

Television news and user-generated video:

How journalists are normalising  
the use of social media video within  
contemporary primetime news bulletins  
in Aotearoa, New Zealand

Danielle Louise Mulrennan

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## **Abstract**

Since the development of the Internet and the interactive affordances of Web 2.0, social media material has become an integral part of news as journalists incorporate user-generated content (UGC) into their work. While the phenomenon frequently has been investigated within newspaper and online settings, this study explores the implications for primetime television news. It has found that user-generated video (UGV), in particular, is broadening the way news stories are being told, and that social media content has become valued for its ability to draw audiences beyond reportage and into the entertainment realm. The study, which focuses on primetime television news bulletins broadcast in Aotearoa, New Zealand, draws on a social constructionist perspective where a mixed-method approach incorporates both quantitative and qualitative frameworks to capture and explain how journalistic norms have shifted in response to social media video.

The study investigated 3,360 minutes of videotaped recordings of primetime news bulletins between June and July 2018 and found one-third of the news on New Zealand's mainstream television networks featured Tweets, posts and imagery sourced from social media sites, of which one tenth was video. Through the application of critical discourse analysis (CDA) and participant observation, the news texts and the routines of journalists were investigated revealing that user-generated video had become a normalised element of television broadcast news bulletins. Furthermore, while the boundaries between professional and amateur remain, there is evidence of a morphing between traditional and social news that has implications for the sector.

The findings contribute to an international body of knowledge in the areas of television broadcast journalism, social media and paradigm repair where there have been significant changes in the power and dominance of social media since the invention of the Internet. The study also shows that television journalists are drawing on their natural resilience to maintain relevance within the broader news landscape as they face the challenges and opportunities that user-generated video affords them, while also providing a valuable benchmark for longitudinal studies.

**Table 1.0. Annotations and abbreviations applied within the thesis.**

.....	information compressions (deletion of detailed information)
- - - - -	noun compressions (generalisation of multiple nouns as a collective)
=====	verbal compressions (construction of multiple verbs as actions)
=====	temporal indicators (tenses and temporal adjectives or adverbs)
2S.....	two people in the shot
3S.....	three people in the shot
Audio.....	sound effects and/or script and/or interviewee comments
BCU.....	Big close up
BG.....	background image
caption.....	on screen text as it appears in caps or lower case
CU.....	close up
freeze.....	footage comes to a complete stop (frozen) for effect
<u>fx</u> .....	effects or manipulation of the audio or video
HA.....	high angle of camera creates a downward looking frame
I/V.....	interview
LA.....	low angle of camera creates an upward looking frame
LOF.....	left of frame
LS.....	long shot featuring full length typically of a person
MCU.....	medium close up of a person from elbows upwards
MS.....	mid shot of a person from hip upwards
Newsreader V/O.....	newsreader reads script “live” while edited video plays
OS.....	over the shoulder of a person to view a second subject
POV.....	videoed from the point of view of the camera
PTC.....	the reporter delivers a narrative piece directly to the camera
RVO.....	newsreader reads script live to match edited video
ROF.....	right of frame
RT.....	running time or the reference point at which each event occurs
slomo.....	footage has been slowed down to slow motion for effect
Vision.....	video and/or still images with technical instructions <i>italicized</i>
WS.....	wide shot provides the subject in a wider visual context

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## **Attestation of Authorship**

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Danielle Mulrennan

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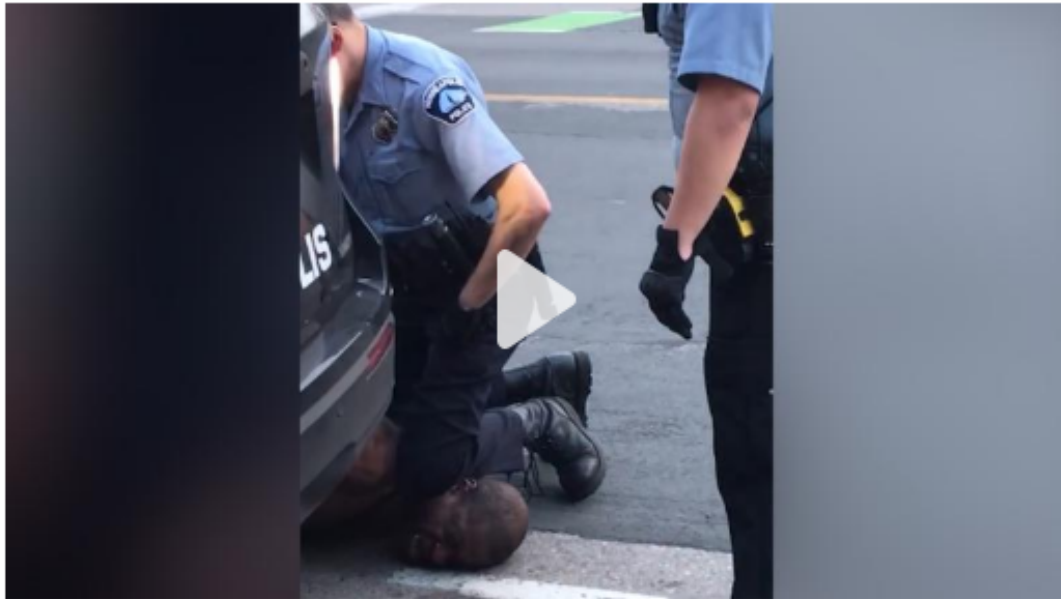
## **Chapter One: Introduction**

### **1.0. User-generated video (UGV) and the news**

News organisations have been drawing on social media content that has been created on smartphones by members of the public and shared on platforms like Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and others (Kelly, 2013) since the introduction of the Internet – and in particular the interactive iteration of Web 2.0. – in 2004. The material is referred to as user-generated content and features textual, audio and video content. The study refers to social media video as user-generated video or UGV, defined as content posted to YouTube, Facebook and other social networking sites, whereas produced video is produced and edited by professionals and published as television programmes, movies, and commercials (Abdollahian et al., 2010). Some television news organisations have restructured their newsrooms in order to manage and process the content as part of their news offering (Williams et al., 2011a). When user-generated content is used to bring amateur content to audiences, what does this alternative perspective to professional material offer and how does it broaden society's potential to witness and understand events and actions that take place in the public sphere? For example, at the time of writing this thesis, a segment of UGV footage shared on social media and broadcast by American networks prompted a groundswell of protests in 140 cities across America (Taylor, 2021) and led to 40 countries worldwide calling for social change (Safi, 2020). The footage featured a black American man, George Floyd, being suffocated by a police officer in Minneapolis while being arrested for a minor misdemeanor. It showed the victim as he desperately cried out to the officer just moments before he lost consciousness and died.

The figure below presents a screen captured image of the user-generated footage that received global attention and became repurposed for broadcast by television news organisations around the world.

**“4 Minneapolis cops fired after UGV footage shows one kneeling on neck of black man who later died”**



Video shows Minneapolis officer kneeling on black man's neck 03:01

Figure 1.0. CNN story broadcast on 27 May, 2020 featuring UGV (Sanchez et al., 2020).

In figure 1.0. above, the UGV footage appeared in a news story broadcast by CNN (Cable News Network, an American, news-based, pay-television channel) two days after the event occurred, announcing the sacking of four officers associated with the death of Mr Floyd and drawing heavily on the UGV footage that had been shared.

Not only did the footage spark protests for racial justice around the world, it was also used as evidence in the trial that convicted the offending police officer. Subsequently, the 18-year-old woman who recorded the act on her smart phone was presented with a special journalism award by the Pulitzer Prize board, one of the most prestigious journalism awards in America. The committee said it honoured Darnella Frazier for “courageously recording the murder of George Floyd, a video that spurred protests against police brutality around the world, highlighting the crucial role of citizens in journalists’ quest for truth and justice” (BBC News, 2021). This is believed to be one of the first examples of UGV content gaining recognition in a journalistic award.

Academics acknowledge that user-generated content has had a decisive impact on the communication landscape (Naab & Sehl, 2017), however, literature on user-generated

content and television news has received minimal attention since the mid-2010s. Furthermore, user-generated content applied within mainstream television news networks in New Zealand has not been investigated; the most recent content analysis studies (Cook, 2002; Comrie, 1996) were conducted prior to the emergence of user-generated content. This thesis seeks to respond to this gap in literature by investigating television journalists' work practices in relation to the production of news when UGV is present and explore the challenges and opportunities the material can offer within a contemporary television news climate.

### **1.1. Aims of the study**

The aim of this study is to shine an academic light on the professional practice that is normalising the incorporation of UGV content into primetime television broadcast news. By investigating the challenges, opportunities and implications when UGV becomes part of the daily routine of news workers, it aims to illuminate the changing nature of television news texts in the post-Web 2.0. era and provide a reference point that informs future studies of the genre.

The study takes place at a time when there has been an exponential growth of user-generated content creation and rapidly increasing uptake of social media usage in television news production. It is also a period when audiences have been shifting away from traditional news sources and towards online and social platforms (Vujnovic et al., 2010). The OECD (2007) foreshadowed that user-generated content would become the leading cause of the demise of media production as it had changed the nature of communication and social relationships. Paulussen (2011) argued that journalism had no option but to embrace the participation of citizens' contributions within the news production process. Bradshaw and Brightwell (2012) agreed that journalism had to reinvent itself in order to survive in an environment of technological, socio-political and economic change. Accordingly, as journalism has become more confident of its role within the Web 2.0. ecology, journalists and citizen producers have increasingly become perceived by the audience as being equal partners (Singer, 2014). So much so, that digital journalists no longer considered audience participation as an intrusion on their occupational turf, but complementary to their professionally produced content (Frauke & Hermida, 2015, p.113).

Television journalism is not immune to the changing patterns within news production. This study investigates how UGV has become particularly helpful in television news, where a journalist is not only required to articulate the news but must also find the pictures in order to tell the story (Tuchman, 1975).

The following research question underpins the study:

RQ: How are journalists normalising the use of social media video (UGV) within contemporary news bulletins in their everyday work?

## **1.2. Methodology**

The study has followed an epistemology of social constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978), which emphasises the importance of culture and context in understanding what occurs in society (Derry, 1999). It has drawn on a mixed-method research design (Campbell & Fiske, 1959; Creswell, 1994, 2017; Johnson et al., 2007) that includes both quantitative and qualitative methodology. The quantitative method has enabled the researcher to discover the nature and frequency of UGV content that has been incorporated into television news, while the qualitative approach was used to explore the everyday practices of television journalists, and their interpretations and descriptions of happenings (Geertz, 1973). But first, the data gathering methods are discussed next.

### **1.2.1. Data gathering methods**

This study has gathered empirical data of all early evening television news bulletins broadcast on New Zealand's mainstream networks of Television New Zealand and TV3 between 6pm and 7pm for four weeks from 11 June up until and including 8 July, 2018. During this period, the researcher also spent 30 hours in a television newsroom where a second data set of 447 minutes duration was gathered that included video-recorded semi-structured interviews (Baker & Edwards, 2012) conducted with senior television journalists and video ethnographic-style fieldwork as they produced stories featuring UGV content. This enabled the stories in the bulletin data to be triangulated with newsroom data in order to gain further insight into the practices of some of the journalists who made them. These two forms of data gathering are briefly discussed further.

#### **1.2.1.1. Broadcast television news data**

The broadcast television news data were gathered using a home-based video recording system, Tivo, that captured 56 hours or 3,360 minutes of mainstream prime time news. A back-up set was recorded by a television technician on an AUT University server.

#### **1.2.1.2. Newsroom data**

The newsroom data were recorded by the researcher who used a digital video camera with built-in microphone, to conduct semi-structured interviews and video-ethnographic observational fieldwork.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted with a purposive selection of participants from within one national newsroom. The participants responded to questions relating to the decision-making processes they had applied during the production of television news stories featuring UGV. These included the processes of access/observation, selection/filtering, processing/editing, distribution and interpretation as identified in Hermida (2011).

The video-ethnographic data featured some of the participants who had produced stories present in the broadcast television news data. The purpose of this was to gain further insights into how participants interacted with the user-generated content, while they researched, scripted and edited their stories.

#### **1.2.2. Mixed-method approach**

As previously mentioned, the study drew on a mixed-method approach that included quantitative and qualitative research methods which are discussed next.

##### **1.2.2.1. Quantitative methods**

Firstly, the broadcast news data were analysed in order to identify story data that featured UGV content for further analysis. The study created a bespoke identification rubric that drew on the findings of an eye-tracking analysis study (Abdollahian et al., 2010) that identified commonly recognised characteristics of UGV material. This helped to provide a subset of stories that would be analysed quantitatively. The method used was content analysis which enabled the researcher to gain a broad picture of the frequency and commonly occurring characteristics of the user-generated video present within television news stories. The form

of analysis required drawing a representative sample of data, coding it according to a set of rules or categories that reflected differences in the content, and being able to demonstrate reliability by achieving similar results should the conditions be repeated (Riffe et al., 2019). By applying a quantitative approach in this way, it is possible to obtain precise and reliable observations drawn from the data (George, 2009). Quantitative analysis has been associated in recent years with computational coding methods to automatically analyse large data sets (Riffe et al., 2019) such as a set of more than 60,000 tweets to analyse the sources in news coverage of the Arab Spring (Lewis et al., 2013). But, computerisation on such a large scale was found not to be a relevant method for this study, as the sample size was significantly smaller at 3,360 minutes of television news bulletins as described later in this chapter. Therefore, the analysis was recorded and conducted manually.

Once a representative set of data had been selected for deeper analysis, a qualitative approach was adopted in order to go beyond the word or sentence level to identify key features and activity in the language of news and the wider practice of television news (Cotter, 2005).

#### **1.2.2.2. Qualitative methods**

The study drew on two qualitative research methods in order to gain a deeper understanding of the data and the work processes conducted by television journalists in relation to user-generated video. The first was thematic analysis (Boyatzis, 1998), and the second was critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1995, 2001). Each is discussed next.

Thematic analysis is a method for systematically identifying, organising, and offering insight into patterns of meaning across a data set (Braun & Clarke, 2012, p. 57). Through the use of thematic analysis, it was possible to identify themes reflecting what was common and important in relation to the particular topic and over-arching research question being explored. The themes applied in the study were generated deductively. In other words, they were driven by the researcher's theoretical or analytic interest, rather than inductively where the coding of themes is driven by the data and may bear little relation to a pre-existing coding frame or the researcher's analytic preconceptions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). By applying themes, it was possible to identify representative texts, producing a smaller number of texts

that could be explored further through a textual analytical framework, which is discussed next.

The textual analytical framework of critical discourse analysis (CDA) was applied as it views language as a form of social practice and therefore situates a social problem within dialectic elements or interacting forces (Fairclough, 1995, 2001). Critical discourse analysis relies on a three-dimensional framework that analyses: language texts (either spoken or written), discourse practices (or the processes of text production, distribution and consumption), and sociocultural practice (or the social and cultural goings-on which the communicative event is a part of) (Fairclough, 1995, p. 57). Together, the three separate forms of analysis can be mapped onto one another to provide an outcome that brings depth to a researcher's findings, by not only revealing how a phenomenon is occurring but also explaining why it is happening.

Fairclough (1995) states that television texts are identified as multi-semiotic, as they combine many texts including written and spoken language, visual images, music and sound effects (p. 4). The ability of critical discourse analysis to be applied across multi-dimensional platforms was considered by this study to be an effective way of exploring television news texts where user-generated video is a feature. Furthermore, while critical discourse analysis can be used to gain insights in relation to what is contained in a text, it can also be helpful in highlighting what is absent within the text.

Accordingly, critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1995) was applied to investigate the textual data, the discourse practice and the socio-cultural practice of television journalists when user-generated video was present. A set of macro-rules (van Dijk, 1988) provided a framework for the examination of the texts and video images that had been produced by the television journalists. This was further informed by a macro-structural to micro-structural textual analysis model (Erjavec, 2005) used to investigate the decision-making processes therein.

The findings were triangulated (Denzin, 2015) with the data gathered during semi-structured interviews and video-ethnographic style fieldwork to gain a deeper understanding of the actions and decisions the television journalists had made during the production of the television news stories.

### **1.3. The significance of this study**

The significance of this study is that it addresses a shift in television journalistic practices and norms in relation to the use of user-generated video that has received little attention from academic researchers until now. It is believed to be one of the first studies of its kind that provides a close examination of the news artifacts and the influence user-generated video content has had on the routines of television news journalists as they go about their daily work. Its purpose is to build on an evolving body of knowledge that identifies significant changes in the power and dominance of social media since the invention of the Internet, and in particular its updated iteration, Web 2.0., which has enabled individuals to interact with social content and craft and post their original work online (Allen, 2008). What's more, the study is one the first to capture a defining moment in time in the evolution of television journalism, and therefore provide a valuable benchmark for future studies in the longer term.

Academics have argued that the study of journalism has been an unsuccessful negotiation between the three populations of journalists, journalism educators and journalism itself (Machin & Niblock, 2014; McNair, 2013; Nash, 2013; Zelizer, 2009). However, Zelizer proposes that studies should include engagement with all three groups as it is important to “position journalism as the core of a mix of academic perspectives from which it can most fruitfully prosper” (p. 38). The researcher offers a practice-based perspective as a former television journalist who has spent more than 20 years in the television news sector and 17 years as an academic and journalism lecturer at the Auckland University of Technology. Accordingly, she has attempted to bring both theory and practice to the study in order to shed light on a critical aspect of the work and the practices of television news journalists in a post Web 2.0. era.

### **1.4. Thesis structure**

This thesis consists of six chapters. Following the introduction, Chapter Two reviews extant literature and research that informs and motivates the research questions applied in this thesis. Gaps in previous research are subsequently identified and the overarching research question is proposed for investigation.



Chapter Three describes the methodological approach adopted in the study. In order to enrich the data from different perspectives, a mixed method design is described featuring both quantitative and qualitative methods and justification is provided. It is contended that the design offers the advantage of the possibility of delivering results that complement, elaborate and confirm each other. The approach to the procedures followed in collecting and analysing the data are explained also.

Chapter Four presents the key findings from the quantitative analysis, including the identification of common characteristics and the frequency with which they occurred. Results are considered in advance of further exploration qualitatively in the next chapter.

Chapter Five presents the findings drawn from the qualitative analysis including detailed accounts of the interpretations of the findings of the study with reference to each of the representative pieces of data. The results are summarised in a conclusion.

Chapter Six provides the overall argument that the relationship between television journalists and their work has changed, since amateur video interactivity afforded by the Web 2.0. has led to the ongoing proliferation of user-generated video content published and shared publicly.

Chapter Seven concludes the thesis by focusing on the implications of the research within the workplace and recommendations for future research.

## Chapter Two: Literature review

### 2.0. Introduction

As a result of Web 2.0., the development of modern mass communication technologies has increased a person's capacity to communicate many-to-many giving them greater control over publicly accessible online platforms and reducing lag time when communicating between people in different places (Carpentier, 2011). Consequently, there has been an exponential proliferation of material being created by individuals worldwide that is now widely recognised as user-generated content (or UGC) (Singer, 2010).

Van Dijck (2009) was among the first to identify that the increasing number of ordinary citizens expressing themselves through user-generated content was having a profound effect on capital-intensive industries such as the media. She claimed the digital era provided better access to networked media, enabling users to talk back in the same multi-modal language used by professionals, driven by the many internet channels, particularly user-generated content sites that allowed for do-it-yourself distribution (p. 43–44). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) claimed that user-generated content was leading to the demise of media production and changing the nature of communication and social relationships (OECD, 2007). However, more recent research into news organisations use of user-generated content revealed that users were rarely able to affect the news agenda (Wahl-Jorgensen et al., 2016). Instead, they found that new forms of audience participation had been generated that brought added value to the media landscape, empowering the disenfranchised and illuminating distant communities in a way that had not previously been achievable (p. 811). Wahl-Jorgensen et al. (2016) claimed that journalism continued to play a key role in democracies around the world, despite a number of threats that limited journalists' ability to fulfill their watchdog role. For example, the resources journalists had available to them in order to scrutinise political elites and expose wrongdoing was diminishing (Wahl-Jorgensen et al., 2016), while other disruptive phenomena such as fake news<sup>1</sup> was challenging journalistic credibility (Khaldarova & Pantti, 2016).

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<sup>1</sup> Fake news was first identified in 2014 in the Ukraine during a period of political turbulence (Khaldarova & Pantti, 2016). The phenomenon re-emerged during the 2016 American presidential election campaign battle between Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton, as pro-Trump fake news stories spread across the social media site, Facebook (Bakir & McStay, 2018).

