put some of him/herself into the story. Indeed, it is almost expected by social media savvy audiences, which thrive on human interest, focusing on notions of identity and belonging, as Ros Coward explains:

"Interrogating subjectivity is now part of our culture. Even though it takes many different forms, across most areas of cultural life there's an underlying preoccupation with identity. Popular culture is dominated by questions about identity and subjectivity: about how to improve, alter or come to terms with ourselves"

(Coward, 2007)

We talked about how, in conflict zones, journalists are often acutely aware of their own 'shifting shape', as described by foreign correspondent, Peter Beaumont:

"I realise too that not only is it impossible to separate myself from the stories I collect, but that it is necessary to channel those experiences through my own to try to render them in emotions and sensations that have meaning for me" (Beaumont, 2009).

Changed environments throw questions of individual identity into sharp relief, both for the journalist and for the people whose stories they tell. Autobiographical journalism, this 'shoulder to shoulder' reporting, that acknowledges the presence of ourselves, as journalists, in stories, requires us to report on others cognisant of memory, time and place. Shortly before I visited Salzburg, and in the wake of the Nice attack, I went to Marseille, to MUCEM, the museum dedicated to the history of migration. Whilst I was there, the Holocaust survivor and writer, Elie Wiesel died – he warned us that when writing the stories of others, it is important to 'think before you substitute your memories for theirs' (Wiesel, 1979: 246-7). Rather than a call for silence, this reminds us that writing for others is a collective and an individual act of recall (Coffey, 1999). The physical reality of the museum, provided much food for thought for my talk and reinforced my thinking about the role of space, time and location in storytelling; here, it is illustrated through walking the ramparts between different architectural styles, representative of bridging civilisations. The ancient port was the first contact point for people arriving by sea – nothing lies between the fort and this yawning expanse of blue, stretching to Africa. There is also a garden of migrations, highlighting the importance of appealing to all of our senses in storytelling – and how they awaken memory – the scent and taste of the herbs and spices, the taste of the salty air, the sound of the warm wind.

Marseille also provided a case study for the talk – it is France's third city where, due to secularism (laïcité), there is no census on religion, but one-third of its population (according to a recent survey) is Muslim, making Islam the biggest minority religion. The report, published in 2014, shows that between 2009-2012, the number of Spanish, Portuguese and Italian immigrants in Marseille doubled. It is a city where we can ask some interesting questions, for example, about what lies behind the overt manifestations of civic pride and community. Tricolors adorn tenement blocks in the suburbs (*banlieues*) and in the heart of the old port; but do those who have sought sanctuary there 'feel French'? There are issues of identity – many French (including the taxi drivers) choose to live in Aix en Provence, thirty minutes away from the 'melting pot' of the city, with its love of football and fierce patriotism.

As journalists, we can ask what lies beneath, as we seek to tell the stories of individuals that make up a community like this, or any other. However, whilst seeking to understand, we must avoid generalisations: after the Nice attack, that city's social housing was under the spotlight and very quickly suspicion sets

in (you only had to read some of the quotes and profiles that journalists selected to describe Mohamed Lahouaiej-Bouhlel from neighbours who reported how he ‘eyed up their daughters’ in the suburb where he lived). It is very easy for all Tunisian – born Frenchmen to become branded in the same way and for all ‘bi-nationals’ to become a new focus of attention. So the journalist’s role and responsibility is to avoid inspiring prejudice or evoking fear – the narrative of fear readily used by the far right - and to seek to ask questions.

One journalist who had covered the Paris attacks, the Mail Online’s Jake Wallis Simons, explained to me how many Syrians living in Paris felt guilty for what happened. A former BBC colleague, Kevin Marsh has given talks to journalism students urging them to consider the ways in which the mainstream French media has reported the fallout of the Paris attacks. He asks – “how do we give voice to the voiceless?” One answer is to avoid reporting that is ‘top down’ – an example of this is illustrated by news reports that start in Paris and drive over the bridge to the *banlieues* as if to spectate on another universe, a strange and foreign place – but they are part of the city, with the majority of the inhabitants being second or third generation French citizens: “Whole generations of marginalised French Muslims from north and west Africa grew up in the *banlieues*, but mainstream France never cared for their perspectives on anything ... if you lived in the *banlieues*, you were voiceless and mostly invisible” (Marsh, 2016). This sort of superiority and distance in journalistic storytelling is to be avoided at all costs, a point reinforced by journalist George Packer, writing in *The New Yorker*:

“The highway that encircles Paris is known as the Périphérique. Entering or leaving the suburbs is often called “crossing the Périphérique,” as if it were a frontier. Banlieue residents joke that going into Paris requires a visa and a vaccination card. Mehdi Meklat, a young writer at Bondy Blog, which reports on the banlieues, told me, “There are two parallel worlds.” He called the dynamic between Paris and the suburbs “schizophrenic” (Packer, 2015).

Immersive storytelling, that embraces as many voices as possible indicates a way ahead for journalists, writing for others: journalist and photographer, Ivan Sigal describes this process as ‘getting inside people’s lives’ and being ‘non dramatic’ (Sigal, 2016). The late Marie Colvin, killed in the Syrian city of Homs in 2012, always felt that the journalist had to be there, to stay, in order to be authentic, to do the job properly: “I feel strongly that we have to include these stories of the suffering of civilians to get the point across” (Colvin, 2012). Of course, she paid the ultimate price for her commitment to her craft. Long form storytelling is perhaps better suited to this ‘slow’ journalism that calls into question the shibboleth of objectivity – where there is more space and word count to accommodate a fuller picture.

I hope that the students sitting in the library at Salzburg, with the view of the sun setting over the mountains through the window, were encouraged to reflect on how, in telling the stories of others, we share some of ourselves as journalists and as human beings – and how, this most human activity requires compassion and understanding, as well as curiosity. I left them with a story that a BBC foreign correspondent shared with me, from his experience of reporting in the Balkans in the ‘90s, to illustrate the importance of empathy above all:

“One morning I watched the procession of men and women emerge from a forest. They’d been driven from their homes two days earlier and had fled with what they could carry. Most were on foot. Some were crammed into the backs of ancient farm vehicles drawn by donkeys. There were perhaps 40,000 of them. Their hometown had fallen to a Serb advance that had come without warning. Among them, one man seemed close to collapse. He stopped to speak to us. ‘The whole town has fled,’ he said. He’d become separated from his wife in the long trek to safety, and was now worried that she hadn’t made it. His pale, almost translucently white skin was stretched across the bones of his face like parchment. His forehead was livid blue from a fall. And I asked him how old he was. He said he was 80. ‘May I ask,’ I said finally, ‘are you a Croat or a Muslim?’ The memory of it shames me even now as I hear in my mind his answer echo down the years: ‘I am,’ he said, ‘a musician.’” (BBC foreign correspondent, quoted in Fowler-Watt, 2013).

Perhaps above all, the current challenges around reporting migration present us with an opportunity to pursue good journalism and a journalism pedagogy that places at its heart that most human attribute: emotional intelligence, so that journalists of the future seek to tell the stories of others with compassion, empathy and, above all, humility.

You can see the final project produced by the students of the Salzburg Academy here:

<http://www.salzburgglobal.org/topics/article/move-media-migration-the-civic-imagination.html>

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Reviews

The reviews pages are edited by Tor Clark. If you have a book you would like to review or have come across a new book we should know about please get in touch. Also if you have recently had a book published and would like to see it reviewed, please contact Tor on tclark@dmu.ac.uk

Journalists always tell the best stories

Introduction to the Reviews section by Reviews editor Tor Clark, De Montfort University, Leicester

With such an appropriate special edition theme as ‘storytelling’ the Reviews section rises to the challenge and offers readers a selection of excellent stories, well told by accomplished writers.

The storytelling edition begins by offering readers words of wisdom by Hemmingway - Emma Hemmingway of Nottingham Trent University, who spent the summer with another great storyteller, Jeremy Vine of Newsnight and Radio 2 fame. Dr Hemmingway enjoyed Vine’s gossipy memoirs, but finds a worrying faux pas concealed within its pages.

Another story, that of football’s journey from a Saturday afternoon working class pastime to an all-embracing globally-conquering media phenomenon, described by writer and lecturer Roger Domeneghetti, enthralls one of our journal’s editors, Mick Temple of Staffordshire University.