Concurrently, there has been a significant shift in the media landscape. The range of sources of news and information has expanded, and increasingly audiences have been migrating away from the traditional news media platforms of print, radio and television news and towards online and social media (Newman et al., 2019). Television news organisations in particular have been experiencing decreasing viewership numbers as more and more of their younger audiences – those less than 55 years of age – turn to online websites and social media platforms to get their news (Mitchell, 2018; Nielsen & Sambrook, 2016). The Reuters Institute annual digital report (2020) has charted online news’ gradual overtaking of television over the past nine years across the 40 countries surveyed. However, it is noteworthy that, at the time of writing this thesis, a global pandemic – the coronavirus crisis – had triggered a resurgence of television news consumption as many people returned to trusted sources of news including public service media (Newman et al., 2020, p. 10). The thesis contributes to the discussions on the interactions between these different communication media in section 2.1.4.1.

This chapter reviews the extant literature on the development of television news as a key news provider and the relationship between user-generated audience material and the professional television journalist. It identifies gaps in the literature within the domains of television news, user-generated content, the overlapping of boundaries between the professional journalist and the amateur content creator, and the impact this is having within the television newsroom. It has been structured into six parts. The first part reviews television news as a mediated cultural artifact and provides an historic view of its role as a news provider in a journalistic culture that resisted technological change. The second part looks at how the term user-generated content was adopted and the implications of the associated scholarship within a television news nexus. The third part discusses how academics have attempted to label the ways in which news makers and other internal influencers have controlled story selection and the effect this has had on user-generated content. The fourth part addresses the scholarship regarding government and other dominant external influences on television news from its early days up until now. The fifth part discusses the shift in relationships between audiences and television news since the introduction of the interactivity afforded by Web 2.0. The sixth part looks at the implications these new relationships have had on the television journalist’s

normative roles. Finally, the conclusion reviews the gaps in the literature discussed and identifies the contribution to the field that this study seeks to make.

## **2.1. The development of television news**

The evolution of television news is bound up with the historic development of media technology, if only as a part of the wider context in which it operates (Hampton & Conboy, 2014). For example, radio was expected to sound the death knell to newspapers, sparking the radio and press wars of the 1920s and 1930s (Cox, 1995), and the introduction of television during the 1950s and 1960 was regarded as a major threat to both radio and newspapers (Zelizer, 2015). To gain a greater understanding of the current challenges and opportunities that technology is creating for the news industry, a review of the historic milestones of broadcast news provides a background to the extant literature on how these have influenced the contemporary television news landscape. The review focuses on the sectors within Britain, USA, New Zealand and Australia.

### **2.1.1. The history of broadcast news**

Crook (1998) argues that the invention of radio marked a significant technological leap forward in communications when it was introduced in the 1920s, during a decade when the governments of Britain, the Netherlands, USA, Australia and South Africa started issuing licences and selling transmitters. Radio enabled information to be broadcast in real time to large numbers of people simultaneously, enabling its producers to forge a new relationship with audiences who had previously relied on reports of events in newspapers that were published retrospectively (Cushion, 2011). However, newspaper organisations in a number of countries were resistant to this new form of news as its reach and flexibility were considered to be a threat to the status quo. At this point, I draw on scholarship relating to the early days of broadcasting in Britain and America as these two English-speaking countries offer valid comparisons with New Zealand from a cultural perspective, as outlined in the World Values cultural map (Welzel-Inglehart, n.d.). Both countries bear relevance to New Zealand's television and news services that were designed and implemented under the influence of the British public service model and subsequently modified to meet a deregulated market under an American commercial model of influence (Horrocks, 2004; Atkinson, 1994).

When radio was introduced in Britain, the government fought to preserve the dominance of the traditional newspaper outlets against a medium it thought would become a powerful threat (Schlesinger, 1978). For example, Cox (1995) describes how British radio journalists were banned from producing their own news and instead were required to adapt a 2,500-word daily report provided by newspapers and that would be broadcast outside the newspaper publication timetable. However, the stranglehold of newspapers was broken during a critical time in history, when newspaper production was halted by the General Strike of 1926 and the British Broadcasting Company (BBC) stepped in and began producing radio news bulletins under the leadership of Lord John Reith (Cox, 1995; Schlesinger, 1978).

In America, a similar back-story exists. The introduction of radio met with opposition from the long-established traditional news suppliers and resulted in a period referred to as the Press-Radio War, circa 1922 (Cox, 2013). Initially, radio journalists were forced to operate under a covenant known as the Biltmore Treaty established by a group of media owners and executives to restrict the medias journalistic pursuits by rationing the radio networks to daily five-minute newscasts from established wire service sources (Cox, 2013, p. 27). However, the Treaty failed when radio outlets produced sponsored news shows of their own and were able to operate independently.

In New Zealand, early radio news was restricted by the newspaper stronghold also (Day, 2000). Radio journalists were limited to reporting on content prepared by the Prime Minister's office or the Tourist and Publicity Department. Furthermore, they were banned from having access to news agencies such as the New Zealand Press Association, which was extensively used by newspapers (Day, 2000). However, an opportunity for radio to demonstrate its value presented itself on Christmas Eve in 1953 when 151 people were killed in New Zealand's worst railway accident<sup>2</sup> and newspaper journalists were taking a Christmas holiday break. The event has since become recognised as the "unheralded and unrecognised birthday of news broadcasting" in New Zealand (Day, 2000, p. 68).

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<sup>2</sup> The Tangiwai train derailment in the Central North Island occurred as a result of a lava flow from volcano Mount Ruapehu which destroyed the bridge and sent a train carrying 285 passengers and crew plummeting into a flooded river resulting in the death of 151 people (Ministry for Culture & Heritage, 2014).

Meanwhile, globally, television news was beginning to evolve. Despite the generally accepted view that Edward R. Murrow should be credited with groundbreaking television work in the 1950s, the American network CBS was established nearly 10 years earlier (Conway, 2006). Conway argues that, in 1941, the network's 21-year-old journalist Robert Skedgell covered the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, drawing on maps as a visual guide that showed television news could provide an alternative to radio or newspapers (Conway, 2006). In Britain, the Second World War had disrupted broadcasting in Britain, and early attempts to establish regular newsreels in conjunction with the commercial cinema industry were discontinued as the film industry feared competition from television news (Schlesinger, 1978). However, the first television news broadcast in Britain took the form of a BBC newsreel that went to air in 1953 (Cox, 1995). Produced in black and white, the broadcasts were considered to be little more than radio when immediacy counted (Higgins, 2007).

Schlesinger claimed the formation of the BBC news as a cultural product and an organisational structure had been the result of external factors rooted in the politics and economics of British society. Studies documenting early New Zealand television developments suggest a similar landscape. In New Zealand, the public considered the medium as “unworthy”, and likely to lower cultural standards, a perception promoted by the National government of the time (Day, 2000, p. 85). Day (2000) argued the government used this rhetoric to justify its delay in introducing a state-owned and operated television system implemented in the 1960s, and following 57 other countries. However, Horrocks (2004) claimed the delay was the result of difficulties in creating a transmission system to reach a scattered population across uneven terrain. Furthermore, Dunleavy and Joyce (2011) argued that the establishment of a television system in New Zealand took so long because it was a small country with a government short on capital. Nevertheless, once introduced, the public rapidly became engaged in the television service and this led to the New Zealand government expanding its range of transmission, as it had done with radio several years earlier (Butterworth, 1989).

Once television news became embedded within social norms across the world, further expansion had a less disruptive effect on the news sector. According to Cox (1995), the satellite transmission of television pictures in 1965 was heralded as a significant leap in the evolution of television news as it catapulted it into an inter-continental form of broadcasting,

bringing an immediacy that audiences had not experienced before. Lealand and Martin (2001) claimed this development was particularly significant for New Zealand audiences, where the installation of an international satellite station in 1971 at Warkworth, north of Auckland, linked the population with the rest of the world for the first time. Butterworth (1989) said the international news feeds enabled Kiwis to become part of a global village experiencing major social change through events such as the Vietnam War protests, and the women's liberation movement. Furthermore, Livingston and Bennett (2003) found the introduction of the videophone and portable recording and transmission systems freed reporters to geographically roam and cover events at their own discretion. This, combined with the stationing of foreign correspondents in locations such as New York and London, enabled global networks to receive news reports generated by their own journalists that were tailored for home audiences rather than relying on sourcing content from foreign television news companies who provided generic perspectives (Cox, 1995).

It is clear that the technologies of newsgathering and transmission are as central to the story of journalism in New Zealand as elsewhere. Moreover, television news programmes are among the oldest and most common television formats found within traditional television content and have barely changed since the 1940s (González-Neira & Quintas-Froufe, 2020) despite being set within an evolving landscape that has included global deregulation and globalisation. (The deregulation of the television broadcasting sector and the New Zealand industry is discussed in detail in section 2.4.).

However, what remains to be discussed here, is the literature that has investigated the struggles experienced within the New Zealand television news industry over time. Atkinson (1994) argued that new technologies may have paved the way for progress, but it was the politicians of the day and not public pressure that led the decision to open up the market to international interests. He claimed that the Labour Government's introduction of converged telecommunications technologies led to the transformation of New Zealand's radio and television organisations into state-owned enterprises. Additionally, Atkinson (1994) claimed "disaffected state broadcasters" and the financial pressures of the advertising sector influenced the government to take a number of initiatives (p. 149). Those initiatives relating to television broadcast included:

- i. Opening up to foreign media ownership that led to the launch of the country's first private commercial television network, TV3, in 1987.
- ii. The introduction of digital delivery mechanisms including both satellite and terrestrial including the introduction of Sky TV Network in 1990 that provided more international content including multiple news channels.
- iii. The launch of regional television channels including Canterbury Television and Triangle (now Face TV) in 1999, that eventually began broadcasting on Sky Television (Horrocks, n.d.).
- iii. The launch of the country's first indigenous channel, Māori Television, that began transmission in 2004, and the addition of a second channel in 2008. This followed the first daily Māori-language news bulletin, *Te Karere* that was introduced on TVNZ in 1980. Aotearoa Television Network was an earlier attempt to introduce a Māori channel in 1996, but it only lasted for 10 months (Stephens, 2014).
- iv. The introduction of the Freeview platform in 2007 that enabled audiences to record live broadcasts and time shift content; it included TVNZ6 (later replaced by youth Channel U) and TVNZ7 that featured hourly news bulletins until it was closed in 2012. At the same time, streamed or on demand television first began through TVNZ. It has subsequently become available via the major TV networks, plus companies like Quickflix, Netflix, Lightbox and Neon (NZ On Screen, n.d.).
- v. New Zealand completed the switch from analogue to digital transmission by late 2013. Since then, the functionality of television sets has been broadened to include Internet-enabled and Bluetooth technologies and high-definition images and wider screens (such as the 16:9 ratio) have become the norm.

These changes were partly driven by the hyper-commercial environment set up under the neoliberal reforms that came about in the 1980s under the fourth Labour Government. Thompson (2019) claims deregulation, financialisation and convergence have not only intensified commercial pressures on the media, they have led to important shifts in the ways



audiences discover and engage with media content. He argues that this, in turn, has complicated the traditional models of state intervention intended to deliver public service outcomes in New Zealand (p. 89). At the time of writing this thesis, the New Zealand government was exploring a potential merger between its two state broadcasters, Television New Zealand and Radio New Zealand (McCullough, 2020). This is the most recent example of state intervention in the local broadcasting sector, a theme that is explored among others in the next section.

### **2.1.2. The influences on television in New Zealand**

According to Herman (2000) the social purpose of the media is to educate and defend the economic, social and political agenda of privileged groups. This ideology holds strong when the organisational needs of television news is truly independent of high-level influencers, either in the private or governmental sector. However, Franklin (1997) argues that, historically and globally, news has been constrained by economic and political factors, and these have affected the ability of journalists to perform their work, particularly in an increasingly competitive environment. Accordingly, this section draws on the literature that has investigated the influences on television news in New Zealand.

Cocker (2008) described how broadcasting in New Zealand began in 1960 as a government-owned and operated television system that was set up under a public service. It was funded by a public licence fee and advertising revenue, staff consisted of public servants, and carried distilled television news content that did not challenge the government (Cocker, 2008). Post-reform in the late 1980s, Butterworth (2002) found that, despite the government advocating the model was free from controls and deregulation, audiences were spoon fed propaganda (p. 181). Lealand and Martin (2001) claimed that the Australian government's early inclinations were towards a public service model similar to that of New Zealand. However, a change of government from Labour to Liberal brought about a swift move to a dual or mixed television system of commercial and non-commercial entities, which allowed for greater free enterprise. This decision is likely to have precluded Australia from the deregulatory upheavals experienced in New Zealand.

### **2.1.2.1. Political influence on television in New Zealand**

Butterworth (2002) found that from 1960, the New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation was dominated by political influence. She described a neoliberal paradox where the government presented a political philosophy that emphasised the importance of economic growth with minimal interference and free market forces, yet it maintained ministerial control over capital expenditure that included broadcast (Butterworth, 2002). Cocker (2008) identified four critical periods that characterised the effects on New Zealand's broadcasting service: the first, was the introduction of radio under government restrictions in 1935; the second, was the introduction of television operated by civil servants in 1961; the third, was the transitioning of the public service broadcasting model into a public corporation in 1976; and the fourth period was the deregulation of the broadcasting system in the late 1980s and the new legislation drafted to support it (Cocker, 2008). He found that these four periods were marked by the failure of successive governments to identify and resolve organisational issues within the sector, and this had an accumulating effect of bringing about a lack of public loyalty to a medium seen to be in disarray (Cocker, 2008, p. 40).

Spicer et al., (2002) claimed that successive changes of government, each with conflicting approaches, also had a detrimental effect on the fledgling broadcaster. For example, in the 1970s the National government called for the operation of a second national television channel; then after a change of government to Labour, the New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation was split into four entities; then the next incoming National government merged the corporation back into a single entity (Spicer et al., 2002). According to Lealand (2002) "some of the gains that had resulted from the earlier corporatisation were reversed by these events" (p. 200).

The newly formed Television New Zealand (hereafter TVNZ) was in a vulnerable position when the deregulation of the global broadcasting sector occurred in 1987. Many academics have analysed how the international turmoil triggered by a global oil recession resulted in the worldwide deregulation of the broadcasting sector (Herman & Chomsky, 2002; Franklin, 1997; Cocker, 2008; McChesney, 2000, Spicer et al., 2002). Scholars have described how this period in history triggered a major shift among broadcasters as multiple independent media companies were introduced into a number of marketplaces throughout the world (Atkinson, 1989, 1994; McChesney, 2008; Murdock, 2015). In New Zealand, these sweeping

political and economic changes were widely considered to be some of the most brutal experienced by any country (Cocker, 2008; Atkinson, 1994; Spicer et al., 2002) and this is discussed next.

#### **2.1.2.2. Deregulation**

The New Zealand Government's move to deregulate the broadcasting sector was exacerbated by the neo-liberal stance of the Labour government of the day (Bell, 1995a). Bell claimed that, as in other parts of the world, the deregulation of broadcasting in New Zealand was justified largely by technological determinist arguments (p. 184) that assumed society's technological advances had influenced the development of its social structure and cultural values (Marx & Smith, 1994). But, she claimed, this did not explain why the Government's lack of power had been exaggerated and why the deregulation of the local broadcasting sector in 1989 had been extreme (Bell, 1995a). However, Bell found while the development of satellite communication was very expensive, the small nation could benefit from foreign investment if the market was deregulated. Accordingly, the state broadcasting operations were commercialised and the market became liberalised (Bell, 1995a, p. 184). And at the end of 1988, TVNZ became a state-owned enterprise (SOE) with a primary statutory obligation to provide an annual fiscal return to the state (Comrie, 1999).

A number of academics have discussed the changes to TVNZ during the following three years, when the organisation transitioned from a public service monopoly into a commercial operation (Atkinson, 1994; Comrie, 1999; Cocker, 2008). Cocker (2008) took a broad view of New Zealand's broadcasting history and found it to be “inextricably bound with the politicians' belief in their alienable right not merely to determine policy but to be involved in a day-to-day oversight of an area in which they had a vested interest” (p. 52). However, Atkinson (1994) identified specific examples of changes in television news since deregulation. He described as the Americanisation of One Network News how the state broadcaster demonstrated increasing “morselisation” where news content was reduced into shorter components packaged into saleable segments, and “depoliticisation” or the removal of serious discourse about public affairs mainly stemming from the drive to maximise ratings and therefore advertising revenue (Atkinson, 1994, p. 152). Comrie (1999) found broadcast deregulation had affected the use of sources in television news stories. There had been an increase in the air time given to commercials which had brought about a decrease in the length

of sound bites (or interviewees' quotes), in TVNZ's news stories and fewer cited sources, including a reduction in the use of official sources, and a greater use of celebrities and victims (Comrie, 1999, p. 51). These characteristics were consistent with the findings of Franklin (2005) who found the news media in Britain had experienced a "dumbing down", or McDonaldisation (in reference to the fast-food outlet), characterised by shifting news values and a dull, staple diet of programming obsessed with ratings (p. 12).

Deregulation also resulted in major changes in New Zealand's broadcasting governance model. Prior to 1988, responsibility for the sector lay with the Minister of Broadcasting, and the Broadcasting Tribunal was responsible for granting warrants and hearing complaints (Bell, 1995). However, under the Broadcasting Act (1989) TVNZ became governed by three cabinet ministers: the Minister of Broadcasting and Communications, the Minister of State-owned Enterprises, and the Minister responsible for the state broadcasters of TVNZ and Radio New Zealand (Bell, 1995, p. 183). Furthermore, the Minister of Broadcasting oversaw the Broadcasting Standards Authority whose role it was to establish broadcast standards and adjudicate on complaints, while the Broadcasting Commission (New Zealand On Air) would collect and distribute the broadcasting licence fee based on a funding model first laid out in the Peacock Report (1986).

The deregulation of the New Zealand television system left television researchers with difficulty in finding a theoretical model that accounted for such a "complex field of forces in any television system" (Horrocks, 2004 p. 51). However, Lealand (2002) argued that deregulation was "little more than annoying gnats buzzing on the largely impervious, wrinkled hide of the beast that is commercial radio and television in New Zealand" (p. 212). He claimed that deregulation freed up several areas of legislation that protected the state broadcaster from the public taking part in the frequency leasing process, freed the networks from obligations to provide quality content or meet local production thresholds, and freed the sector from the restraints on advertising and foreign ownership. These freedoms enabled competition within the sector, created more jobs and broadcasting outlets, and increased local content and programming choice for viewers (Lealand, 2002). However, Cocker (2008) argues that the effect of local deregulation undermined the social, political, and cultural role

that broadcasting performed in New Zealand. This is discussed further in the next section, which explores the literature in relation to the political economy concept.

### **2.1.2.3. The political economy of communication**

McChesney (2000) and Herman and Chomsky's (2002) seminal studies of the political economy of communication addressed the breaking down of the relationship between media and communication systems and the broader structure of society. Herman and Chomsky (2002) devised the "propaganda model", an analytical framework that could be used to identify the power relationships between institutional structures and media ownership and control (p.1.). The model was applied to the study of the American media ecology and revealed that the interests of corporate and state power were exercised through five filters. The filters included media ownership, advertising, sourcing, ideology, and flak as a means of disciplining the media (Herman & Chomsky, 2002). Accordingly, they found that a world of virtual communities had been built by advertisers and this was exploiting consumer information and had weakened the public sphere (Habermas, 2006; Herman & Chomsky, 2002). Also, they argued that media ownership had led to rapid globalisation, where nine corporate giants dominated the global media market, four of which provided news, investigative reports and documentaries that addressed political issues. The richer the corporate media giants had become, the greater the social inequality (Herman & Chomsky, 2002). Furthermore, they claimed the worldwide media had contributed to the unseating of democracy and made a connection between the decline of public service values and the decline in "strong, trustworthy and reliable journalism" (Herman & Chomsky, 2002, p. 49).

Mullen (2010) claimed that, since its publication in 1988, the propaganda model had received very little attention within the field of media and communication studies, the wider social sciences or the media. However, he argued that although the model was met with controversy from scholars, it could be applied to advance knowledge of developments within the media. Herman and Chomsky (2002) said further academic work was needed on the propaganda model to increase its relevance to the 21st century, however, there is little evidence to suggest it has progressed since then (Nesbit, 2020).