Professor Temple, a devotee of the beautiful game, has come to this text late but thoroughly recommends it for teaching or just enjoyment.

Prolific book editor and regular JE reviewer John Mair, takes a break from assembling his next collection of articles, which ask whether print journalism is finally facing its end, to review former BBC Director General Mark Thompson’s provocative new book *Enough Said: What’s Gone Wrong With the Language of Politics?* He finds plenty to interest and intrigue as the CEO of the New York Times uses examples from his experience on both sides of the Atlantic to ask searching questions about journalism’s role in the health of our democracy.

And finally, as this edition’s *Classic from the Journalism Bookshelf*, who better to feature but that late lamented prince of political columnists, Alan Watkins, who served the Spectator, New Statesman, Observer and Independent on Sunday, in his time with informed aplomb. Watkins had a style all his own, and while his memoirs *A Short Walk Down Fleet Street*, are indeed short on his personal craft, they more than make up for it with delicious descriptions and anecdotes from half a century of political column writing.

So overall, an interesting mix, with stimulating and enjoyable storytelling at its heart.

If you would like to review a book about journalism for Journalism Education, or you have a suggestion for a recent book or a classic to be reviewed, please contact Reviews editor Tor Clark of De Montfort University via TClark@dmu.ac.uk

A classic from the Journalism bookshelf

A Short Walk Down Fleet Street by Alan Watkins

Review by Tor Clark, De Montfort University, Leicester

With this edition of *Journalism Education* focusing on storytelling, who better to feature as our Classic from the Journalism Bookshelf than the prince of political columnists, Alan Watkins?

Readers of the Independent on Sunday, and before that The Observer, will have enjoyed his weekly musings on matters political. Watkins had a style all his own, unusual in such a crowded field, but more importantly he had the contacts and the context – the sure grasp of political history – to ensure his style was matched with both his authority and wry humour.

Watkins, a son of the south Wales valleys, had a long career in national journalism, starting with the Sunday Express under John Junor’s editorship and Lord Beaverbrook’s ownership in the 1950s, before moving on to the Spectator, the New Statesman and latterly the two Sundays.

His weekly column was a treat, combining insightful current analysis alongside historical context, often underlined by the fact he had lived through that context and reported on it at the time.

Watkins wrote a handful of very readable books including works of political history *The Road to Number Ten* (1998) and *A Conservative Coup* (1991), and works of memoir and portraits such as *Brief Lives – With Some Memoirs* (1982, 2004) and this volume, the most substantial of his books covering journalism and journalists, which earns its place on the *Journalism Education* Journalism Classics Bookshelf because of the quality of its insight and its writing.

One might approach this book hoping for an account of Watkins’ life in national political journalism from his arrival on Fleet Street in the 1950s to its publication in 2000, but Watkins – never a writer to deliver the predictable – instead provides an account of the publications for which he worked, particularly the characters he encountered, both political and journalistic, but mostly journalistic, especially fine writers and Welsh rugby correspondents.

The magic of this book is not what is written but how it is written. Watkins’ sheer style can be enjoyed as much as his insight. His style might seem over-indulgent in other writers. Watkins displays his journalistic rather than literary background in his use of short, pithy sentences. He employs his descriptive ability so as to not only be excused but also celebrated. He describes Beaverbrook’s butler thus:

“Eventually a summons to lunch arrived. It was communicated by Raymond, the butler, a red-haired man of uncertain age with protruding eyes, a surprising strong handshake and a camp conversational style” (page 53).

Another passage celebrating some of the many fine journalists of the 1950s and 60s with whom he regularly drank – and there is an awful lot of drinking in this memoir – describes New Statesman reviewer John Raymond:

“Raymond had a face like Stilton cheese. He was prone to sweating and never looked entirely well. He pushed the mode of dress then prevailing in higher journalism to extremes, sometimes appearing in a coat, a waistcoat and a pair of trousers from three different suits. He usually wore a sports coat and a pullover. He always had about him a whole collection of newspapers, periodicals and books from the London Library or from papers which wanted him to review them. Others such as Philip Hope-Wallace encumbered themselves similarly. Journalists who could perfectly well afford a briefcase or a bag of some description preferred to inconvenience themselves with quantities of books and newsprint precariously held. To a certain extent they still do. It is one of the peculiarities of the trade” (p95-6).

Watkins describes a lost golden age of Fleet Street, where fine writers were free to spend much of their working days in pubs, clubs, wine bars and restaurants. He mourns the trade’s move from Fleet Street and the imprisonment of modern writers within their Docklands offices.

So what we have is essentially a selection of memoirs and anecdotes, focused on the people and places he knew, rather than on himself. This is perhaps its only disappointment, because as a long-standing admirer and practitioner of political writing I wanted to know more about how the master achieved his results – his techniques and processes – skills and insights about his craft I could attempt to replicate myself or pass on

to my students. It's still hugely enjoyable for its witty observations of the world he knew and chiefly for the way he describes it, but just a brief glimpse into the art of a master practitioner would have been the icing on the cake.

The book stops abruptly in 2000, with Watkins still happily employed on the Independent on Sunday, and lacks a satisfactory conclusion, but what has gone before makes up for it.

Voting in the most exciting general election of modern times took place on Thursday May 6, 2010. Two days later, with no clear winner, frantic negotiations taking place between the political parties, and speculation and gossip rife within political and journalistic circles, Watkins, aged 77, died. I always like to think though we miss his unique style and insight, the time of his passing was about as apt as it could have been. We will not see his like again, but thankfully he has left us his writing. What we now need is a collection of his best columns from down the years.

A Short Walk Down Fleet Street by Alan Watkins published by Duckworth, 2000, 277 pages, ISBN 0 7156 2910 7, published at £18.

From the Back Page to the Front Room: Football's journey Through the English Media Roger Domeneghetti

Review by Professor Mick Temple, Staffordshire University, UK

I must begin by apologising for not reviewing this book earlier. I understand a second edition is on the way for early 2017, so I hope the author forgives me for focussing on this earlier hardback edition.

The truth is I didn't know of its existence until a few months ago, despite teaching a Master's module in Sports Broadcast Studies. I would now consider it essential reading for anyone teaching or studying on sports journalism courses. In its breadth, depth of research and vigour, it is streets ahead of any competition.

From the Back Page to the Front Room is well-researched, full of unexpected nuggets, witty, insightful and, despite the mass of historical detail, a pleasure to read. Its critique of English football and its representation by the media is critical but not cynical, and is infused throughout by a clear love of both football and its journalists. It's also a mine of unexpected information. For example, we know that football violence has deep historical roots, but Domeneghetti cites a 1934 *Leicester Mercury* report on damage caused to a football special train by a 'hooligan element', a good few decades before most of us would have guessed at such occurrences.

The book covers all aspects of football coverage, with an appreciative critique of fanzines and alternative journalism along the way. It even includes a chapter on the greatest English footballer of all time. His rocket shot and last-minute winners were the very essence of football fiction, and the legendary Roy Race's career is analysed in a very funny (yet insightful) chapter which analyses the English media's representations of the English footballer and their treatment of 'funny foreigners' who deviated from English notions of fair play. Sadly, despite the influx of aliens into our own football leagues such stereotypes persist, as some football commentators continue to demonstrate.

I hope the new edition expands his interesting examination of the ways in which football, even at the stadium, is becoming an immersive experience in which in-game tweeting has become essential for many spectators, and continues his analysis of the impact new and increasingly interactive technology is already having on football journalism.

I do have some caveats. There are few grammatical glitches, and some of the throwaway (dare I say, 'journalistic?') asides grate rather than induce smiles. It also occasionally assumes a superiority over its audience's knowledge, a strategy all authors should hesitate to employ. For example, he asks: 'Take knur-and-spell. Heard of it? Didn't think so.' Well, yes, actually, I have heard of it and so will many of his readers. Complaining about the lack of sources for many of the facts and assertions might appear churlish, but despite a comprehensive bibliography the lack of citations annoys the academic in me. It makes it difficult to assess the strength of some of his observations.

But these are very minor irritations in an otherwise pleasurable read. It is rare that such a detailed study is a page-turner to rival any work of popular fiction. To sum up, Domeneghetti's book is a first class examination of the history of football's long journey through the media and is one of my favourite sports books. I recommend reading it just for pleasure.

From the Back Page to the Front Room: Football's journey through the English media Roger Domeneghetti, published by Ockley Books, 2014, Published at £12.99, ISBN: 978-0-9571410-56.