Belair-Gagnon (2019) found a weakness in the political economy of news work research in that it does not describe how these processes take place in daily routines or a given cultural

symbolic system, unlike studies of routine and social organisation of news work. This is an area of study that has been addressed in sociology studies and is discussed in section 2.6.4. However, it is possible to point towards evidence of the consequences of political economy on the New Zealand news media through Auckland University of Technology's annual Journalism, Media and Democracy reports, hereafter referred to as the JMAD reports. In a review of the JMAD reports going back to 2011, editor Myllylahti found that private financial entities regarded media companies not as structured wholes but as assemblages of business units that ought to be continually restructured to maximise profit rates (Myllylahti & Baker, 2019, p. 82). Some key points are that in 2017, privately owned, independent media outlets had out-numbered those media companies owned by shareholders and the Crown for the first time (Myllylahti, 2017). The 2018 JMAD report found a considerable shift as international conglomerates strengthened their hold within New Zealand media ownership (Myllylahti, 2018). The television-based Australian Nine Entertainment took over Stuff's parent company Fairfax Media and the television, radio and interactive media company MediaWorks merged with an Australian outdoor advertising company (Myllylahti, 2018). In the 2019 JMAD report, fundamental changes among New Zealand media sector were identified as major media companies continued to fight for their financial viability (Myllylahti & Baker, 2019). The report revealed that the commercial television broadcasting sector was facing difficulties: TV3's MediaWorks company put its television arm up for sale; Sky TV invested heavily in rugby broadcasting rights with a high cost (while not paying a dividend); and TVNZ announced plans to invest more in local content while withdrawing dividends from the government for the next three years (Myllylahti & Baker, 2019, p. 81). The 2020 JMAD report revealed there were further major changes in New Zealand media ownership (Myllylahti & Hope, 2020). The most remarkable change was the purchase of the online news organisation *Stuff* by the company's chief executive for a mere dollar from Australian Nine Entertainment. The multiplatform media company MediaWorks sold its television operations to the American Discovery Channel including its television news service, Newshub, thereby making the media corporation a substantial broadcaster in the New Zealand market. Business models have come under huge pressure leading to further changes in media ownership, where the majority of New Zealand media companies are now privately or independently-owned, apart from TVNZ and Radio New Zealand (subsequently referred to as RNZ) which are both publicly owned (Myllylahti & Hope, 2020, p. 16).

However, as mentioned in section 2.1.1., in 2020 the New Zealand Government announced that it had plans to restructure TVNZ and RNZ before the next election in 2023 (Mitchell, 2020). The announcement did not come as a surprise to academics who have long speculated that TVNZ would eventually be sold (Goode & Littlewood, 2002; Comrie and Fountaine, 2005; Dunleavy, 2008; Horrocks, 1996, 2004). In March 2021, the Strong Public Media Business Case Governance Group of high-level sector representatives was appointed and charged to oversee the development of a business case and draft a charter that would propose how TVNZ and RNZ would merge (Ministry of Culture & Heritage, 2021). At the time of writing, the charter was expected to be presented to the Government later this year. Peacock (2021) proposed this would be the biggest shake-up in the local media this millennium. This study argues that the shifts in media ownership patterns, particularly among television news media, suggest that academic debates cannot ignore the influence that governments and conglomerates have, particularly at a time when the need for a relationship with audiences is intensifying as the market continues to fragment. And in doing so, it proposes that a new age of broadcasting is now upon us and this is discussed next.

### **2.1.3. Is Web 2.0. the third age of broadcasting?**

Barwise and Ehrenberg (1988) argued that if radio and television were the first two ages of broadcasting, the Internet is the third age. Zelizer (2015) claimed that the Web 2.0. was the most advanced technological development of our time, and therefore it brought a threat to the power and financial viability of existing media forms – the legacy media of print, radio and television – as it drew on larger political, economic and social spheres. However, Gillmor (2004) found that while the Internet had an impact on the news landscape, it had not overshadowed existing news services, arguing that it had in fact expanded the way humans told each other stories and advanced the reach of communication.

Next, this literature review describes the limited research into the effects of Web 2.0. on television news, particularly in the past 10 years where the findings of Harrison (2010), Wardle and Williams (2010), Williams et al., (2011a), Wardle, Dubberley, and Brown (2014) and Johnston (2016) are based on data more than 10 years old. A reason proposed for this shortfall, is that journalism academics have been more inclined to focus their lenses towards the impact of the Web 2.0. on online news environments rather than on broadcast news (Bird,

2011; Carpentier, 2011; Hermida, 2010; Jenkins et al., 2013; Lewis, 2012; Loosen & Schmidt, 2012; Ostertag & Tuchman, 2012). Furthermore, Cushion (2011) claimed there was a perception by academics that television news had become “dated” or “unfashionable” as a research topic when compared with online, interactive and multimedia journalism (p. 180). He said scholars had become attracted to new media and online news, and this moved academic interest away from television broadcast news. Nevertheless, this literature review argues that, while television broadcast news may have slipped under the academic radar, adaptations that have been made during the Web 2.0. era are worthy of further exploration, as current practices suggest. The aforementioned broadcasting reforms and market pressures flag the way the contemporary television news ecology has changed. So how does the medium hold onto its position as a dominant service provider to New Zealand audiences?

#### **2.1.4. The challenge to the television news sector**

This study has drawn on industry-wide reports to ascertain the relevance of television broadcast news within viewing audiences in order to inform the argument towards the need for further research to be conducted into television news. Firstly, findings from research data that scopes audience behaviour generally is presented, and secondly, research into trends that have occurred since the Covid-19 pandemic struck the world in 2020.

##### **2.1.4.1. Audience behaviour**

The annual Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism Digital News Report presents the results of research undertaken across 40-plus countries. The findings provide a broad overview of audience behaviour in relation to the media, of which the television news-related data has been selected here for discussion. New Zealand data is not represented in the report – most likely due to the country’s small population and limited sample size – so this study has focused on Australian, British and American data.

The Reuters Digital News Report provides a longitudinal study of data recorded between 2013 and 2019 (Newman et al., 2019, pp. 15-132). Here are some of the key findings:

- i. In Australia, television news remained strong and steady and was favoured by 66 percent of audiences in 2019, compared with 65 percent of audiences in 2013.

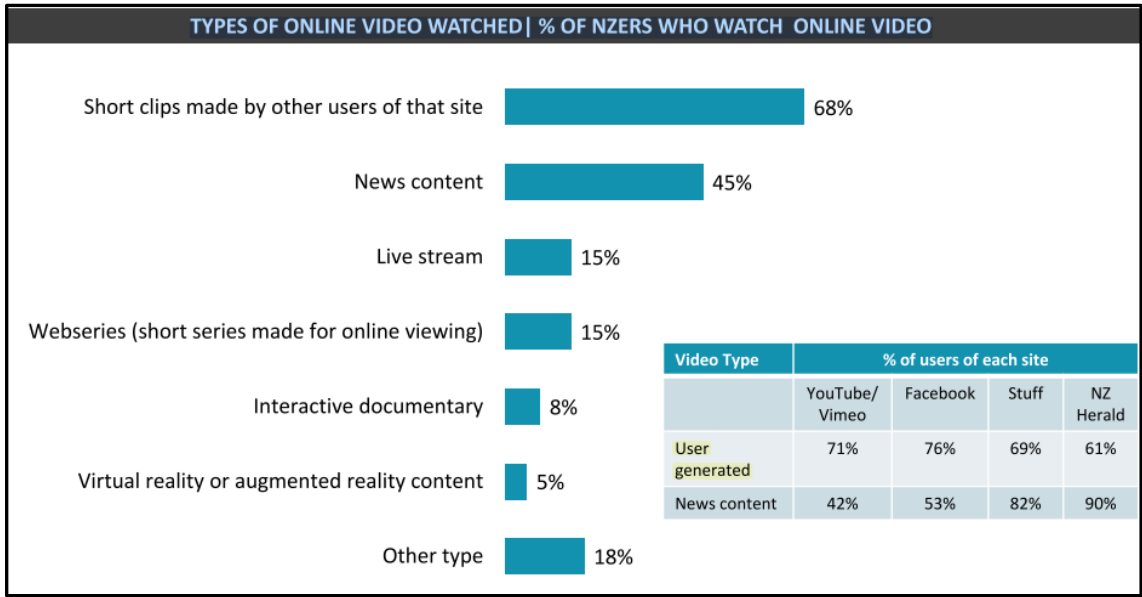


- ii. In Britain, television news was slowly declining in favour of online and social media news sources, from 79 percent in 2013 to 71 percent in 2019. However, people turned to television news at times of crisis, as demonstrated when the parliamentary Brexit vote for the United Kingdom to exit from the European Union occurred during the survey period.
- iii. In America, television news use significantly decreased from 72 percent in 2013 to 58 percent in 2019. A bump in news consumption was visible in 2017 after the election of Donald Trump [as American President] but since then television, print and social media news use declined. The report identified the cause of the downturn as a “climate of heightened hostility toward the US press under Donald Trump” that has brought about “low levels of media trust - especially on the right” (p. 117). This was despite evidence of ties between the White House and *Fox News* deepening, including a charge by *The New Yorker* that the broadcaster buried a story on Trump’s payoffs to adult film star, Stormy Daniels.

Furthermore, as each generation of younger viewers matured there was a downward trend in television broadcast news viewership. Instead, for this group, the smartphone was used as the main first point of contact with news each day for 28 percent of British and American younger audiences, overtaking television at 27 percent for the first time. These results reflected the technological preferences of the emerging demographic group as each has naturally followed the advances in technology of their generation since the introduction of the Internet. For example, audiences over the age of 35 were born prior to the Internet; Gen Y audiences, also known as millennials, grew up at the turn of the millennium in a world without Facebook and YouTube; while Gen Z audiences have also been referred to as digital natives and have no memories of the pre-Internet age ([Dimock, 2019](#)).

A report by New Zealand On Air found television news still had the greatest audience share of 21 percent over social media, newspapers, radio and others (Glasshouse Consulting, 2018). Furthermore, television was the most popular medium from 6pm onwards (pp. 27-47) of relevance to this study, as it draws on data from the 6pm primetime evening period. However, despite strong continuity in audience numbers, the New Zealand data revealed an emergent trend by television audiences away from broadcast media and towards online news. New

Zealand On Air (2018) found that user-generated clips were the most popular type of video to watch online, followed by video content posted by news sites as figure 2.1 demonstrates.



**Figure 2.1. Percentage of New Zealanders who watch online video by category (Glasshouse Consulting, 2018, p. 48).**

The above figure shows that user-generated video was the most popular form of video watched by 68 percent of audiences, with Facebook the most popular source watched by 76 percent of audiences, closely followed by YouTube/Vimeo at 71 percent.

These results suggest that the New Zealand audience patterns are starting to follow global trends towards online sources for news information. A New Zealand On Air report (Glasshouse Consulting, 2020) presented findings on its fourth wave of the study of audience behaviour since a benchmark was established in 2014. The following key points are drawn from the report:

- i. Audiences of traditional or legacy news media including television, radio and newspapers were found to be equal in size to online media at 61 percent of the total audience aged 15 years and over.
- ii. TVNZ1 news and updates were the most widely watched and trusted during the Covid-19 outbreak by 47 percent of the viewing audience, while all four of the other top five TV channels showed a decline.

However, these findings were gathered prior to a global pandemic that distorted the landscape considerably, as discussed next.

#### **2.1.4.2. The Covid-19 pandemic**

In 2020 and 2021, the Covid-19 pandemic had a unique effect on news trends, both globally and locally as audiences were affected by government confinements including widespread lockdowns as they attempted to isolate and eradicate the virus that was killing millions of people worldwide (Coronavirus Resource Center, 2021). During this period, audiences were often forced to organise both their work and leisure time while confined to their homes, and this resulted in an increase in domestic media consumption (Mikos, 2020). This was quantified in the 2020 Reuters Institute Digital Report (Newman et al., 2020), which polled 80,000 people in 40 markets when the virus was first at its peak that found:

- i. prime time news' nightly audiences across European Broadcasting Union countries had increased by 14 percent;
- ii. in the UK the BBC's bulletins had increased by approximately 30 percent; and that
- iii. Prime Minister Boris Johnson's address to the nation was one of the most-watched live broadcasts in television history in the UK, with 27 million viewers. (Newman et al., 2020).

The report concluded:

The [coronavirus] crisis is very likely to accelerate long-term structural changes towards a more digital, more mobile, and more platform-dominated media environment. This has helped us to see the impact of the crisis in terms of sources of news and also reminded us of the critical role that the news media play at times of national crisis.

(Newman et al., 2020, p. 4)

In New Zealand, the two main television networks also were reported to have experienced a surge in ratings each time the country went into lockdown. The trend was most significant on Aug 9, 2020, when TVNZ's One News viewership increased by 108,500 in a single night while TV3's Newshub viewership increased by 36,200 (Dillane, 2020).

Experts predict that the global surge in television news ratings during the pandemic is almost certainly a temporary phenomenon (Newman et al., 2020). However, the aforementioned general audience movement away from legacy media and towards online news sources should not be overlooked. Nielsen and Sambrook (2016) and others have claimed that if television news organisations do not react to the decline, over time they risk becoming irrelevant to their audiences.

These points remind us that fluctuations in audiences are recurring, and of the vulnerability of a sector that relies on innovation and relevance to retain a connection with audiences' needs for change. Accordingly, this thesis aims to reinvigorate scholarly attention towards television news and explore ways organisations have begun to adapt. The next section of this literature review examines 'user-generated content', initially in the broader sense, then secondly, in relation to television news.

## **2.2. Defining user-generated content (UGC)**

Material produced by members of the public in the post-Internet era was first identified in scholarship as user-generated content in 2005 (Douglas, 2006; Hermida & Thurman, 2008) and referred to in French as "contenu auto-cr   " or the "rise of the amateur creators" (Wunsch-Vincent & Vickery, 2007, p. 8). Wardle and Williams (2008) argued that user-generated content was considered by the public to be a "clunky" or "ugly phrase" (p. 13) while open-sourced journalism (Deuze, 2001), audience material (Wardle & Williams, 2008) or ambient journalism (Hermida, 2010) were among alternative terms that were rejected. It is noteworthy that other terms applied included participatory journalism, and citizen journalism and these are discussed further in section 2.3.

Despite frequent references to this topic by academics, no commonly agreed definition existed until the material became formally identified by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, an international organisation promoting economic progress and world trade (Wunsch-Vincent & Vickery, 2007). The organisation reported that:

- i. User-generated content was material that should become published on a publicly accessible website or a social networking site.

- ii. A certain amount of creative effort was put into creating the work or adapting existing works to construct a new one. This meant creators would be required to add their own value to the work, thereby encouraging collaboration rather than merely copying a portion of a television show and posting it to an online video website, for example. Such activity had been seen frequently at the time, and therefore had not been considered as user-generated. However, “the minimum amount of creative effort” requirement was found to be hard to define and depended on the context of the material.
- iii. The content was to be created outside professional routines and practices and therefore outside an institutional or a commercial market context. It was intended to be produced by non-professionals without the expectation of profit or remuneration, where motivating factors included connecting with peers, achieving a certain level of fame, notoriety, or prestige, and the desire to express oneself.

(adapted from Wunsch-Vincent & Vickery, 2007, p. 8)

The emergence of user-generated content was the result of four factors that occurred from the mid 1990s:

- i. Technological drivers, such as the decreasing costs of consumer-grade electronics, the increased processing speeds, the wide-spread uptake of broadband, and the availability of Internet-based hosting and operating sites including software that enabled users to edit and create audio and video without professional expertise;
- ii. Social drivers, considered to be among the most important, were an increased use of broadband, the desire for individuals to share, contribute and create online communities that changed the media consumption habits especially among the younger age groups who were sometimes referred to as “digital natives”;
- iii. Economic drivers, such as the increase of Internet and media firms in hosting user-generated content, motivated by a fear of losing revenues due to decreased interest in traditional media forms. This also reflected the growing amount of financing and venture capital that was used to boost user-generated content related sites and services, USD 262 million in the first half of 2006; and

- iv. Legal drivers, including the rise of new legal means to create and distribute content, flexible licensing and copyright schemes such as Creative Commons licences that permitted easier distribution, copying and amalgamation of non-commercial content.

(adapted from Wunsch-Vincent & Vickery, 2007, p. 13-14)

The OECD found it difficult to define the material in terms of an economic value, as the material was not intended to be used by amateurs for profit (Wunsch-Vincent & Vickery, 2007). This was because only highly rating content had the potential to be selected and monetised, whereas traditional media content was created at great expense and guaranteed publication (Wunsch-Vincent & Vickery, 2007; Hermida & Thurman, 2008; Wardle et al., 2014). There were eight forms of user-generated content first defined by the OECD as shown in the table below:

**Table 2.2. Eight types of user-generated content defined by the OECD**

<b>Type of content</b>	<b>Description</b>
Text, novel and poetry	Original writings or expanding on other texts, novels and poems.
Photo/images	Digital photographs taken by users and posted online; photos or images created or modified by users.
Music and audio	Recording and/or editing one's own audio content and publishing, syndicating, and/or distributing it in digital format.
Video and film	Recording/and/or editing video content and posting it. Includes remixes of existing content, homemade content, and a combination of the two.
Citizen journalism	Journalistic reporting on current events done by ordinary citizens. Such citizens write news stories, blog posts, and take photos or videos of current events and post them online.
Educational content	Content created in schools, universities, or with the purpose of educational use.
Mobile content	Content that is created on mobile phones or other wireless devices such as text messaging, photos and videos. Generally sent to other users via MMS (Media Messaging Service), emailed or uploaded to the Internet.
Virtual content	Content created within the context of an online virtual environment or integrated into it. Some virtual worlds allow content to be sold. User-created games are also on the rise.

(adapted from Wunsch-Vincent & Vickery, 2007, p. 15)

The above table has been adapted in order to demonstrate the areas of relevance to this study by excluding a third column that related to examples of platforms where the described material was applied. As this information was published in 2007 a number of entries were out of date and more recent platforms such as Twitter, Instagram and Snap chat did not exist therefore the column was not considered relevant. There has been no updated report by the OECD in the 13 years since the information was published, reinforcing the need within scholarship for a timely review.

During the past decade, user-generated content has evolved to reflect a wide variety of content that has included amateur news creation (Holton et al., 2013; Wardle et al., 2014). However, there appears to be a clear demarcation between user-generated content with diverse motivations and the intentional production of material within a journalistic context. The rationale for this demarcation is that the material created by individual users is intended primarily for social purposes, while material that has come to be known as citizen journalism is a form of content that closely resembles the output of traditional journalists (Al Nashmi et al., 2017) and this is discussed next.

### **2.2.1. Citizen journalism and participatory journalism**

Allan (2007), Hirst and Harrison (2007) and Goode (2009) have defined citizen journalism as a range of broad, web-based activities by a person not attached to a media organisation that has engaged in journalistic practices while creating original content or adding to existing online content through re-posting, commenting, or tagging. The material has also been described as alternative media (Atton, 2002). Goode (2009) argued that the incorporation of citizen practice into mainstream journalism was beneficial as it offered audiences differing perspectives, modes of address and story selection. Furthermore, citizen journalism brought new possibilities for non-journalists to participate in sense making that shaped and broke news (p. 1291). An example of this is the work of the acclaimed citizen journalist Eliot Higgins, also known as Brown Moses, an unemployed finance and admin worker who used online tools from his lounge in the UK to break major international stories on war reportage and propaganda (Weaver, 2013). Higgins had been operating the independent international investigative platform, Bellingcat, since 2014 when its team discovered key information that led to the identification of the missile launcher and perpetrators that shot down the Malaysian Airliner MH17 over the eastern Ukraine, killing 298 crew and passengers on board. Bellingcat has grown to become a collective of citizen journalists who use open source and social media, and have staff and contributors in more than 20 countries around the world (Bellingcat, n.d.).

Academics have also applied the term participatory journalism to a wide variety of initiatives undertaken by mainstream media to incorporate user contributions into the making of news (Fröhlich et al., 2012; Hermida, 2011a; Paulussen et al., 2007). This has included playing an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analysing and disseminating news and



information (Bowman & Willis, 2003, p. 9). Other forms of citizen journalism have been acknowledged in American law, where courts have ruled that documentary filmmakers, authors of technical publications, professional investigative books, and unpublished writers qualified as journalists if they have started their projects with the intent to publish or broadcast to the public (Hayes et al., 2007). For the purposes of consistency, this study draws on Wall (2015) and refers to citizen journalism as that which has been created intentionally for the purposes of news, because of its potential link to active citizen participation in society (Cottle, 2014).

Nearly 15 years ago, Brighton and Foy (2007) found that there was little citizen journalism used in an average news day therefore it did not pose a threat to established news models (p. 94). However, Allan (2007) claimed that citizen reporting had a profound impact on the forms and practices of mainstream journalism at all levels, despite its mix of critics and advocates. More recently, Fröhlich et al. (2012) argued that traditional journalism had benefitted from citizen journalism as it provided important first-hand content, especially in catastrophes, natural disasters or tragedies. They also found that incorporating citizen content increased audience trust and reader loyalty in mainstream media (Fröhlich et al., 2012). Currently, as academics and professionals have mellowed into an acceptance of citizen journalism, it has often been viewed as a variation of professional journalism although many news outlets see it as a phenomenon primarily to be tamed or managed (Wall, 2020). Wall (2020) argues that it has become increasingly difficult to consider citizen journalism separately from traditional journalism because of the rise of social media platforms where citizen content appears alongside professional news. Accordingly, scholarship suggests that citizen journalism has become an essential part of newsgathering and delivery that provides access to global and local events news organisations would not otherwise cover (Wall, 2015):

While citizen journalists may stand accused of measuring the world in coffee spoons, the fragmentary but sometimes powerful content they produce may contain words and images of death and survival, destruction and renewal, hope and despair; in sum, of some of the essential moments of life on earth. On particularly bad days, some of these amateurs even die in order to create 'mere' citizen content.