It's all News to Me! By Jeremy Vine

Review by Dr Emma Hemmingway, Nottingham Trent University

It was with unashamed relish that as a former BBC news trainee, I approached Jeremy Vine's new autobiography "It's all News to me!"

Vine is himself a BBC news trainee, part of that select few plucked mainly from Oxbridge for the BBC's training programme with the promise of a position somewhere within the great organisation at the end of it. All of this existed well before we had jobs teaching journalism courses in any UK universities.

And thus to my first warning to those thinking of reading this entertaining and extremely well written book. It is unashamedly rather obsessed with everything BBC.

Not that this doesn't at times make for some very funny stories which Vine, being the witty writer he is, turns into hilarious laugh-out-loud moments. And happily, these jokes in no way spare the author. The young, rather too lofty BBC intern who feels the world owes him some kind of a journalistic living soon comes unstuck in many different ways, often funny and then rather more dangerous as his career begins to develop.

Early on his nascent career awareness affords him such refreshing insights:

"Embrace humiliation: it is good for the soul. Your parade needs regular rain. It is in your interests to be constantly reminded that you are less important than the story, and the moment will never come when you have truly made it."

The strength of the book lies in Vine's ability to turn entertaining stories about news into good workaday mantras for 'doing journalism'- and as educators this book is a helpful and effortlessly readable teaching guide to any student journalist.

"I often murmured to myself, 'Other Lives'. And in essence that is journalism: discovering the other. Because a local newspaper is the only show in town, every story in it is a scoop. Which makes working there the purest and rawest and truest form of broadcasting."

And, in an age when students feel it is unnecessary to pick up a telephone and engage in human contact when FB and Twitter are on hand, accessible and obviously far less threatening...

"The lesson is this: The audience has better stories than we do. I remember at Coventry telling Geoff Grimmer a woman had turned up at reception wanting to talk about her brother who had died suddenly. 'Go down and speak to her', he instructed, thus coining the first commandment of journalism in six short words."

In the best chapter, Vine begins to try to unravel that old favourite: what is news? If you have little appetite for BBC internal machinations, from which this book does unfortunately suffer, you could read just this chapter. It is quotable, debatable and will prove challenging to any student starting on their journalistic road.

"What is news and what is news not? 'News,' it was said, 'is what someone else doesn't want you to know. All the rest is advertising'. Beautiful. And quite wrong. I used to have neighbours who argued all the time. They didn't want me to know that. It doesn't mean that them arguing is news. In fact, once you try to find a definition, you discover exasperating contradictions almost immediately."

Or

"So news is the stuff you don't expect... but even as I write that, I remember watching the most recent royal wedding. That was expected. But it was news, surely. It was scheduled, yes, but it was still news... it raises the frightening possibility that the biggest new stories are not the most unexpected, but the most expected."

In its rather unapologetic immersion in BBC processes there is a worrying section where Vine describes his Radio 2 spoof broadcast which attempted to reveal what news would be like if Britain was run by tabloid news editors.

In this broadcast an item was included claiming Ian Huntley had been murdered in his prison cell. This spoof was broadcast in 2006, just three years after the murders of Soham schoolgirls Jessica Chapman and Holly Wells.

Whilst Vine had emphasised the bulletin was a spoof by introducing it as coming from 'Radio Two and a quarter', the incident raises concerning issues of sensitivity, intrusion into people's grief and, most importantly, breaks one of the most important rules of all news journalism - never report anything which could be misconstrued by an audience.

It was therefore with shock and consternation I read Vine's uncritical rendition of how things had gone

wrong, concluding even though they had made a mistake, the news editor at the time did not discipline anyone and simply said she didn't want the team to stop being creative in future.

This advice was given by then controller of Radio 2, Lesley Douglas. Later she was sacked, along with Russell Brand and Jonathan Ross because of an appalling on-air lapse of taste involving the veteran actor, Andrew Sachs. Perhaps Vine could have acknowledged here that creativity is a great thing, but it's not the ultimate excuse when you do something stupid.

Indeed in light of Vine's trenchant advice to young journalists throughout the book, all of which is pretty spot-on, the unapologetic tone of what was a bad misjudgement leaves an unsavoury taste in the reader's mouth.