(Wall, 2015, p. 797)

Wall refers in the above quotation to the risks associated with the creation of citizen journalism by individuals who are not professionally trained to do so. An example of this is

that more than 700 citizen journalists who have been killed in Syria, according to the Syrian Network for Human Rights report on World Press Freedom Day 2020 (Kako, 2020). Wardle et al. (2014) also found the health and safety of amateurs was at risk when putting their lives in danger to capture pictures.

Citizen journalism is not part of the focus of this study, but it has contributed to the legitimacy of non-professional content in news media and put pressure on news media to include a wider array of voices. This is helpful when considering the contemporary relationship between journalists and their audiences, which is discussed next.

### **2.2.2. The people formerly known as the audience**

Over the past several decades, the expansion of new media resources has led to what Benkler (2006) described as a hybrid media ecology where commercial, amateur, governmental, nonprofit, educational, activist and other players interact with each other in ever more complex ways. Each of these groups has the power to produce and distribute content. Therefore, each is being transformed by their new power and responsibilities and in the process, the focus on individual consumers has given way to a new emphasis on the social networks through which production and consumption occur (Benkler, 2006).

Jenkins (2004) held the Web 2.0. technological shift responsible for these social changes, as it had altered the relationship between pre-existing technologies, industries, markets, genres and audiences (p. 34). Jenkins and Deuze (2008) said a small number of media companies were homogenising culture through their dominance of production and distribution of media content. Furthermore they found that individuals had been defined through their roles as consumers rather than being seen as producers of – or better yet, participants within – the surrounding culture (Jenkins & Deuze, 2008).

Some academics have labeled the migration of audiences towards the contemporary media system as convergence culture (Jenkins 2006; Singer et al., 2011). Gillmor (2004) argued that modern technology had brought with it a communications toolkit that enabled anyone to participate in the news, become a journalist cheaply and have a global reach. He argued that the days of the “big media” model were gone, where news once treated as a “lecture” had been replaced by news as a “conversation” where the lines between producers and consumers

had become blurred (Gillmor, 2004, p. 60). But it was Rosen (2006) who was the first to coin the now hackneyed phrase “people formerly known as the audience” (p. 1) when describing the changing role of audiences in a post he shared on the blog of the Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute at New York University that discussed the fate of the press in the digital era. He said,

The people formerly known as the audience are those who were on the receiving end of a media system that ran one way, in a broadcasting pattern, with high entry fees and a few firms competing to speak very loudly while the rest of the population listened in isolation from one another— and who today are not in a situation like that at all.

(Rosen, 2006, p. 1)

In the above quote, Rosen described how a number of Web 2.0.-enabled tools had provided citizens with a freedom of public expression: blogs were an alternative to printing presses, podcasting was an alternative to radio, and video posts provided an alternative to television (Rosen, 2006). Additionally, he said that the media no longer had the power to control communications. While the news editors chose what ran on a front page, it was now citizens who were able to edit and make their own choices (Rosen, 2006).

Bowman and Willis (2003) found that audience participation in the news had become a fundamental part of the Internet, via newsgroups, mailing lists, bulletin boards, fora, weblogs and collaborative communities. This exemplifies the multiple reach of individual users and the shift from one-to-many to many-to-many communication (Heinonen, 2011; Carpentier, 2011). This multi-dimensional power shift and the premise that journalists no longer were the sole creators of news, resulted in professionals engaging in soul-searching to revisit – not only their daily practices – but also the values and conceptions therein (Heinonen, 2011). However, Fox and Mitu (2016) argued that convergence in some television newsrooms still has not been fully developed as far as enthusiasts imagined. Wall (2020) found that independent forms of participatory journalism continued to expand not merely because of technological changes but due to the failures of professional news to adequately respond to the changing nature of how people participate in public communication (p. 9). She argued that professional journalism often failed to bring citizens closer to the news, and instead was keeping them at a distance. Others have become focused on the debates around citizens as journalists in the media landscape.

However, the concept of amateurs engaging in news is not a new phenomenon. In the 1600s, the last page of a newspaper was often left blank so that the publication's readers could contribute their own news before passing the paper onto others, a practice replaced by "letters to the editor" when journalism became recognised as a profession (Hermida, 2011). Since the early days of broadcasting, audiences have taken part in radio phone-ins (Hilmes & Loviglio, 2002), television talk shows (Livingstone & Lunt, 1994) and vox pop interviews (Beckers et al., 2016), and have also commented on live-to-air news programmes such as breakfast television. Furthermore, amateur footage has appeared on television news programmes since the 1960s. Wardle et al. (2014) cited examples such as Frank Zapruder's 1963 footage of the assassination of the American President John F. Kennedy, and George Holliday's 1991 footage of police beating to death the African-American taxi driver Rodney King as artifacts that had become part of our visual culture through exposure on television news. But it is the significant increases in the practice (Williams et al., 2011) that is most relevant to this study, including the volume of social media content produced and the speed with which it is being subsumed within television news.

### **2.2.3. User-generated content and television news**

In recent times journalists have considered publicly accessible UGV to be a cheap way to source pictures such as viral clips of talented pets and amusing babies that have amassed millions of views on social media in a short period of time (Wardle et al., 2014). However, Vujnovic et al. (2010) argued that news organisations were only interested in video footage that was newsworthy, such as coverage of events that had been missed by professional news teams. Two examples that frequently have been cited by academics have included the dramatic eyewitness footage recorded of a tsunami that flattened parts of Thailand and Sri Lanka on Boxing Day in 2004 and the bombing of the London underground in 2005 (Douglas, 2006; Hermida & Thurman, 2008). The response to the London underground bombing resulted in large volumes of user-generated content submitted to television news organisations including the BBC, which received multiple videos, 300 photographs, 22,000 emails and text messages (Douglas, 2006; Hermida & Thurman, 2008).

Most scholars recognised the Arab Spring of 2010 was the coming of age of user-generated content, when videos were recorded by citizens caught in the streets during political protests

in Egypt (Cottle, 2011; Ghannam, 2011). The footage and images showed acts of violence such as fire-bombings that injured citizens and damaged property, shared with the media to demonstrate the power that citizens had to capture global attention and shape international public opinion during a time of social change (Campbell & Hawk, 2012). Some scholars claim user-generated content rose to even greater prominence in 2011 when multiple significant news events occurred within a short time period. These events included public riots in England after the police shot dead a local black man, a massacre in Norway when a lone wolf terrorist killed 77 students at a summer camp, and a tsunami in Japan that swept 20,000 people in its wake to their deaths (Wardle et al., 2014; Wahl-Jorgensen, 2015).

Some news organisations draw on global television news agencies for the sourcing, verifying and republishing of user-generated video. Murrell (2018) found that Associated Press, Reuters and Agence Franc-Presse supplied content to broadcasters that did not have the resources to conduct the costly processes themselves. She argued that amateur video supplied by agencies was playing an increasingly significant role in broadcast news, particularly in the coverage of combat zones that the agencies prided themselves on covering from start to finish.

Other news organisations have created dedicated resources to the mining of social media. For example, in 2005, the BBC established a specialised workstation of journalists whose principal job was to review and verify user-generated content for publication across its network (Williams et al., 2011) and this is discussed next.

#### **2.2.3.1. The BBC's UGC (user-generated content) Hub model**

Harrison (2010) and Wardle and Williams (2010) were among the first to examine a user-generated content or UGC Hub work station created by BBC news in Britain in direct response to a growing influx of material it had received which amounted to, on average, at least 1,000 stills and video clips in a quiet week. The UGC Hub grew out of the News Interactive section of the newsroom and was central to the way the organisation dealt with the material across the BBC's news operation (Wardle & Williams, 2010). The concept was marketed to staff by BBC senior managers as: fulfilling the organisation's public service obligations towards mass reach; a means to combat viewer disengagement with mainstream news; and a response to changes in technology balanced with the editorial ability of the BBC to make user-generated content fit its own traditional news values (Harrison, 2010, p. 243).

Harrison claimed staff within the organisation were concerned the real reason for the BBC's focus on user-generated content was to cut costs. But this was not found to be the case, as instead, it was actually more expensive:

UGC is not a cheap option. The BBC's impartiality rules do not allow for a partisan viewpoint to dominate and UGC is seen as requiring careful scrutiny (sometimes legal and always editorially and journalistically) and as such is labour intensive and expensive. The use of UGC at the BBC is quite a change to what was once a static and fairly unresponsive and self-contained news organisation.

(Harrison, 2010, p. 244)

In the abovementioned quote, Harrison has described how the addition of user-generated content required a costly infrastructure to support its production and processing. She identified four distinct categories of the material used at the BBC:

- i. Unsolicited news, came from ordinary people competing against large corporations, or a cry in the dark where a member of the public is in a difficult or disaster situation and was often an eyewitness account, also identified as "accidental journalism" (For more on accidental journalism see Allan, 2013).
- ii. Solicited news that could enhance, deepen or broaden a news story, similar to the use of vox pop, also known as vox populi or voice of the people, a polling-type technique that has been present in news story-telling for many years.
- iii. Broader content that involved forward planning and seeking audiences' thoughts on upcoming new ideas, debates or angles that could also include personal artifacts repurposed and used to create stories not normally heard or identified.
- iv. Audience watchdog content, which according to Harrison consisted of complaint content, but the practicalities of how these have been incorporated into television news was not discussed.

(Harrison, 2010, p. 245–247)

Williams et al. (2011) studied the model and found that the BBC news journalists identified audience content as: eye-witness accounts; case studies and tip offs; audience comments in response to a call to action; collaborative content produced by the audience via professional support; networked journalism, where professionals and amateurs work together across

brands and traditional boundaries; and non-news content such as wildlife, scenic or community events that are not necessarily considered newsworthy. They found the user-generated content most commonly used by the network was eyewitness material including direct accounts of experiences, audio-visual material, and story tip-offs (Williams et al., 2011). However, there were two types of user-generated content that had a disruptive effect on journalists' relationships with their audiences, and these were projects where audiences had the most control over the production process, such as Web diaries, and online community projects (Williams et al., 2011).

Wardle et al. (2014) identified a number of concerning issues in relation to the UGC hub. This included concerns for the health and safety of amateurs who put their lives in danger to capture pictures, and the effect on the journalists' wellbeing after viewing traumatic content for long periods of time. They also found that staff who worked daily with user-generated content were not sufficiently trained in verification, and that the processes relating to the treatment of user-generated content were often under-developed (Wardle et. al, 2014).

Nevertheless, Williams et al. (2011) found the BBC journalists considered user-generated content to be an additional news source that became highly valued when arresting audio-visual material of breaking or existing news events were present. They claimed the established processes of journalistic production remained unchanged, that the roles of the journalist and the audience remained the same, and that collaborations between the two groups were rare (Williams et al., 2011). Furthermore, they also found that increased audience interaction would continue to be a "euphemism for allowing the public to subsidise the corporation's newsgathering efforts" (p. 96).

Harrison (2010) proposed that, in the future, user-generated content would likely consist largely of a photo or video taken from a mobile phone, stored as a repository of potentially useful sources. She claimed that user-generated content had become part of the mix of established BBC news priorities, without any alteration of news selection criteria or editorial values. There is evidence that news processes were resistant to change, raising the question 10 years later: does that continue to be the case or has a commercially exposed news media system, particularly in New Zealand, been a catalyst for change?

Research has tended to focus on bulletin-leading and dramatic news, neglecting other possible changes. There is a public perception that news events are always and everywhere, and that the amount of news that happens in the world every day almost just exactly fits the news platform (Ilan, 2019). However, as news workers will tell you and Ilan (2019) found, there are many considerations that affected events that became news, including time constraints and decision-making, competition, and the allocation of resources and budgets. For those reasons, television newsrooms often rely on filler material or “shelf items” (p. 30) kept aside for their lack of timeliness but valuable when filling in a gap within a fixed duration of broadcast news. According to Ilan, scholarship on such items is extremely scarce, yet user-generated video content sometimes is likely to be of a timeless nature and therefore this an area of inquiry that is worthy of further exploration.

This study aims to update the decade-old scholarship through the analysis of data gathered in 2018 that is likely to reflect the rapidly changing news ecology. It also expands on the data-gathering methods of observation and interview previously applied in these seminal studies, by including video-ethnography and broadcast data in order to capture a broader context.

The study is situated alongside others that have investigated news selection and objectivity, exploring how television news decision-making processes operate. Accordingly, the theories relating to news values, agenda-setting and framing are investigated in the next section, firstly across the broad range of news media, then secondly, specific to television news.

### **2.3. News framing and professional boundaries**

Scholars have long attempted to define how news workers identified the value of an event as newsworthy, how much information is warranted and how that story is ranked alongside other items of interest (Galtung & Ruge, 1965; Hall, 1981; Harcup & O'Neill, 2001, 2017; and O'Neill & Harcup, 2008). The most significant breakthrough was when peace sociologists Galtung and Ruge (1965) found that what individuals chose to consider as an ‘event’ was culturally determined. By analysing the factors influencing news selection a set of variables showed “how events become news” (p. 65). The greater number of variables presented the increased likelihood that a story would be selected as news, and how it would become accentuated and then replicated to an audience (Galtung & Ruge, 1965). The variables, known as news values, included frequency, threshold, unambiguity, meaningfulness,



consonance, unexpectedness, continuity, composition, reference to elite nations, reference to elite people, reference to persons, and negativity (Galtung & Ruge, 1965, p. 71).

### **2.3.1. News values**

News values ascribed in Galtung and Ruge (1965) have been discussed by a number of academics (Brighton & Foy, 2007; Caple & Bednarek, 2015; Gans, 1980; Hall, 1981; Harrison, 2006; Harcup & O'Neill, 2001, 2017). Brighton and Foy (2007) argued the research had been produced by academics with a specific interest in peace studies who had drawn on data that was limited to the reporting of conflict. They also argued that the data of just four newspaper publications and the geographical spread of Norway, the authors' country of residence, was also a limiting factor (Brighton & Foy, 2007). Harcup and O'Neill (2017) found that while news values gave scholars some insight into routines practiced within a highly competitive market, they only provided a partial explanation of how news was selected. However, they agreed the identification of news values made the news selection process more transparent and better understood (Harcup & O'Neill, 2001). Caple and Bednarek (2015) argued the study was strongly embedded in uncovering "why" an event had become news but not "how" other aspects had influenced news selection (p. 435). They also claim that meaning making of important elements such as images and page design had been neglected (Caple & Bednarek, 2015).

It is noted that the work of Galtung and Ruge (1965) occurred when newspapers were the dominant media, broadcasting was still evolving and the Internet certainly did not exist. However, there is evidence that the concept of news values was advanced after television news was introduced as discussed in section 2.1. Bergsma (1978) was among the first to build on the findings of Galtung and Ruge (1965) by identifying the value of "spectacularity of visuals" (Bergsma, 1978, p. 216). Lealand and Martin (2001) claimed that news values relied on a binary view such as order/disorder and reason/irrationality, that was in conflict with the demands of television news production (p. 150). Accordingly, they considered the news values applicable to television news included personalisation, negativity, locality, timing, frequency and continuity, pictures, simplicity and clarity, threshold, consonance, unexpectedness and – particularly relevant to television news bulletins – composition. Harrison (2006) found that the availability of pictures or film was an integral value in the production of television news. Meanwhile, Brighton and Foy (2007) broadened the lens

further by considering other aspects that influenced news value selection, such as the changing nature of relationships between providers and consumers of news (p. 6). This view was supported in Franklin (1997) who argued that in television news, time and space were two constraints that account for the structure of the bulletin built on pace or energy and the retention of audience interest rather than news importance [value].

Nevertheless, Galtung and Ruge (1965) continues to be cited as groundbreaking and many scholars have continued to build on the sociologists' initial findings. Harcup and O'Neill (2017) argued that while identifying and recording the news values found within published pieces of journalism could not provide a complete explanation of the journalistic process, it did inform scholars of the mediated world that was presented to news audiences, providing a shared shorthand operational understanding of what working journalists were required to produce to deadlines (p. 1471). Accordingly, Harcup and O'Neill have revisited news value theory multiple times (2001, 2016), and in 2017 advanced the theory to reflect the changing conditions since the emergence of social media by incorporating arresting audio-visuals, surprise and shareability properties as key values in the selection of news (Harcup and O'Neill, 2017). This study has aimed to take a fresh look at the news values that can be applied to television news and aims to provide an update to extant literature in relation to the power and influence of news values on the decision-making processes when user-generated content is a factor.

### **2.3.2. Setting the news agenda**

As discussed in the previous section, news values can provide us with some insight into the selection process of stories that are published. Cohen (1963) is frequently quoted:

The media may not tell us what to think, but they are stunningly successful in telling us what to think about.

(Cohen, 1963, p. 13)

What Cohen was suggesting is that the media selected the information that gained public attention and therefore set the news agenda for the public to follow. Pavlik (2000) supported this view and claimed that news coverage (in general) exerted an agenda-setting news influence, by helping to shape public opinion about which issues were most important in society, recognised as agenda-setting theory. Agenda-setting theory focuses on what

audiences learn from the mass media, and this learning process is mediated by individual differences, foremost of which are the relevance of particular mass media messages and the degree of interest in specific details (McCombs, 2005, p. 548). This transfer of salience from the news media to the public has been considered to be an early step in the formation of public opinion.

Agenda setting theory was developed in McCombs and Shaw (1972) during the Chapel Hill experiment, while investigating voters' perceptions during the 1968 American presidential election. McCombs and Shaw (1972) found a correlation between news stories and the prominence the same issues held in the minds of the public. They discovered that the choice and display of news by editors, newsroom staff, and broadcasters played an important part in shaping audience perception of the importance of issues in the news (p. 176). These findings have set a benchmark for similar worldwide research on mass media agenda setting ever since. Rogers et al. (1993) found that agenda-setting research offered insight into the effects the media had on a change in societal attitude and behaviour. However, Brosius and Kepplinger (1990) found that the direction of influence media-towards-public or public-towards-media needed to be considered, as some media stories had the reverse effect to agenda setting. In other words, the stories could cause audiences to avoid the topics being covered in the news rather than engaging with them.

In McCombs (2005) agendas were defined abstractly by a variety of characteristics and traits that described them, also referred to as attributes. For example, when the news media reported on a news event some attributes were emphasised while others were downplayed, and these influenced an audience's understanding of the story (p. 546). McCombs argued that attribute agenda setting formed a bridge between agenda setting and framing (Goffman, 1974; Entman, 1993) as both called attention to the perspectives of communicators and their audiences, how they picture topics in the news and, in particular, to the special status that certain attributes or frames have in the content of a message (McCombs, 2005).

However, since the introduction of the Internet, more agendas in contemporary society have become available to a large segment of the public (McCombs, 2005). McCombs predicted the end of agenda setting as audiences become increasingly fragmented and public attention becomes scattered, a situation almost 180 degrees from the media agendas of the past when

members of the public received highly redundant presentations from the news media (p. 544). McCombs has since developed a third-level agenda setting model that built on Lippmann's (1921) concept of "the world outside and pictures in our head" (p. 4). Guo et al. (2012) described how the first level of agenda setting related to the object or the subject of the news or "What are the pictures about?", the second level related to the attribute or "What are the dominant characteristics of these pictures?" applied to the object by the media, and the third level related to an applicability effect or how the news relates to an individual's network of pre-existing knowledge or "What are the pictures in our heads?" (p. 54–55).

However, Cushion (2011) claimed that academic debates had moved on from looking at how news plays an agenda-setting function, to examining the framing of issues and events to understand how these can influence an audience's ability to understand economic, political and social issues. The next section explains the orientation between agenda setting and framing, the latter of which is relevant to this study in relation to the selection and framing of user-generated video within television news stories.

### **2.3.3. Framing**

While agenda-setting relates to the outcome of an audience's perception of the news, framing is a broadly-applied and flexible label for a variety of approaches to studying social constructions of reality employed by journalists in the creation of news. Goffman (1974) identified framing as the culturally determined definitions of reality that allowed people to make sense of objects and events. Entman (1993) found framing involved the selection and salience of particular aspects of a news event that gave context to a story, and thereby "making a piece of information more noticeable, meaningful, or memorable to audiences" (p. 53). He claimed that people in general naturally made conscious or unconscious framing judgments in deciding what to say, guided by frames (schemata) that organised their belief systems. Within journalism, he found that journalists framed a news "problem" through commonly applied frames that achieved up to four objectives. These objectives included: firstly, to "define problems" by determining what a causal agent was doing and this was usually measured in common cultural values; secondly, to "diagnose causes" or the forces creating the problem; thirdly, to "make moral judgments" by evaluating causal agents and their effects; and finally, to "suggest remedies" for the problems and predict their likely effects (Entman, 1993, p. 52).

Entman also found that framing theory directed a scholar's attention towards how a communicated text exerted its power, and provided insight into the investigation of audience autonomy, journalistic objectivity, content analysis, and public opinion and normative democratic theory (p. 57). The theory was further advanced in Cottle and Rai (2009) who discovered that the frames applied to television news satisfied a common architecture that was central to the ways that news makers produced, organised, narrativised, visualised, and told their stories. Cottle and Rai (2009) identified how "communicative frames" were constructed within a "communicative architecture" (p. 45) that reflected how professional judgment was exercised and news was selected within a pressurised production environment. Matthews and Cottle (2012) later found that the extent to which different communicative frames were applied by mainstream television news outlets positioned them within the wider news ecology. Furthermore, they argued the frames affected the processes of mediated democracy, as they opened up or closed down opportunities for public understanding based on processes of cultural recognition and deliberation (p. 120). For more on communicative frames see section 3.2.3.2. This area of inquiry is worthy of further exploration in order to examine how communicative frames become affected when user-generated content becomes framed as part of a television news story, an area that previously has not been investigated in scholarship.

#### **2.3.4. Television news selection**

The television news agenda is a highly selective one because of the hour-long format, so appearance in an evening bulletin is a strong signal about the high news value of a topic while additional cues are provided in its ranking and by the duration of the story (McCombs, & Valenzuela, 2020). However, Maier (2010) found that the news selection across multiple platforms including newspaper, online, radio and television were remarkably similar. Moreover, he determined that the news outlets often shared similar news values in the frequency and depth of news coverage (Maier, 2010). But a weakness in his study was that it focused on *what* was covered by the news media and did not address *how* each story was reported. More recently, Cushion, Kilby, Thomas, Morani and Sambrook (2016) found a similar correlation between newspapers and evening television news bulletins during the 2015 British General Election campaign. The study also identified evidence of the press setting the television news agenda and revealed editors were more than comfortable relying on press stories if they were deemed newsworthy (Cushion et al., 2018, p. 18). As the media

ecology becomes more complex, the question arises of where user-generated content sits within the between-media agenda-setting and whether or how this becomes connected to the aforementioned news values and news selection.

The dominant ideologies on the selection of news for television broadcast have continued to be the subject of debate. Lealand and Martin (2001) found that television news is “socially constructed and highly selective” (p. 148). They argued that television news is subjective, and that because of the nature and production of television news, people featured were selected for their compliance with or deviance from society’s norms, and this led to frequent and unbalanced representations which caused stereotyping, moral panic and a need for social control (Lealand and Martin, 2001). Earlier, a seminal empirical study conducted into British news networks by the Glasgow University Media Group (1976) found that television news was not a neutral product; that it was, in fact, heavily mediated and described as “a sequence of socially manufactured messages which carry many of the culturally dominant assumptions of our society” (p. 339). The study found that a number of the factors influencing the news message were dependent on the process that television news required; that the medium required people and resources to enable it, and that these factors were often limited by economic and/or logistical means. For example, news would be selected at the discretion of an editorial team who also decided how the stories would be framed; who the interviewees would be; that the question-lines were based on the social and professional assumptions of the individual journalist who interviewed them; and that the range of stories and topics covered were selected to appeal to the widest range of viewers (Eldridge, 2000, p. 133). Not surprisingly, these findings were strongly criticized by the BBC and ITV as “an attack on their professional integrity” (p. 116.). However, despite the fact that the television journalists themselves believed they were applying the highest standards and journalistic ethics to their work, the Glasgow University Media Group argued these biases occurred within many more organisations than the two that were researched (Eldridge, 2000).

The scholarship on television news selection, its news values, agenda setting power and framing tag on the end of a set of widely applied theories. Accordingly, this study aims to build on previous knowledge and further develop scholarship in relation to the incorporation of user-generated video content within television news. In lieu of literature on the

relationship between audiences and television news selection, this review draws on research covering the wider news ecology.

### **2.3.5. The role of audiences in news selection**

According to Bourdieu (2005), the journalistic field<sup>3</sup> is characterised by a blend of heteronomy and autonomy that cannot be understood simply on the basis of the knowledge of the surrounding world. Therefore, the microcosm in which journalism operates “requires us to understand the effects that the people engaged in this microcosm exert on one another” (p. 33). Journalists have applied boundary work as an effective ideological tool to protect their professional autonomy, similar to the way public scientists construct boundaries between the production of scientific knowledge and its consumption by non-scientists (Gieryn, 1983). As the creation of newsworthy content is expanding and members of the public are recording newsworthy events, journalists have heightened the contrast by labelling non-journalists as amateur in order to protect the autonomy of their professional activities. However, Domingo et al. (2008) claimed that the rise of digital and online media demonstrated the increasing role that audiences were playing in deciding what made news. Jönsson and Örnebring (2011) provided a more nuanced perspective, that the media/audience relationship was complex and featured different dimensions. They found that users who created content were not necessarily the ones in control of aspects such as framing and news selection. Additionally, the practice had little to do with journalism in a traditional sense and therefore there was no shift in power of audience content over professional news content (Jönsson & Örnebring, 2011, p. 140). However, Naab and Sehl (2017) argued that user-generated content had an effect on the public sphere, and that amateur communicators were drawing attention to their own individual interests which broadened the scope of topics beyond those associated with traditional journalism.

But, while Hermida (2011) found online newspapers had been reluctant to open up the news making process to outside contributors, other researchers discovered that some news organisations actively called on the audience to contribute to the production of journalism (Deuze, 2007; Heinonen, 2011). Heinonen (2011) claimed users could have a presence in the

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<sup>3</sup> A site of actions and reactions performed by social agents such as a journalistic field where journalists occupy a permanent position from which they perform the creation of news as a cultural product (Bourdieu, 2005).

newsroom, and interact with resident journalists, and even use similar tools as them. He said, while the collaborative work increased a journalist's reach particularly at the observational stage of news production, it put at risk the journalist's role of gate-keeper and this was at the essence of his or her professional identity (Heinonen, 2011, p. 37). Therefore, to protect their professional identity, journalists restricted the role of the user to the beginning and end of the production process (Heinonen, 2011, p. 42). This view may not be valid in relation to user-generated video content within television news, where the production process is more complex and less linear, an area to be explored further in this study.

#### **2.3.5.1. Produsage**

Academics have labelled the content created by amateur workers as produsage (Bruns, 2006, Westlund, 2015). The portmanteau was inspired by a futurist (Toffler, 1971), who used the term prosumer to describe the on-demand production of customised consumer goods (Bruns, 2006). Bruns found that produsage was created in an open-sourced online environment where the boundaries between producers and consumers did not exist, enabling all participants to share information, and content becomes extended for further improvement (p. 2). Producers work online to share and improve upon existing material, often set up with discussion tools that encouraged collaborating (Bruns, 2006). An early example of produsage is *Wikipedia*, an online encyclopedia that encourages audiences or users to contribute information on global topics of interest, which is subsequently verified and edited by others. However, a starting point for further research into the audience as a participant begins with two main dimensions of audience theory, namely the active/passive and the interaction/participation dimensions (Heinonen, 2011). While this is beyond the scope of this study, the nature of informally organised audience activity and its relationship with the complexities of production, reception and power should be explored further. That is because the boundaries of professional/amateur producer/consumer, meaning-maker/consumer are likely to become compromised in an environment where the audience is becoming increasingly active in the creation of user-generated content.

Heinonen (2011) claimed that, while there were only so many journalists and they could never be aware of everything that was going on, there was a large mass of users who were in close contact with an enormous range of possible news topics (p. 38). What is more, he found that users sometimes had a good sense of the issues others were interested in. Heinonen claimed



that the user role of a “public sensor” had grown in importance because of the availability and functionality of smart phones that increased the potential for information flow to newsrooms, and the leaner staffing levels (Heinonen, 2011) due to organisational downsizing as advertising revenue has decreased. This placed audiences in a position of value as newsroom “scouts” and idea generators (p. 38). However, Jönsson and Örnebring (2011) found some news organisations restricted users to the creation of popular culture and personal or everyday life content rather than content that was newsworthy or informational, as managers were worried that the content might affect their brand in a negative way through reduced quality and trust.

There is a body of knowledge that has argued that audiences favoured non-journalistic content for its authenticity (Bakker & Pantti, 2009; Pauwels & Hellriegel 2009; Williams et al., 2011), as they considered user-generated content to be more “real” and less “packaged” than footage produced by professional journalists (Williams et al., 2011, p. 195). Boczkowski and Mitchelstein (2013) found that it was the nature of the content that affected audiences more so than the way it had been professionally formatted. They found that traditional storytelling and straightforward news styles were preferred by both journalists and audiences (Boczkowski & Mitchelstein, 2013). This is discussed further in relation to how the boundaries between professional and amateur have become blurred.

#### **2.4. Blurred boundaries**

According to Deuze (2005), journalism has long held fast to its definition as a semi-profession that provides a public service of information gathering and sharing under the conditions of objectivity and fairness, autonomy, newness and ethical appropriateness (p. 449). Traditionally, news has belonged to and was tightly controlled by media workers whose professional identity, authority and expertise have been linked to the sense making of information produced and published (Lewis, 2012, p. 837). However, since the adoption of the Internet the news environment had become a contested space where the boundaries between professionals and amateurs have deserved scrutiny (Lewis, 2012; Loosen, 2015). Tuchman (2010) found that the professionals were forced to develop a new set of skills to survive, paving the way for the introduction of new professional niches or expansion of existing ones. She claimed that those who did not adapt to new environments lost the ability

to control key facets of their work, as the work that they performed simultaneously changed (p. 130).

Accordingly, journalists have been required to draw on their expertise and social authority to create a distinction between professional/amateur, producer/user, and journalist/non-journalist (Hermida, 2011). Paulussen and Ugille (2008) found journalists valued audience contributions as content that complemented their own work. They also discovered that journalists felt the need to retain control over news selection in order to maintain a high standard of news quality (Paulussen & Ugille, 2008). However, Hermida (2011) argued that journalists were reluctant to allow audiences to take part in the news agenda-setting. Also, he claimed journalists limited the role of the participating audience to that of being a source of information or a provider of audio-visual content (Hermida, 2011). He said that the journalist was able to retain his or her gatekeeping role by shaping the users' involvement in the story process or in deciding the editorial value of their contribution.

Heinonen (2011) found that journalists preferred to rationalise the boundaries between themselves and amateurs through self-perception in three areas:

- i. The first self-perception was that of a “conventional journalist” where there was a clear demarcation between journalism produced by a professional and that of an amateur;
- ii. the second perception was a “dialogical journalist” who worked jointly or collaboratively with an amateur;
- iii. and the third was an “ambivalent journalist” who expressed reservations about amateurs, but also recognised their active role in the production of journalism.

(Heinonen, 2011, p. 47)

However, he advised that journalists should construct their professional identity in the context of a fluid, precarious work environment (Heinonen, 2011). Singer (2014) found that journalists reinforced the boundaries between professional and amateur largely by emphasising the normative practices of verification and accountability. She argued that journalists retained their cultural identity as gatekeepers by focusing on the credibility and quality of the content they created (Singer, 2014; Witschge and Nygren, 2009). Additionally, Singer (2014a) found that journalists were allocating a range of related newsroom tasks to online users, such as assessing the value and visibility of what was to be published. While

acknowledging that amateurs had the capability to make and implement editorial judgments about what was newsworthy, she warned that these functions went beyond previous conceptions of what audiences could and should do (Singer 2014a). These strategies create a hierarchy between the journalist and the amateur where the journalist is of higher ranking and therefore in a greater position of power than the lower ranking amateur. This study aims to interrogate whether, in reality, this is actually the case and whether the hierarchy has changed since earlier studies as discussed next.

#### **2.4.1. Implications for newsroom sociology/ecology**

Newsroom management has been discussed in section 2.2.3.1. in relation to the BBC Hub, however, the data is more than a decade old and not all television news organisations have the budget and resources to set up a standalone work hub of this nature. Therefore, this study aims to explore contemporary television broadcast newsrooms to identify the current work practices in relation to the management of user-generated content, because journalism as a social practice becomes affected by the social conditions under which it is made (McNair, 1998).

#### **2.4.2. Technological change**

McNair found that the form and content of journalism was determined by the availability of technology during the processes of newsgathering, production and dissemination (McNair, 1998, p. 124). However, the belief that technology drives journalism, and that changes are caused by adaptations to technological developments that occur outside it, are not concepts that journalists often reflect upon (Örnebring, 2008). Paulussen (2011) found that technology influenced editorial practice within a newsroom, and this either could foster or inhibit innovation. He argued that the progression of technology had led journalists to feel they had no option but to embrace citizens' contributions within the news production process and forced them to consider the integration of the non-journalistic content into their work (Paulussen, 2011). Eldridge (2000) claims new technologies are enabling the paradigm repair of a "fractured field" where new types of social actors produce news both on their own and in collaboration with traditional journalists. He suggests technology has enabled an act of preservation, securing the boundaries of the field and the field's dominant vision (p. 555). To ground each of these arguments, this literature review refers to McLuhan (2001) who stated that the public's use of media may have subtle influences on us, but more

importantly, it is the social context of that use which is crucial. McLuhan's observation bears relevance to the changing boundaries between professional television journalists and amateur creators of user-generated content, particularly as technology is a significant driver in the production of television news. That is because television news bulletins require an organisational news cycle that focuses on events and not processes or trends (Galtung & Ruge, 1965; Tuchman 1973). Tuchman (1973) argued that technology had a significant impact on the organisation of work by television broadcast journalists, and in particular, spot news<sup>4</sup> where facts were “reconstructed” and became more accurate as more information became available.

Another factor that affected the organisation of television news was the limitations of time and technological competence. Franklin (1997) argued there had become less time available to tell a story because of an increasingly competitive media environment, government media policies, new technologies and changes from within journalism itself. Hemmingway (2017) found in a more recent study that conflict had arisen between those with differing levels of technological competency in the production of local news. She found conflict occurred when a group of professionals were combined with a group of student amateurs to produce local television news. While there was evidence that each group accepted each group's differing aims and demands, neither attempted to unify professionally (Hemmingway, 2017, p. 110). This study was one of the most recently identified that looked at technology in a television news environment when professional and amateur social actors combined. Ethnographic fieldwork has proven to be a valuable framework used to explore the boundary work between the two groups.

## **2.5. Television newsroom ethnographies**

While this literature review is not intended to discuss methodologies, it has identified that the findings of newsroom ethnographies of Tuchman and others provide invaluable insights into the nature and determinants of news production, a view shared by Cottle (2007). Caple and Bednarek (2015) claimed that researchers who used ethnographic methods such as interviews or newsroom observations were able to focus on the news workers' judgment, which can be considered a pillar of their profession. Research into broadcast newsrooms conducted by

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<sup>4</sup> Spot news is an unexpected news event that occurred when reporters and camera crews were not present to record vision or facts accurately (Tuchman 1973).

Tuchman (1978) and Schlesinger (1977) have set valuable benchmarks that enable us to consider the cultural and professional changes that have occurred to professional boundaries since the phenomenon of user-generated content. For example, Schlesinger (1977) drew on the concept of timeliness, drawing similarities between television news production and that of a time machine where the production process was directly affected by speed of publication within allotted times. This concept was advanced in Postman and Powers (2008) where they found supersonic journalism required post-Web 2.0. journalists to apply the latest technology to news creation and publication at speed. Tuchman's pioneering ethnographies in the 1970s revealed how institutions and journalistic routines shaped the content and production of television news, where the sociological need for the control of work was enabled through the development of organisational routines (Tuchman, 1972, 1973, 1973a, 1975, 1976 & 1978).

Ethnography also comes with theoretical assumptions about the particular place, organisation, ways of understanding, and norms that make up the news practice. This study argues that, because of the many influences of technological change, these ethnographies require a timely review in order to explore the qualitative differences in journalistic norms within a climate of an accelerated flow of user-generated content. For example, how do television journalists retain their gatekeeping role while engaging with amateurs in an ambient environment of socially manufactured news (Hermida, 2011)? How do they shape a user's involvement in the story process or in deciding the editorial value of their contribution? How do you connect technological change to journalism practice and the changing business of news? These are among the themes explored within this study in order to fill the gap in scholarship identified here.

## **2.6. Conclusion**

This literature review has identified and critiqued the scholarship that provides a background context to television news, the introduction of user-generated content and the implications of the conditions created by Web 2.0. and other technologies on the profession of journalism. The review has looked at the inherent resistance to change each time new technology has appeared on the media landscape, such as radio, television and latterly the Internet and Web 2.0. The evolution of television broadcast news has been discussed in relation to the institutional influences that have occurred through governmental intervention and corporate

ownership. The review has identified how scholars have described the global media market and its creation of a fertile territory for Web 2.0. to flourish, and how newfound interactivity has enabled greater participation of audiences in the production of news. This has challenged the boundaries between professional journalist and amateur user, resulting in the need for changes in newsroom practices to better manage this relationship and the content it creates.

A comprehensive search of the literature did not find any contemporary research that has adequately captured and analysed the routinisation of the work of the television journalist when user-generated content is incorporated. Academics concur that there is limited research into user-generated content and television broadcast news journalism (Bruns, 2011; Cottle, 2007; Deuze, 2005; Jenkins, 2014; Singer, 2005, 2010), with some of the most illuminating scholarship relating to television news featuring data that is now a decade old (Wardle & Williams, 2008; Williams et al., 2011; Wahl Jorgensen et al., 2010). In New Zealand, the most recent content analysis on television news was published has been Comrie (1996) and Cook (2002) in which a detailed content analysis of television news did not feature user-generated content, likely because the studies were conducted at a time when the Internet was in its infancy and Web 2.0. had not yet been launched.

Moreover, Robinson et al. (2018) found that the amount of scholarship on television news and related themes had declined steadily from 2010 to 2014 in nine major communication journals, in favour of a rise in new media articles focusing on journalism within the context of online and social media. What is more, in a review of 239 international articles on journalism and related fields published from 2004 and 2012, Naab and Sehl (2017) found that 62 percent of the published studies addressed user-generated content outside institutional journalism and only 23 percent examined audience participation within the professional journalism framework (Naab & Sehl, 2017, p. 1265). Naab and Sehl claimed the majority of the reviewed studies applied quantitative methods and content analyses to examine user-generated content. This review argues these studies address the “what” questions but not the “why” or the “how”. They considered that one of the reasons for these shortcomings is that academics found it challenging to understand the new form of media because of the continuously changing nature of its content.

While television has been described by some academics as an ageing medium, its importance continues in industrialised countries and in the developing world as it defies the boundaries of class, ethnicity, religion, and press freedom (Robinson et al., 2018).

Accordingly, this study argues that scholars need to return to studying television journalism practices, because it remains central to journalism practice, remains important to audiences, and tells us a lot about how technology is adapted within professional practice. It is presented at a time when the academic lens has focused on new media as platforms and practices in themselves while television broadcast news has fallen under the radar of academics during the past 10 years. It is argued that this is the first mixed method project to explore the routines of television news journalists and their interactions with UGV, and aims to bring new insight into how these texts are being presented as television news. It will build on a body of knowledge that identifies significant changes in the power and dominance of social media since the invention of the Internet, and in particular Web 2.0., an iteration which has enabled individuals to have the ability to craft their own content (Allen, 2008).

It is therefore argued that the gaps in scholarship identified in this literature review will be addressed within the thesis, as it seeks to discover what challenges and opportunities impact on the current professional norms and daily practices of a television journalist when social media video is a feature of a news story. It is expected the findings will contribute to the theoretical issues in relation to agenda-setting, framing and boundary-work theory because it remains unclear how these are being managed within television news organisations. The findings will also advance empirical scholarship, for example Heinonen et al. (2011) and Wardle et al. (2014), on whether television news organisations are rejecting viral video but including audiences more, how much journalism is being transformed by UGV, and whether social media threatens the future of the television journalist.

The study aims to contribute to international knowledge in the areas of television broadcast journalism, social media and the disruption of professional boundaries. It will also provide valuable industry insight into the challenges and opportunities facing practitioners, identifying emergent trends, issues and recommendations for this professional group.

Accordingly, the overarching research question is:

RQ: How are journalists normalising the use of social media video (UGV) within contemporary news bulletins in their everyday work?