I was left wondering why Vine's high minded journalistic perceptions, when pointed at himself, were not rather more condemning and thus more just? I fear the answer to this may lie in the rather self-protecting steps of the very institution which created the highly polished BBC creation that is Jeremy Vine.

It's All News to Me! By Jeremy Vine, published by Simon and Schuster, 2013, 350 pages, ISBN 9 781 84983 777 4, published at £8.99.

Enough Said: What's gone wrong with the language of politics? By Mark Thompson

Review by John Mair, former BBC producer

This is a stunningly good book, thoughtful, well researched, well written and full of prescription. It is not an easy read. Thompson does not carry his lifetime of learning lightly.

Mark is the success story of his journalistic generation. BBC Director General for eight years, who, unusually, left of his own accord. 'Thommo' survived many storms over the BBC to leave it (mainly) intact. Then, in a first for a broadcast executive, he jumped media to the 'print' New York Times as president and chief executive. There he is leading them with some success to the sunny uplands of a digital future, at a price though - Mark may be the most highly paid journalist in the world at a reported \$8M per year!

I must declare an interest. We have been friends for 35 years since the days of Nationwide and, presciently, I did tell a friend in common in 1980: 'That boy will be DG one day!'

None of this shapes my view that this is a magnificent tome. It had its origins in the lectures he delivered as Oxford Professor of Rhetoric at St Peter's College, Oxford, in early 2013 preceded, as is his wont, by a period of heavy reading in the Bodleian Library. It shows. The sources quoted range from Plato to McLuhan and wider.

Thompson attempts to find the place of rhetoric in modern political and media discourse on both sides of the Atlantic. He examines, inter alia, the Brexit and Trump campaigns and sees their disconnect with reality. He uses the Classical Greek concepts of logos (ideas), doxa (opinion) and episteme (understanding) as his template for analysis throughout.

Take just one chapter, his examination of George Orwell's well known 1946 essay on 'Politics and the English language'. The Oxford First in English comes out in his textual analysis of what Orwell meant; the social and political background plus the extra dimension is added with readings from Plato to Wittingstein, Heidegger to AJ Ayer. Thompson posits the similarities between 1946 and 2016 and the tension between positivism and authenticity: all illustrated by contemporary examples of misuse of English in politics. It is masterly.

That is just one of 12 densely argued and footnoted chapters on an intellectual piste, from spin doctoring to selling, to his final (maybe too late) pleading for a new language of politics from the practitioners and from the media, who sometimes report the former too slavishly.

In that chapter for example, he references the lyrics of Beyonce and Eminem, surely a first for an Oxford Professor of Rhetoric?

Intellectual ambition oozes from every page. Not many media executives could produce a work of this quality and deep thought. Buy it alongside a dictionary, but leave plenty of time to read it, digest it and learn from it.

Enough Said: What's gone wrong with the language of politics? By Mark Thompson, Bodley Head, 2015, RRP £25.

Information for contributors

We accept original articles about journalism education and topics linked to journalism and education that are not offered for publication elsewhere at the time of submission. Articles for peer review should be in the range of 5000-7000 words.

Articles for Comment and Criticism should be shorter at about 3,000 to 4,000 words.

The copy deadline for the next issue is: Aug 30, 2012 but material sent earlier would be appreciated. Articles should be submitted to the editors at ajejournal@gmail.com together with a 100-150 word abstract. Comment and criticism articles can be more polemic and do not require an abstract.

Presentation and submission:

Articles should be produced in Word format, double spaced and set in Times New Roman 12pt with the minimum of formatting. Please **do not** press the "enter" button to put a double space between paragraphs or add additional spaces and do not use specialist templates. Referencing should be in standard Harvard form with citations in the form: (Simmons 1955, p404) whilst notes should be set as endnotes.

All tables and figures should be produced separately either at the end of the article or in a separate file. Each should be clearly labelled Table 1:..... Table 2:..... Fig. 1:.... Fig. 2: etc and a note inserted in the text identifying approximately where it should be placed.

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Journalism Education

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Volume five, number two. Inside this issue:

Special Edition of *Journalism Education* - It's the story that matters! Teaching journalism's storytellers

Guest editor: **Dr Karen Fowler-Watt, Bournemouth University, UK**

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