The study will argue that the increased frequency of UGV footage present in New Zealand television news has resulted in a normalisation of the practice and how the normative routines of television journalists have developed accordingly.



## **Chapter Three: Methodology**

### **3.0. Introduction**

This chapter outlines and discusses the methodological approach and research design methods applied in order to address the question: “How are journalists normalising the use of social media video (UGV) within contemporary news bulletins in their everyday work?”

The methodological approach aims to uncover the challenges and opportunities faced by television broadcast news, and the current professional practices, when social media video is a feature of a television broadcast news story. While acknowledging that a wider range of user-generated content including text and audio are also used within television news, this study is most interested in UGV as it is an area that has been under-represented in academic literature (Naab & Sehl, 2017; Robinson et al., 2018) as discussed in the previous chapter. A New Zealand nexus focus has been applied for the following reasons: New Zealand is a country with a small population of 4.8 million (Statistics New Zealand, 2018) and it is known for its ability to rapidly adopt new technology (Horrocks, 2004); also, it is a country highly exposed economically because of its size, and this makes it vulnerable to the issues of the global news ecology since the digital revolution. Therefore, the size and nature of the country makes it possible to look at the overall system and its dynamics more clearly than that of a larger country. Additionally, from a cultural perspective, comparisons between New Zealand can be drawn with other English-speaking Western countries such as Australia, Canada, Britain and America and non-English-speaking countries like Switzerland, Iceland and Belgium based on the Welzel-Inglehart Cultural map (Theunissen & Sissons, 2018; World Values Survey, n.d.). While the New Zealand television news services have been designed and implemented under the influence of a British model – and subsequently modified under the influence of an American model – neither of these bears a true relation to the size and culture of the New Zealand experience. Therefore, this provides an opportunity to consider the experiences of an American/British hybrid industry.

The focus of this study is the free-to-air television broadcast news rather than its non-linear counterparts. National television news in New Zealand is comprised of two English-speaking networks of TVNZ, TV3 branded as Newshub, and a bilingual network, Māori Television. News bulletins are broadcast at four main times of the day, including breakfast, lunch, and early and mid-evening. Each network maintains a media website and specialised apps that

provide smartphone access to a website that features a selection of material gathered from its bulletins that can be accessed at a user's leisure.

In using a constructivist paradigm, a mixed-method methodology (Creswell, 1994) was applied that employed both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Mixed-method research evolved from the work of Campbell and Fiske (1959) who used multiple research methods to validate their data. Decades later, mixed-methods has become recognised as the third major research approach alongside qualitative research and quantitative research, as it enables the researcher to consider multiple viewpoints, perspectives, positions, and standpoints that include ideas from both qualitative and quantitative methods (Johnson et al., 2007, p. 113). Creswell (2017) stated that mixed-methods research had gained popularity within social and human sciences as it enabled more insight to be gained from a combination of the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research than by either tradition by itself (p. 203).

The mixed-methods applied in this research project include a quantitative methodology method to gain a broad overview of the presence and frequency of UGV in television broadcast news, and qualitative methodology methods to explore the deeper meanings within the data. In this chapter, each methodology is addressed in a separate section that features a detailed discussion along with justification for selection in relation to the design and validity of choice of the research instruments of each. The processes of data collection are described, along with an overview of how the data were analysed. Ethical issues relating to the research process are discussed, and the chapter concludes with a summary of the aforementioned sections.

### **3.1. Quantitative methodological approach**

Quantitative methodology has been defined as “a systematic assignment of communication content to categories according to rules and the analysis of relationships involving those categories using statistical methods” (Riffe et al., 2019, p. 3). This statistical technique offers the possibility of obtaining precise and reliable observations (George, 2009). The form of analysis requires drawing a representative sample of data, coding it according to a set of rules or categories that reflect differences in the content, and being able to demonstrate reliability by achieving the same results should the conditions be repeated (Riffe et al., 2019). A body of quantitative research frequently referenced in journalism studies research is McCombs and

Shaw (1972) where data revealed that news stories from television, newspapers and magazines had an agenda-setting effect on a representative group of voters from Chapel Hill during an American election campaign. The research has attracted strong academic interest across 40 years and numerous extensions to this model have been tested (McCoombs & Stroud, 2014).

Within this study, quantitative methods were drawn on to analyse the frequency of UGV present in television news, and key characteristics measured in order to respond to the following research questions:

RQ1: How frequently is UGV featured in television news stories?

RQ2: What categories can be applied to the television news stories featuring UGV, and how frequently do they occur?

RQ3: What are the most frequent news values that can be applied to television news stories that feature UGV?

RQ4: How often is UGV either the principal focus of a story topic, or drawn on to supplement existing professional footage?

RQ5: Is UGV more likely to be incorporated into locally produced or internationally sourced stories?

The abovementioned questions are discussed further in section 3.1.2.

### **3.1.1. Quantitative data sampling of television broadcast news data**

The study has drawn on simple random sampling of television news bulletins across four weeks on the country's two mainstream networks of TVNZ and TV3 to investigate 56 hours or 3,360 minutes of data. Simple random sampling is one of three broad methods that researchers have applied to television broadcast news sampling. It is an unbiased subset of data where each item has an equal probability of being chosen; where as "stratified random sampling" is where the sample is selected evenly across days of the week, months or years; and "purposive consecutive-day week sampling" features a sample selected during a particular week that a specific event occurs (Riffe et al., 2019). The sampling selected for the study was based on a design applied in a two-week pilot study conducted in 2017 that

resulted in 42 hours or 2520 minutes of data gathered from TVNZ, TV3 and the Māori Television Service. As there was no UGV present within the Māori Television news data, the network was excluded from this study.

The sampling occurred across seven-day weeks, thus following Stempel's (1989) principle that week days and weekend days vary in nature. The study avoided December and January, and the sampling occurred mid-way through 2018 between 11 June and 8 July inclusive. The networks' early evening news bulletins between 6pm and 7pm were selected and recorded, a timeframe known as primetime screening where the news bulletins are sometimes referred to as "the flagship" or top-rating programmes (Comrie, 1996). The data were gathered on a Tivo digital recording system that was pre-programmed to record a prescribed time/channel/day repeatedly for the duration of the sampling period. A second set of back-up recordings was gathered by an AUT University technician in the unlikely event of a power surge or other interruption.

The full commercial news hour was recorded in order to capture all facets of each news bulletin. These included the opening titles and graphics, the news reports, promotions of upcoming stories, commercial breaks, summaries, chatty handovers, sign-offs and credits (Harrison, 2000). While Harrison (2000) disaggregated areas of the bulletin that went beyond the news stories themselves, Atkinson (1994) argued that promotional packaging was an important feature of television news, that made the bulletin popular and kept audiences away from the competition (p. 11). Accordingly, the study found promotional packaging was likely to provide greater context to the analysis of the use of UGV in television news stories. However, weather reports were excluded from the study, as they are a studio-based report in front of a computer-generated map, and therefore not part of the news content and commercial break content was also excluded.

The resulting data set consisted of 1324 television news stories to be analysed. Each story was viewed in real time by the researcher, and 398 stories were found to feature user-generated content that consisted of still and moving images, social media text messages such as Twitter tweets, Facebook postings, and video postings on Facebook, YouTube and Instagram or a combination of all of these. The details of these stories were entered into a

spreadsheet that included the date of transmission, the network, a story title, a description, and a note of the running time of where the story was located within the news hour.

Next, a bespoke rubric designed for the study was used to identify and select a subset of 133 stories that featured UGV. These stories were prepared for further analysis, by being organised into separate .mp4 video files that included the newsreader's introduction, the story, and if present, a back-announce after the story. All content within the structural elements of the bulletin that related directly to the UGV were also included in the .mp4 video files, such as presenter chitchat or reactions, and promotional packaging of teasers and recaps.

According to McMillan (2009), a unit of measure can be applied to analysis in a number of ways depending on theories, research questions and the hypotheses. In a more traditional news context, these units have included word counts for newspapers and time measured in seconds for broadcast (p. 66). The stories in this study were measured in seconds so a percentage of UGV to total story could be calculated. For example, where a story was based entirely on UGV the UGV content was measured at 100 percent of the total story; while another a story featured 20 seconds of UGV and the total story was length of 92 seconds long. Therefore, the UGV content made up was measured at 22 percent of the total story. By calculating these percentages, it was possible to apply statistics to the amount of influence the UGV had on the news agenda, and this could be explored further in the context of boundary work theory (Gieryn, 1983, 1999; Singer, 2015; Johnson & Dade, 2018).

### **3.1.2. The quantitative research questions**

The study was interested in identifying the frequency at which user-generated content appeared in television news stories, and more specifically, the frequency at which UGV was present and are discussed next.

#### **3.1.2.1. Frequency**

RQ1: How frequently is UGV featured in television news stories?

The total number of stories present in each of the television news bulletins was counted and a mean number of stories per bulletin was calculated. Then by counting the number of stories featuring UGV, a mean number per bulletin was calculated and a ratio established. This was

compared with the ratio achieved in the pilot study referred to in section 3.1.1. where the ratio was identified as 1:4, and this set a benchmark that could be compared with the current study data to identify whether there was a consistency from year to year.

Once the mean number of stories per bulletin was identified, a set of categories were applied.

### **3.1.2.2. Categorisation**

RQ2: What categories can be applied to the television news stories featuring UGV, and how frequently do they occur?

Stempel (1989) claimed objectivity in research was achieved by the precise definition of categories where different people could apply them to the same content and get the same results. Cook (2002) found that the analysis of subject matter was relatively easy for broadcast news stories, as each story was short and generally dealt with a single subject (p. 91). Accordingly, this study has explored several news categorisation schemes to identify an approach that would enable the abovementioned research question to be answered effectively.

The study found story categories that previously had been applied within scholarship were unsuited to this study. Tuchman's (1973) news workers' categories of unexpected events as hard, soft, spot, developing, and continuing news reflected the routines of newsgathering rather than the categorisation of the subject of the news item itself. The categories used by the Glasgow Media Group (1976) identified the influences on news selection and production within the area of industrial relations, which – at the time – was an important way of seeing how problems of the British economy were interpreted.

Therefore, the study applied story categories drawn from a combination of Hartley (1989) that featured on British and American network news, and were expanded upon in Harrison's (2000) research into terrestrial television news selection at the BBC (Harrison, 2000, pp. 216-228). The categories were also similar to Comrie (1996) which enabled a comparison within a New Zealand nexus. The resultant categories were tested during the aforementioned pilot study and the following were found to account for the majority of the data adequately without overlaps:

- i. Economics – economics at governmental to local level, and included employment, business or industry news.
- ii. Education – including government policy enactment, stories about educational institutions and non-governmental reports or statistics.
- iii. Environment – including conservation, a concern for global warming, pollution or practices that have potential environmental consequences for humans, or flora and fauna.
- iv. Law, order and crime – legal control, justice, and unlawful acts.
- v. Parliamentary Politics – parliamentary activity, government and government personnel activities, locally and internationally. For clarity, this was abbreviated to Politics.
- vi. Science discoveries and research – inventions or technological breakthroughs. For clarity, this category was modified to Science and technology.
- vii. Weather – weather events or weather patterns that geographically impacted on inhabitants. This category excluded general stories about global warming that were accounted for in the Environment category, and did not include weather forecasts as they are outside the scope of the research.
- viii. Other - a non-specific category that was applied to stories that did not fit any other category.

(Adapted from Harrison, 2000, pp. 216–228)

Further categories were modified or added during the study in order to cover New Zealand conditions:

- ix. Disasters and accidents – natural disasters (March, 2002) such as earthquakes, and events like human-made disasters or accidents that resulted in casualties or death. This included transport-related accidents such as plane, boat or car crashes but excluded weather-related stories, as they were found to be commonly present and therefore justified as a separate category. In addition, a new category of Fire was created as the pilot study revealed UGV of fires were commonly drawn on by television news. This was likely to be because of the highly visual nature of the footage that was often captured by witnesses at the height of its activity, and before a television journalist arrived at the scene.

- x. Health – health matters, medical care, medical discoveries, and welfare issues that had an impact on general wellbeing. This was adapted to Health and welfare to more clearly define the coding, and a separate category of Disability was added to identify stories that were specific to the disability sector, which was not addressed elsewhere in the categories.
- xi. Religion – stories about a particular religion, church or church service when it was not part of a larger story. This category was adapted to Religion and Terrorism to recognise a cultural shift towards religion in the context of terrorism becoming an increasingly newsworthy since the Arab Spring, widely regarded as marking the birth of UGV as discussed in Chapter Two.
- xii. Social affairs - originally defined by Harrison as Human interest or Other, however the study found this category was too broadly defined when applied within a contemporary context where UGV is commonly created from social actions. Therefore, six new categories of Sport, Animals, Social issues, Celebrity, Children and Entertainment were created.

The absent/present category paradigm (Hartley, 1989) was also applied.

Harrison's research design also included the categories of "International economy", "International law, order and crime", "European/EEC politics" and "Politics in the rest of the world" (Harrison, 2000, pp. 216-228). However, these categories were not present in the data explored in the pilot study. But, as the data featured a number of internationally sourced stories that featured UGV, it was necessary to capture this variable and this is discussed next.

### **3.1.2.3. News values**

RQ3: What are the most frequent news values that can be applied to television news stories that feature UGV?

According to Bell (1991) there are three ways news values can be applied: to the content of the news, the news process, and the quality of the news text itself (p. 156). Most studies have



focused on the content of a news item (Caple & Bednarek, 2015; Galtung & Ruge, 1965; Harcup & O'Neill, 2001, 2017; Harrison, 2010; O'Neill & Harcup, 2008 and others) while Caple and Bednarek (2015) took a discursive approach towards news values and also focused on news images. While most academics have focused on news values within newspapers or online news, only a few have been examined within a television news context that was relevant to the study. For example, Cushion et al. (2018) examined the agenda-setting effect of newspapers upon television news, but news values were not measured. Greguš and Mináriková (2016) did not take into account news values that reflected the post-Web 2.0. environment of which UGV is a characteristic.

However, the study found that, despite being applied to newspaper analysis, Harcup and O'Neill (2017) proposed a set of news values reflecting the post Web 2.0. environment that were able to be applied within the 2017 pilot study conducted:

- i. Exclusivity – stories generated by, or available first, to the news organisation.
- ii. Bad news – stories with particularly negative overtones, including death, injury, defeat and loss (of a job, for example).
- iii. Conflict – stories concerning conflict such as controversies, arguments, splits, strikes, fights and warfare.
- iv. Surprise – stories that have an element of surprise, contrast and/or the unusual.
- v. Audio-visual – arresting video, audio, photographs and/or illustrated with info graphics.
- vi. Shareability – likely to generate sharing or comments on social media.
- vii. Entertainment – lighter stories such as sex, show business, sport, human interest, animals or humour.
- viii. Drama – unfolding drama such as escapes, accidents, searches, sieges, rescues, battles or court cases.
- ix. Follow-up – subjects already in the news.
- x. Power elite – powerful individuals, organisations or institutions or corporations.
- xi. Relevance – groups or nations perceived as influential with the audience, either culturally or historically. This value also includes government announcements.

- xii. Magnitude – perceived as significantly impacting on large numbers of people.
- xiii. Celebrity – people who are already famous.
- xiv. Good news – particularly positive overtones, including recoveries, breakthroughs, cures, wins and celebrations.
- xv. News organisation’s agenda – stories that set or fit an organisation’s own agenda.

(Harcup & O’Neill, 2017, p. 1482)

In an attempt to gain a clearer definition of the news value of *shareability*, the sharing of news stories on social media by each network was explored. The platforms of Facebook and Instagram were considered, and Facebook was found to have a significantly higher number of followers at 1,048,450 for TVNZ news and 654,329 for TV3 Newshub, than Instagram, which had 53,900 followers for TVNZ news and 92,500 for TV3 Newshub. There were inconsistencies in how each networks’ stories had been treated by viewers, once posted. For example, TVNZ’s Facebook site did not provide the number of times a story was shared but did show its viewing statistics, while TV3’s Facebook site provided sharing statistics but not its views. Due to these inconsistencies, instead the study drew on theories of Harcup and O’Neill (2017) that *shareability* was “likely to generate sharing and comments via Facebook, Twitter and other forms of social media” (p. 1482) and Newman (2011) “stuff that makes you laugh and stuff that makes you angry” (Newman, 2011, p. 24). By coding the data with the above news values, it was possible to identify commonalities, and also to establish the influence UGV could have on the selection of a news story as news, and this is discussed next.

#### **3.1.2.4. Principal or supplementary influence**

RQ4: How often is UGV either the principal focus of a story topic, or drawn on to supplement existing professional footage?

The aim of the above question was to measure the influence that UGV had on the news selection and therefore, the news agenda. Did the story exist because the UGV was deemed newsworthy in its own right or did the UGV simply perform the role of filler footage designed to overcome a shortfall of footage available? (Ilan, 2019). A coding of principal influence

was applied to UGV that met the threshold of becoming the topic of a story, or a coding of supplementary influence when judged supplementary to the topic of a story. To avoid ambiguity, a question was designed to provide reliability and that was, “would the story exist if not for the UGV?” If the answer was “no”, data were coded as principal influence, and if the answer was “yes”, then the coding was supplementary influence.

Two examples drawn from the story data demonstrate the two codings outlined:

#### Example 1: Principal influence

Story #88 was produced entirely from UGV footage of a Taiwanese 4-year-old child dangling from a balcony balustrade by his head after he had climbed out of a high-rise apartment as shown in the still image below.



**Figure 3.1. A still image coded as principal influence (Newshub, 2018).**

In the story referred to above, the UGV footage is dramatic as it shows the child hanging by his head. The pictures are rare and invite a strong emotional response from the viewer. Would the story exist if not for the UGV? No, as without the pictures there is nothing to report but that a child was rescued after hanging from a balcony and therefore, from a television news perspective, it would not be justified. Therefore, the story was coded principal influence.

#### Example 2: Supplementary influence

Story #31 was about the conviction of a man found guilty of murdering his wife, and featured UGV of the accused walking near a family pool with his son as shown in the still image below.



**Figure 3.2. A still image coded as supplementary influence (TVNZ, 2018)**

Would the story exist if not for the UGV? Yes, as the story reported on the man's conviction and circumstances of the murder whereas the UGV footage provided an element of visual context to a story that already had a newsworthy angle. Therefore, the story was coded 'supplementary influence' as the UGV footage, while related to the topic, was supplementary to the story angle.

### **3.1.2.5. Source location**

RQ5: Is UGV more likely to be incorporated into locally produced or internationally sourced stories?

The study wanted to capture whether the stories were locally or internationally sourced in order to identify if UGV had an effect on story selection and/or international distribution. This was relevant as companies such as the BBC News in the United Kingdom had committed significant resources to the management and utilisation of user-generated content (Wardle & Williams, 2010; Harrison, 2010; and Johnston, 2016), and therefore, it was of interest to identify whether the incorporation of UGV into television news was more or less likely in New Zealand than other countries. However, a limitation would be that the data was drawn from international stories re-used by the two New Zealand networks at the centre of the study, therefore it would not necessarily reflect international markets or trends. The internationally

sourced stories originated from foreign correspondents or news organisation affiliates, such as ABC America, BBC England or CNN Canada. They were identified by the researcher when a newsreader's introduction named a reporter and their international organisation, through graphics that were present on the video story, and/or when the television journalist signed-off at the end of story such as, "Jane Patterson, ABC News". The stories produced in New Zealand were coded as local while the internationally sourced stories were coded as international. Some international stories were re-edited by a local television journalist and presented as part of the local bulletin offering, but could be identified when a local reporter provided the voiceover but had no visual presence within the story. These stories were coded as international to reflect the original source.

### **3.1.3. Reliability**

The study design has taken into consideration the shortcomings of quantitative analysis methodology identified by a number of scholars, particularly those in the field of communications (Kracauer, 1952; Riffe et al., 2019). Gunter (2013) argues that quantitative content analyses are descriptive accounts of the characteristics of media output that reveal little about production ideologies or the impact of the data. So, while the methodology may yield reliable outcomes relating to the content of the media, the contribution to an understanding of the forces that lie behind the content is limited (p. 250).

It is acknowledged that a quantitative method provides a limited overview of the data, however, in this study the method was applied to identify the frequency of UGV present in television news, and code a number of conditions present in the data. This provided a generalised overview that would become subject to deeper analysis within a qualitative paradigm, as discussed later in section 3.2 of this chapter. To ensure the reliability of the codings applied, a set of story samples were provided to a second coder who was a senior journalism lecturer and former television journalist at the BBC. The second coder agreed with the codings applied with 100 percent reliability.

Kracauer (1952) argues that a quantitative approach can skew coders to arrive at oversimplification of coding categories. This was mitigated by applying proven models of categorisation (Harrison, 2000; Harcup & O'Neill, 2017) adapted to reflect New Zealand conditions as described earlier, in section 3.1.2.2.

### **3.1.3.1. Sampling technique**

Krippendorff and Bock (2009) state that reliability is the extent to which data can be trusted to represent the phenomena of interest. Data should be evaluated for its reliability; coding instructions should be reproducible and the result should be the same each time it is tested (p. 350-351). The study has applied simple random sampling, however, Riffe et al. (1996) found that stratified sampling was more effective as it took 35 days to match the same level of efficiency as data from nightly television network news on two days stratified by month. In response to this argument, the study has drawn on a sample size that captured 56 hours or 3,360 minutes of data, and this was considered by the researcher to be a sample large enough to demonstrate the range of characteristics required.

### **3.1.3.2. Definition of the data**

Establishing a reliable definition of a news story is one of the big problems when analysing television news, according to Harrison (2000). Accordingly, this study drew on the definitions provided in Harrison (2000) and Hartley (1989) to provide clarity and therefore minimise any confusion in the data selection. A television news story was defined as an individual story irrespective of the bulletin's presentational style (Harrison, 2000). It featured a newsreader who framed the topic and provided links between the other elements of the bulletin, a television journalist or commentator who set the topic in context and explained its significance, and a filmed report that presented images and actuality at the street level of experience (Hartley, 1989). A reader voiceover (RVO), or live narration to pictures provided by the newsreader (Alysen, 2012), was also considered to be a news story as it met the requirements of featuring a newsreader who 'framed' the topic and a filmed report that represented images and actuality.

### **3.1.3.3. Identifying UGV**

During the pilot study referred to in section 3.1.1. it was difficult to rely on onscreen identification of UGV as the on-screen labelling of the source was inconsistent and often non-existent. Therefore, the study created a rubric that featured the differences between the typical characteristics of UGV and that of professional television news footage by drawing on eye-tracking analysis of audiences watching non-professional video (Abdollahian et al., 2010). Abdollahian et al. found that the amateur videographers had intentional and unintentional behaviours when recording footage, and these characteristics became clearer

when compared with professional video. For example, an amateur who recorded the video in real time frequently changed camera movement by zooming into or panning across an image to build a narrative in a way that departs from a professional videographer (2010, p. 28). They also found that the way amateurs recorded UGV footage mirrored human behaviour similar to when a person looked at an object for the first time, whereas a professionals recorded a variety of shot sizes and angles that could seamlessly be edited together into a sequence. Also, they found that while professionals drew on a range of subjects to video record, amateurs often featured people as the subject of the video (p. 35), the footage was often out-of-focus or unstable (p. 40) and the lighting often varied (p. 28). For more on the examination of professional news visuals, see the Glasgow Media Group (1976, pp. 358-359), which the study found is still relevant to current practices.

The rubric was also discussed with a senior television news journalist who was a participant in the study, and provided an additional defining feature that UGV was frequently recorded in a portrait aspect, which conflicted with the more conventional landscape aspect of professional video. He also said that UGV was often darker when compared to well-lit professional video, as smartphones did not operate well in low light situations, and that background horizons in UGV were seldom level.

In addition to the UGV, other footage investigated was found either to have been professionally created by non-news organisations such as the police and sports groups, or sourced from closed-circuit television footage recorded by security companies, that often looked grainy and badly focused. The rubric is presented in Table 3.1. on the next page.

**Table 3.1. Attributes of UGV compared with produced video.**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>User-generated video (UGV)</b>	<b>Produced by television news (PTN)</b>	<b>Produced by a non-news organisation (PNO)</b>
Camera movement	Can be erratic and may include random zooming or panning.	Used selectively to enhance coverage.	Used selectively to enhance coverage.
Subject	Limited coverage of subject, frequently has people as a central feature.	Features sequences, and with a mixture of subjects including people and landscapes.	Features sequences, and with a mixture of subjects including people and landscapes.
Focus	Can be out of focus.	All footage is in focus.	All footage is in focus.
Stability	Can be unstable as smartphone camera is handheld.	Stable as recorded from a tripod or off the shoulder.	Stable as recorded from a tripod or off the shoulder.
Perspective	Frequently portrait or vertical perspective.	Landscape, and typically with a 16:9 aspect ratio best suited to broadcast.	Landscape, and typically with a 16:9 aspect ratio best suited to broadcast.
Lighting and colour	Can be compromised due to limited functionality of the smart phone, resulting in dark, fuzzy or both.	Lighting is consistent throughout, effective use of aperture and colour control so flesh tones look natural.	Lighting is consistent throughout, effective use of aperture and colour control so flesh tones look natural.
Horizons	Frequently unlevel.	Level.	Level.
Composition	Not composed in a balanced way. Framing may feature too much/not enough headroom, or subjects may be cut off.	The subject as the main feature of the shot, and using rule of 3 <sup>rd</sup> and other camera framing conventions.	The subject as the main feature of the shot, and using rule of 3 <sup>rd</sup> and other camera framing conventions.
Watermarks	The user's name may be identified in a post-production graphic but not always.	News organisation's in-house style may feature a company watermark or logo.	Organisation's watermark or logo is featured.

The abovementioned criteria were applied to the data and footage that did not satisfy the attributes of UGV was excluded. As the researcher, I believe my background knowledge of more than 20 experience in television news production made me well placed to reliably to analyse and identify stories featuring UGV among the data. The videos were also viewed closely in their entirety multiple times to confirm accuracy.



### **3.1.4. Ethics**

As the recordings featured in the data were broadcast to the public on free-to-air television channels, there were no ethical concerns with gathering the samples for the quantitative analysis of the data. Where the data from a television organisation was considered to be produced by a journalist who had acted unethically, or the story had been found to be in breach of the Broadcasting Standards Authority codes, the story would be analysed as part of the study output but would not be reproduced.

## **3.2. Qualitative methodological approach**

The previous section discussed how a quantitative approach was applied to find the frequency of UGV within television news and identify a number of commonly occurring attributes therein. However, while quantitative analysis was used to identify the scope of the phenomenon of UGV, a shift in analytical emphasis to qualitative methodology was necessary in order to gain a deeper understanding of the data (Kracauer, 1952) in order to address the research question. This section discusses the qualitative analysis methods best suited to examine the effects UGV has on the journalistic norms of television news production. The methods featured include thematic analysis and critical discourse analysis, and each is discussed in relation to the findings.

### **3.2.1. Qualitative data sampling**

As discussed at the start of the chapter, this study has applied a mixed-method approach where the television broadcast news data were drawn on for both quantitative and qualitative analysis methods. However, in order to address the overall research question that explored “how” television broadcast journalists were harnessing user-generated video in their everyday work, further qualitative data were required so the current daily processes and routines undertaken could be investigated. The additional qualitative data consisted of semi-structured interviews and video-ethnographic style fieldwork, which is discussed next.

#### **3.2.1.1. Semi-structured interviews**

Interviews are the most commonly used data-gathering method in qualitative research and have been applied to a diverse range of disciplines. This has resulted in a wide variation among interviewing approaches including unstructured, semi-structured and structured formats (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). Unstructured interviews originated from

ethnographic anthropology (Mead, 1932) and were more or less equivalent to guided conversations, while structured interviews such as surveys are more frequently used in the gathering of quantitative data (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). However, the most suitable approach for this study was semi-structured interviews that sought to describe and understand the life world of individuals according to their constructed world (Baker & Edwards, 2012).

Semi-structured interviews are generally organised around a set of predetermined open-ended questions, with other questions emerging from the dialogue between interviewer and interviewee (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). Baker and Edwards (2012) argued that, unlike quantitative research methods, qualitative methods led researchers to study fewer interview subjects but delved more deeply to generate a greater understanding of how and why people thought and interacted in a certain way. The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with eight senior television journalists who were recorded on a small consumer-grade video camera with a built-in microphone at the participants' workstation or – if they preferred – in a quiet office space adjacent to the newsroom. Each participant was introduced on camera for identification purposes, and as the camera continued recording it was placed on a close desk or table until the interview ended. The purpose of this was to minimize the discomfort for the subjects by encouraging them to talk freely without the intrusion of a camera being aimed at their faces. When relevant, the video camera was also used to record activities on the computer screen to provide a reference to points addressed in the interview. An example Figure 3.3. shows gives an example of a still frame from the semi-structured interview data.



**Figure 3.3. Video recording during a semi-structured interview.**

In the figure above, an anonymised participant refers to the social media aggregator Tweet Deck as the newsroom production processes are discussed during a semi-structured interview. Each interview lasted approximately half an hour, a timeframe designed to minimise the disruption of their work routines. The participants responded to questions focused on the various stages of news production, including access/observation, selection/filtering, processing/editing, distribution and interpretation as identified in Hermida (2011). To gain a greater understanding of the responses, observational data were also gathered and the technique applied is discussed in the next section.

### **3.2.1.2. Video-ethnographic style fieldwork**

One of the goals of this study was to capture the current working practices of television journalists when UGV is present. This was achieved through video-ethnographic style fieldwork where the actions of three senior television journalists were video-recorded as they produced news stories that were present in the seven news story samples analysed in the study. Video ethnography enables a researcher to gain insights into how a participant works with respect to the issues under investigation, while not forming generalisations beyond the data and towards other communities (Dufon, 2002). Ethnography has been a successful method used by scholars like Cottle (1999, 2000, 2007), García Avilés et al. (2004), Schlesinger (1978), Schudson (1989), Tuchman (1973, 1978) resulting in seminal work that has enabled a deeper level of understanding of news production. The method focuses on the

behaviours of members of a particular community by studying them in naturally occurring, ongoing settings, typically while they participate in mundane day-to-day events (Dufon, 2002, p. 42). By recording these behaviours on video, the interactions could be replayed, transcribed and analysed, to gain unique insights into the current working practices of the participants (Sissons, 2016). According to Theunissen and Sissons (2018), one of ethnography's strengths was that a researcher could take themselves out of their own environment and into the world of the person being studied, making it easier to focus on how participants enacted their professional lives and routines.

However, there are limitations to the method of video-ethnography as it provides a small snapshot of the practice: for example, simultaneous actions outside of the camera's vantage point are not represented; and secondly, it is difficult to conclude from the video data whether the professional practice or event observed occurred in isolation or is representative of commonalities (p. 11). Therefore, it is important during data-gathering that the recordings should capture as much as possible of the context of the event being captured (DuFon, 2002). Television news is produced under a work system that operates with multiple workers within a determinate set of routines (Schlesinger, 1978). Accordingly, the study recognised that the practices being observed within the video-ethnography style fieldwork and field notes formed a subset of the many actions that occurred within a television network newsroom. In addition, Schlesinger (1978) found that news was produced in daily cycles or "news days" divided by news bulletins and deadlines for which the production machine is oriented (p. 48). This study focused on one bulletin deadline, the primetime "flag ship" bulletin at 6pm often considered the most significant of the day (Comrie, 1996, p. 192). The figure on the next page shows a frame from some of the video-ethnographic style data gathered.



**Figure 3.4. Video recording during the editing process.**

In the figure above, the researcher conducted a video recording from the rear of an editing suite within the newsroom complex as a story featuring UGV was being edited. The television journalist can be seen on the left-hand side and is indicating an editing decision to the video editor, who is positioned on the right.

The observations were conducted during five weekdays from 11 to 15 June 2018. They included senior editorial team meetings where the daily stories were discussed. This provided an opportunity for stories likely to feature UGV to be identified so that the production process conducted by the television journalist assigned could be followed. General conversations within the greater newsroom were observed where journalists interacted with their peers and specialist workers such as graphic artists, and video editors during the editing of stories. Computer-based activities such as journalists reading and responding to emails, interacting on social media and on the phone with sources were also observed. The observations occurred within the newsroom complex but did not extend to fieldwork outside the newsroom.

As a former staff member of the organisation observed, the researcher was able to bring an advanced level of understanding to the practices being observed and recorded while being mindful of the potential observer effect, a frequent criticism of ethnographic research that could introduce bias and possibly invalidate research findings (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982).

In particular, self-censorship or behaviour modification could occur when informants felt scrutinized (Monahan & Fisher, 2010). To mitigate any risks, the researcher's primary supervisor's contact details were provided to the management and participants to contact if they had any concerns about the research or how it was being conducted. While this was likely to have been inevitable, a lack of complaints or concerns suggested it did not rise to a level the participants felt highly uncomfortable about.

While different newsrooms have different structures, there is a common structure of organisation within television news production. And while newsroom work groups have evolved over the past 50 years, the study found the fundamental workflow remained the same as described in Schlesinger (1978):

- i. Common within all news platforms, the news day begins with an editorial conference chaired by the departmental editors, and attended by the managerial news heads who have access to policy decisions made at the highest level. They are joined at the meetings by senior editorial staff from the newsroom, and planners of news coverage. Television journalists also attend. The meeting is an opportunity for the editors to assess potential stories, and promote the handling of news in particular directions or angles. Specialists may also be present such as video editors, studio production directors and graphic designers, where discussion of technical requirements in the quest for pictures can often dominate the news judgments required.
- ii. A daily news diary is used as a source of upcoming information that is assessed for its newsworthiness and used to define the news agenda for the day. The diary also provides information on the availability of reporting staff, timing of international news feeds and special requirements likely to have an impact on the production of bulletins throughout the day, and particularly the main six o'clock bulletin that is the subject of this study.
- iii. Throughout in the news day, the news agenda is monitored across multiple media outlets. There is much concern with the deployment of reporting resources as limited manpower can affect the logistical ability to cover some stories. Unlike the other media formats of print, radio and online, to do the job effectively, a television reporter requires a camera person and a certain amount of physical movement over varying distances to gather the pictures and get them to air.
- iv. A shared level of understanding is required of each member of the news team within a newsroom structure that follows the routines of production in relation to the newsgathering operation. This includes the phases of story assignment, research and coverage planning, booking of resources such as a camera

operator and travel vehicle, setting up interviews, travelling to and from often multiple locations to record footage, all the while allowing the time later in the day to edit the story together to meet the on-air deadline.

Each of the above points relate to the television news story, while the next set of points refer to the production of the news bulletin:

- v. The news bulletin, itself, is the product of a number of interlocking skill sets, where the division of labour is between newsgathering (reporting) and news processing (editing). Once a story has been assigned to a television journalist, a series of parallel selection processes is set in place that are woven together in the hour before the bulletin goes to air – and sometimes – not finalised until after the broadcast has begun. The editing process in television is complicated requiring technical videotape editors to work under the direction of the television journalists. Stories are checked in real time by senior editors, scripts are subedited, and segments of the bulletin are “knitted together”. Throughout the process, updated information can influence the pre-determined running order where stories can be moved higher or lower in the ranking depending on the overall composition of the bulletin. A story can also be dropped from the bulletin if its newsworthiness becomes compromised or usurped by a stronger story. (This is because there is a set maximum duration of a bulletin, typically 48 minutes of content within a commercial hour.)
- vi. Approximately an hour before transmission, the senior duty editor finalises the bulletin, and the newsreader(s) who have been dressed and made-up begin to familiarise themselves with the intro scripts, sometimes altering the wording to suit their personal delivery style. Typically, the newsreaders will have recorded promotional clips earlier and these are broadcast during commercial breaks during the day’s broadcasting. At this point, much of the focus moves towards the studio production team of news director and control room crew takes control of the bulletin under the careful guidance of the senior editor who continues to monitor the progress of stories.

(adapted from Schlesinger, 1978, pp. 49–82)

There were several points in the process outlined above where UGV was likely to create opportunities or bring challenges for the television journalist. Exploring these processes through the analysis of the ethnographic videos took the study beyond theoretical enquiry into the distribution of journalism, decentering the newsroom and the talk of newsroom-centricity which has been regarded as a problem within research (Deuze & Witschge, 2017).

### **3.2.2. Sampling method**

Once the abovementioned data-gathering methods were selected, a suitable method of sampling was required in order to capture reliable evidence of television journalists operating in their normative workplace environment of a television newsroom. The news editors of both New Zealand's national television newsrooms were approached for access. One organisation agreed and the second news organisation declined as the manager was reluctant to introduce external pressures at a time when the organisation was experiencing resource pressures. Therefore, the study proceeded with the consenting organisation, and the newsroom workers participated in the study.

To gain useful and relevant data, it was necessary for the participants interviewed to have a level of experience and knowledge of the subject matter that the researcher could draw on when observing and discussing their practice. The data-gathering method of purposive sampling (Patton, 2002) was applied, a technique also called "judgment sampling" (Etikan et al., 2016, p. 2), which is a non-random technique that does not need underlying theories or a set number of participants. By drawing on purposive sampling, the researcher was able to select participants who were knowledgeable about, and experienced with, the phenomenon of interest, available and willing to participate, and were able to communicate their experiences and opinions in an articulate, expressive, and reflective manner (Palinkas et al., 2015). Where possible, the researcher also attempted to include participants who had produced stories that were featured in the broadcast news data, so that the analysis of the stories could be informed by the participants' explanations of their practices.

Accordingly, 10 senior television journalists were purposively selected (six men and four women) where the criteria of "senior" was interpreted as more than five years' working experience. Not only was this to ensure the participants had a suitable level of knowledge and experience working with UGV, but it was also to avoid any discomfort felt by those workers who had recently been the researcher's students while at Auckland University of Technology, a condition of the ethics approval granted. Two participants later excluded themselves from the data, one interviewee considered themselves not meeting the threshold of seniority or experience, and a second participant repeatedly deferred the interview time citing work demands. Therefore, the result was that the field data gathered came from eight senior television journalists, of whom six were men and two were women.



Five of the abovementioned senior television journalists also agreed to be video-recorded as they worked on UGV-featuring stories, performing activities representative of the process of television news production within the newsroom complex as described in section 3.2.1.2. above. Two of the participants were working on stories featured in the seven stories analysed, and these included Story 1: Whale, and Story 3: Storm. The video recordings included the journalists working at a computer, speaking on the phone to colleagues or sources, interacting with colleagues, and working in the video-editing suites. Additionally, two men and one woman from the video library, the video-ingestion and the video-editing areas were also consulted in order to confirm the researcher's existing knowledge of processes applied within the newsroom were still valid. The video data of the semi-structured interviews and the video-ethnographic style field work were transcribed by the researcher.

### **3.2.3. Thematic analysis**

As mentioned earlier, the qualitative textual analysis applied drew on the same set of broadcast news data as the quantitative analysis. The qualitative analysis sought to identify themes within texts that characterised the experience of informants and illuminated questions of importance (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). Two theme-identification methods were considered: The first was content analysis and the second was thematic analysis. Content analysis is commonly used in the sciences in the study of texts to examine patterns by applying replicable and valid methods to communication data (Krippendorff, 1980). The method focuses on data at a micro level, providing themes as a classification but fails to penetrate the given text in order to explore the underlying meanings (Kracauer, 1952) that were critical to this study. Thematic analysis was found to be more useful to the study, whereby data are coded in relation to the observation of a moment in time, recognised as important, and then encoded for further interpretation (Boyatzis, 1998). Braun and Clarke (2012) claimed a benefit of thematic analysis was its flexibility and that it could be combined with discourse analysis, a framework applied in this study and is discussed in section 3.2.4. later in this chapter.

#### **3.2.3.1. Developing themes in the story data**

According to Boyatzis (1998), themes applied should define the characteristic in a clear, concise, and conceptually meaningful manner that is closely connected with the raw data. He also said the descriptions should be clear and, if necessary, include any qualifications or

exclusions, and that positive and negative examples should be provided to eliminate any confusion (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 31). Accordingly, three approaches to the application of themes and code design were considered for the study:

- i. A theory-driven approach relied on a researcher's theory or hypothesis as a principal driver of the method of enquiry, where the meanings and wording of the themes emerge (Boyatzis, 1998). This technique has been criticised by scholars such as Corbin and Strauss (2014) as being highly dependent on the theoretical sensitivity of the researcher.
- ii. A prior-research-driven used codes proven to be valid and reliable by others working within a similar data context (Boyatzis, 1998). Corbin and Strauss (2014) argued the risks associated with relying on prior research codes meant the researcher might subconsciously accept another's assumptions, projections and biases. However, they acknowledged the method also offered the ability to build on prior knowledge without having to "[re]invent the wheel" (p. 37).
- iii. A data-driven approach applied codes developed inductively as conclusions were reached based on what had been observed (Boyatzis, 1998). Data-driven coding required a large amount of attention to be paid to the method's design details. This approach was criticised for its high level of complexity, and regarded as a controversial method that was used infrequently (Boyatzis, 1998).

A comparison of these three approaches is presented in Table 3.2. on the next page.

**Table 3.2. A summary of stages and steps when using thematic analysis.**

Stage	Theory-driven approach	Prior-research-driven approach	Data-driven approach
I	Deciding on sampling and design issues.	Deciding on sampling and design issues.	Deciding on sampling and design issues.
II	Generating a code from theory.  Reviewing and rewriting the code for applicability to the raw information.  Determining the reliability.	Generating a code from theory.  Reviewing and rewriting the code for applicability to the raw information.  Determining the reliability.	Selecting subsamples.  Reducing the raw information.  Identifying themes within subsamples.  Comparing themes across subsamples.  Creating a code.
III	Applying the code to the raw information.  Determining validity.  Interpreting results.	Applying the code to the raw information.  Determining validity.  Interpreting results.	Determining the reliability.  Applying the code to the remaining raw information.  Determining validity.  Interpreting results.

(Boyatzis, 1998, p. 44)

In the table above, the stages of the theory-driven and prior-research driven procedures are the same, while the data-driven approach requires more steps as the data set is greater in volume. The prior-research-driven approach was found to be most suitable for this research project, as it was possible to draw on themes that had proven valid and reliable within journalism studies in the past 10 to 15 years. This timeframe was selected to represent the most recent literature identified on the topic of television news since the arrival of the Internet.

The study drew on Cottle and Rai (2009) who developed an approach that was used to explore the “communicative frames” within television news in six different countries, and re-theorise the genre within the rapidly developing news ecology (p. 61). The study found these themes could be applied within a contemporary nexus in order to investigate any empirical shifts since UGV was introduced into practice, and this is discussed next.

### **3.2.3.2. Framing**

When Cottle and Rai (2009) explored communicative frames, they drew on sociologist Max Weber’s “ideal type”, a common mental construct that identified general phenomena that recurred in different times and places but did not place a value judgment on it (Weber, 1949, p. 92). By applying the ideal type construct, Cottle and Rai (2009) developed a set of categories that captured universally recurring structures or frames inherent in television news. The widely held discourse-dependent interpretation of framing is to inform how a text has been mediated (Entman, 1993). However, Cottle and Rai’s approach to framing was non-traditional, as their aim was to identify the formal characteristics of television news stories per se (Cottle & Rai, 2009, p. 51). The frames are explained below:

- i. The reporting frame was the most common news frame, conveying the information and observation of an event in relation to the daily production of television news (Wright, 1974). It featured succinct, up-to-date information delivered within a short duration (stories were approximately one-and-a-half minutes long, and reader voiceovers were as short as 15 seconds long). The reporting frame has been criticised for delivering a “thin account of events” (Cottle & Rai, 2009, p. 51), as it was not possible to cover an event in any degree of depth, because of its short duration.

- ii. The reportage frame addressed the aforementioned issues of brevity, as it was slightly longer than the reporting frame and therefore includes detailed background information, providing context and/or analysis. It has been connected with observational documentary modes, including witness bearing (Nichols, 1991) and may include observational, first-hand accounts or follow-ups that provide an update on previously screened stories.
- iii. The frame of reconciliation extended beyond the reportage frame, by drawing on the filmic modes of television news reporting such as satellite link-ups and the use of other similar live technologies in order to bring conflicting entities face-to-face to champion a solution to a newsworthy issue. Cottle and Rai (2009) noted that reconciliation frames were rare. However, the study considered that since the Internet had enabled increased opportunities for reporters to deliver a live report into a television news bulletin as it is being broadcast, reconciliation frames were likely to occur more frequently.

The abovementioned frames were applied within the study, and were investigated more deeply through the use of the two polemic sub-frames of conflictual and consensual news (Cottle & Rai, 2009) addressed below.

- a) Conflictual sub-frames communicated conflict in a propositional or analytical form, and also invited public deliberation, and included five subcategories:
  - i. Dominant – news stories defined by a single external news ‘voice’ that may come from a source of authority, challenger or groups within the social hierarchy, which either remained unopposed or was marginally challenged;
  - ii. Contest – two opposing views and arguments generally given equal weight or representation and structured adversarially;
  - iii. Contention – multiple voices or perspectives that represented a complexity of viewpoints that might connect with particular areas of contention or dispute, but did not necessarily challenge or oppose the interests or perspectives of others;
  - iv. Campaigning – not commonly used in television journalism, but characterised by a news service declaring its stance on an issue and presenting views and voices that challenged, opposed or proposed a particular perspective and course of action;

- v. Exposé/investigative – conforming to the ideology of journalism as a public watchdog where journalists undertook extensive research as they investigated, exposed and uncovered information and practices that would not otherwise be revealed in the public domain.
- b) Consensual sub-frames were of a culturally expressive nature, that did not highlight any obvious issue nor contending perspectives:
- i. Community service – where the story advised the meaning of essential new information and essentially took on an advisory or service-oriented role;
  - ii. Collective interests – a report on a news event that elaborated or visualised a shared, communal or collective interest through “common interest” subject matter;
  - iii. Cultural recognition – symbolised and/or affirmed shared values and community ideals, and served to evoke and appeal to notions of cultural identity and cultures of difference by acknowledging and/or celebrating events, individuals or groups represented;
  - iv. Mythic tales – a story that displayed or activated cultural myths that symbolised values or ideals that were exceptional or extraordinary in some way and/or which were felt to be “normative cultural goods”.

(Cottle & Rai, 2009, p. 53).

Accordingly, it was possible to identify a subset of stories that were representative of a range of ideal types within the data and these were explored within a critical discourse analytical framework, the elements of which are discussed next.

The study looked at the level of textual practice to explore how the news stories in the data were affected when UGV was incorporated. By conducting deeper analysis into the form and textual characteristics, the aim was to understand how the amateur visual content was absorbed into television news. For example, did it change the way of describing the world or introduce new ways of televisual storytelling and did the UGV challenge the boundaries between profession and amateur content creation? Critical discourse analysis was selected as a method in order to focus on the social practices carried out through discursive actions, enabling the study to combine the perspective of structure with the perspective of the action (Fairclough, 2001, p. 123). The next section firstly explains the analysis of the broadcast

news story data, then secondly, the analysis of the semi-structured interviews and video-ethnographic style field work data.

#### **3.2.4. Critical discourse analysis (CDA)**

Scholars of Critical Discourse Studies follow a school of common interests in the deconstructing of ideologies and power through the systematic investigation of semiotic data that is written, spoken or visual (Wodak & Meyer, 2015). They attempt to make their own positionings and interests explicit while retaining their respective scientific methodologies and remaining self-reflective of their own research process (p. 4). Within Critical Discourse Studies, this study has drawn on Fairclough's (1995) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework to identify and analyse social practices that resulted, as in patterns in the data when a television journalist produced a television news story containing UGV. CDA focuses upon relations between discourse and other aspects of social life (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2018). According to Fairclough (1995), CDA is used to investigate, "the radical changes that are taking place in contemporary social life, with how semiosis figures within processes of change, and with shifts in the relationship between semiosis and other social elements within networks of practices" (p. 123). This perspective was relevant to the study, as one of the most radical changes in recent history has been the introduction of Web 2.0. that has changed the media landscape with the interactivity enabled by social media, a key area of interest in this study. Each of three dimensions of the critical discourse analytical framework (Fairclough, 1995) is described next, along with the application of each within this study.

- i. Text was broadly understood as written or spoken language. However, in contemporary society a wider variety of texts have become present, the most obvious example of which is television, combining language with visual images, music and sound effects (Fairclough, 1995). For this purpose, this study also draws on the Glasgow Media Group (1976), Montgomery (2007).
- ii. Discourse was a complex unit of linguistic form, meaning, and action captured under the notion of a communicative event or communicative act (van Dijk, 1988). News reports were unique forms of discourse, where discourse analysis enabled a researcher to pinpoint the key features and behaviours of the language of news, and enrich one's understanding of the media (Cotter, 2005, p. 798). Within the context of this study,

‘discourse practice’ (Fairclough, 1995) is defined as the production of meaningful news discourse.

- iii. Socio-cultural practice was the distinctive, spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterised a society or a social group (Akuoko, 2009, p. 58). Fairclough (1995) argued that the analysis of texts should not be artificially isolated from the analysis of institutional and discursal practices within which texts are embedded (p. 9). Accordingly, the routines, processes and motivations of the television reporter were explored within the context of the news stories containing UGV that were produced.

An area that was excluded from this study was ‘audience reception’, which Fairclough (1995) argued should be considered. Audience reception was regarded as outside the scope of the study. However, the semi-structured interview data and video-ethnographic style fieldwork gave some insight into how television journalists expected a story to be received by its audience. While this study did not explore audience reception empirically, it did go some way towards the journalists taking into account audiences through the lens of production.

Television news texts are three-dimensional, featuring written, audio and video texts. The study drew on an analytical framework of macro rules (Van Dijk, 1988) applied to the written texts of the newsreaders’ introductions (also referred to as “intros”) and the voiceover scripts for the video stories; the audio texts of the voice over and sound effects present in the edited footage; and the visual texts of the video footage and interviews, graphics, and captions or other on-screen texts.

#### **3.2.4.1. Macro rules**

Van Dijk (1988) identified that news schema, textual superstructures, determined how topics were ordered, how sequences and sentences should appear in a text (p.51). He found that news stories were composed of “macro propositions” or several topics, structured to adhere to “macro rules” subconsciously applied by the journalist to compress a story into as few details as possible without losing its meaning. These can be identified within the news discourse by searching for the following attributes:

Macro rule 1: Deletion of detailed information, such as detail of place, age or time.



Macro rule 2: Generalisation of multiple nouns as a collective, like cat, dog, canary as pets.

Macro rule 3: Construction of multiple verbs, for example the verb ambush as a number of actions.

(adapted from van Dijk, 1988, pp. 49–82)

Bell (1991) referred to the above macro rules as “summarisations”, and pointed out they were similar to the processes by which stories were edited to become shorter in length, or duration (p.162). For the purposes of clarity, the above macro rules have been referred to in this study as compressions.

Compressions are a useful tool for the television journalist working with multi-dimensional texts featuring visual and audio images, as the voiceover script delivered at a rate of three words per second cannot be longer in duration than the story’s edited footage. Therefore, when the edited footage is of short duration, the script is shortened in length to equal it. Furthermore, a voiceover typically begins and ends slightly inside the duration of the footage, so that there is no overlapping or cut-off when the story is broadcast as part of the news bulletin that features ‘live ’ newsreader introductions and other elements that are not of a fixed duration. An example from the data that demonstrates how compression of the news discourse was identified in a story called ‘landslide’. The story featured UGV recorded by a man who was driving to work when a major landslide occurred in front of him, narrowly missing his car and blocking a highway. It was coded with a ‘conflictual’ subtheme, with the news values of negativity, audio-visual and shareability, and featured one dominant news source. The study found UGV of weather events were a fairly common occurrence, and featured in 11 percent of the broadcast news story data of which this story was a typical example. The UGV footage featured dramatic and high-risk visuals that may have influenced the editorial decision to produce the story for broadcast. Without the UGV, it is unlikely that the story would have met the threshold for television news. The topic would have resonated with local audiences in a country with the highest vehicle ownership in the world (Transport Ministry, n.d.), and where rural communities often become compromised by weather-damaged roads in areas of rugged terrain. This would have affected the prominence the story was given within the television bulletin, as it was located sixth in the running order of 22

stories. The UGV also featured in a promotional tease package at the start of the bulletin. An excerpt from a transcription of the story is presented in figure 3.5. on the next page.

1.35	<b>WS slip continues</b>	<i>(Reporter's voiceover):</i> It's left seven-thousand tons of <u>dirt</u> to clean up and the stability of the landscape is <u>now in question</u> .	Past tense Background information
1.37			
1.40			
1.41	CU interviewee #2	<i>(interviewee #2):</i> We've got crews that have come in from both the northern and southern sides, so they're attacking both slides of the slip. Ah but with the volume of material it's gonna be days before they can um get one lane open again.	SHIFT: Present tense new information
1.42	<i>(caption)</i> MARK OWENS, NZ TRANSPORT AGENCY		
1.52	(map)	<i>(Reporter's voiceover):</i> State highway 2 links Gisborne and Opotiki through the Ureweras, normally a two-hour journey. Now drivers face a grueling four hour <u>detour</u> around the East Coast's state highway 35.	SHIFT: Future tense Projecting the Story forward
2.00			
2.04		<i>(interviewee #2):</i> Um we're throwing the resources at it to make sure we can get it cleared as quickly and as safely as possible.	SHIFT: Present tense
2.09	HA snowy hills tilts down to reveal highway running through	<i>(Reporter's voiceover):</i> This morning winter <u>made its presence felt</u> on roads across the South Island.	SHIFT: Past tense background information
2.10			
2.14	MS car driving on highway through snowy hills	Arthur's Pass <u>off limits for a time</u>	
2.15		<i>(Interviewee #3):</i> They seem to panic when they get three millimetres of snow these days	SHIFT: Present tense commentary
2.16	MCU Interviewee #3 in car		
2.17	MCU Interviewee #4 in car	<i>(Interviewee #4):</i> Always love a bit of snow on the roads, makes it a bit interesting	
2.22	CU kea bird sitting in snow	<i>(Reporter's voiceover):</i> However, more snow is expected over night with an ice blast set to <u>engulf</u> the	SHIFT: Future tense projecting the story forward for potential follow-up
2.24	WS trees with sun shining through	(CONTINUED)	

**Figure 3.5. An excerpt from a television news story where macro rules were applied.**

In the figure above, the following compressions were identified and are referred to within the context of van Dijk's macro rules (1988):

- i. Macro rule one: the deletion of detailed information occurred four times within the story script, where the details were replaced with colloquialisms and generalisations. The first reference, “now in question” (at 1.40) was a vague phrase that compressed the concept of not knowing what will happen next, along with what the implications of what that might be. It appeared halfway through the story, at a point where the UGV already had featured three times. It shows how the reporter was limited in his or her ability to include relevant information as they had essentially run out of footage to match the script.
- ii. Macro rule two: the generalisation of multiple nouns, also enabled the story to become compressed, where “dirt” (at 1.35) was a term used to reduce the naming of the multiple forms of debris on the road (rocks, rubble, mud and the crumbling hillside), and “detour” (at 2.00) was an abbreviation for the gorge roadways and additional highway the motorist was going to take to get back to the East Coast.
- iii. Macro rule three: multiple verbs were grouped together by the term “engulf” (at 2.24) that was used to connote the action of the landslide swamping and demolishing a main arterial road, while also overwhelming the motorist. Also, it was a term that reflected the dramatic nature of the event recorded in the UGV that would have been difficult for a television journalist to acquire within a normalised routine.

Each of these points above demonstrate the effectiveness of the framework and therefore how they were incorporating UGV into the production of televisual news texts. The transcript is also referred to as an example discussed in the next section which examines how temporality was explored within the data.

### 3.2.4.2. Temporal narrative structure

The second approach to discourse analysis was to examine the narrative structure of a news story, which Cotter (2005) argued was a productive area of analysis and produced distinctive results when media data were considered. Labov (1972) found narrative structures drew on a set of characteristic categories organised by rules. Labov investigated the storytelling of black youth in the inner cities in the USA to explore the relationship between linguistic behaviours and the participants' literacy levels, and found that there were six elements in oral storytelling. Bell (1995) applied Labov's model to news discourse and found that journalists performed a similar storytelling role, interpreted through "satisfying questions" (p. 310) as described:

- i. The *abstract* summarises the central action through questioning "what is this about? why is this story being told?"
- ii. The *orientation* sets the scene with "who, when, where" and the initial situation or activity of the story.
- iii. The *complicating action* is central to the story or "what happened (then)?"
- iv. The *evaluation* or "so what?" factor justifies why the story is worth reporting.
- v. The *resolution* is identified as the "consequence".
- vi. The *coda* wraps up the action with, "and that was that".

(Bell, 1995, pp. 310–314)

The above elements represented the central action, and there were three additional lower-level categories including "follow-ups" that covered subsequent actions, "commentary" provided by a journalist's contextual observations, and "background" covering events prior to the current action (Bell, 1995, p. 316). Furthermore, Bell (1995) found a striking difference in storytelling, in that oral storytelling was expressed in a canonical or chronological order, while news discourse was delivered in parts, following a top-down principle from the most important to lower-level details. This model of news discourse was known as the 'inverted pyramid' structure, a non-chronological order that van Dijk (1988) described as the 'installment method'. Bell (1991) found the inverted pyramid structure was influenced by the time-boundness of the news production process, and Montgomery (2007)

argued that was part of the reason television news relied heavily on the present tense. Furthermore, Tuchman (1978) claimed the use of the present tense created a sense of the present reality and minimised the distance between the news field and its report.

However, the study argues that, as television news is a highly visual medium, narrative structures have evolved beyond temporal considerations. The researcher has observed in her practiced-based work that it is common for the visuals to dictate three different structures found in television news, and these include: (1) strongest pictures appearing at the start of the story in order to capture an audience's interest; (2) a canonical structure which may not be the most engaging, but likely to be the easiest for an audience to follow; and (3) most recent visuals appearing at the start of the story, thereby providing the newest information similar in a way to the application of the inverted pyramid described above.

For these reasons, temporality and its influence on the structure of UGV-incorporated television news was an area of interest to the study, particularly as the reviewed literature indicated that it was an area that was under-explored. For example, Boczkowski (2010), Reich and Godler (2014), and Usher (2014) investigated time challenges and opportunities within journalistic production, but not within the news discourse itself. Zelizer (2018) argued that more journalism scholars should focus on temporality as an in-road to understanding the news, given the degree to which the idea of time distinguished journalism as a mode of public address. Tenenboim-Weinblatt and Neiger (2018) claimed that understanding the temporality of journalism in a changing media landscape would enable researchers to disentangle the complex relationships between the material and textual dimensions of time in news production. Furthermore, it could inform the identification of a systematic categorisation of narrative patterns, as well as a comparative assessment of the roles it plays in relation to public time (Bell, 1995; Tenenboim-Weinblatt & Neiger, 2015, p. 1048).

The study was able to identify temporality in television news when UGV was present, by adapting a model by Neiger and Tenenboim-Weinblatt (2016) that recognised and categorised the temporal layers in news stories. This included identifying temporal indicators through grammatical markers such as tenses and temporal adjectives or adverbs and other references to events or developments that took place in the past, present or future, and sorting the results into distinct temporal categories in relation to the news cycle. Neiger and Tenenboim-

Weinblatt identified up to 11 temporal categories including distant, long-range, mid-range, recent and immediate past, present, and immediate, near, midrange, foreseeable and distant future (p. 143). However, this study reduced the model to the three temporalities of past, present and future, as the layering of multiple temporal shifts was outside the scope of the research project.

Temporality in television news is demonstrated in figure 3.5, a transcription of the aforementioned ‘landslide’ story that identifies Bell’s (1995) satisfying questions as referred to at the start of this section. The temporal shifts are:

- a. At 1.35, the reporter’s voiceover was presented in the past tense reporting on the event that occurred and this could be heard while the UGV of the landslip was seen on screen. This was factual background information providing context to the event. This is also referred to as the *orientation*.
- b. At 1.40, the end of the sentence featured the temporal marker “now (in question)” to shift the audience to the present tense to seamlessly connect with interviewee Owens’ quote as he described the man-power he was applying to resolve the problem, identified as a *complicated action*. Then he projected the story into the future tense by referring to the likely outcome, that it would “be days before they can [um] get one lane open again”.
- c. At 1.52, the reporter’s voiceover returned to the present tense as he provided commentary on the state of disruption, again using the temporal marker, “now”. The segment continued with a present tense commentary (at 2.04) from Owens that effectively mirrored the reporter, and attempting to respond to and even placate those travellers facing the detour who may have been watching the story due to its proximity and likely effect on their lives. This was identified as the *evaluation*.
- d. At 2.09, the reporter segued to the past tense to bring wider context to the story, the *resolution*, by reporting on weather conditions that had occurred in other parts of the country. If the dramatic UGV had not been sourced and used to make the start of the story look more visually interesting, this is the point at which the story may have begun

as a shorter piece reporting on the bad weather that had hit the South Island of New Zealand.

- e. At 2.15, a shift to the present tense was identified when two interviewees gave off-the-cuff comments that shared their own views about the commuters affected by the bad weather in the south.
- f. At 2.22, the reporter's voiceover shifts to the future tense to speculate on the future progress of the weather pattern and project the story forward for a potential follow up. This is a common technique in television news, also known as the *coda*.

By applying a temporal framework (Neiger & Tenenboim-Weinblatt, 2016) multiple time shifts were identified in the narration. Each shift was crafted by the television journalist to add layer-upon-layer of new information while also attempting to make sense of the visuals available. It is noteworthy that a majority of the shifts were between actuality (video footage) and interviews. The interviews were affected by the temporal characteristics of the questions presented by the reporter; in other words, a question asked in the present tense is likely to have prompted a response in the present tense. This provides a clue as to the order in which the story was video-recorded. When the television reporter came to compile the story, these temporalities influenced his design of the narrative structure to flow within a visual and temporal framework. In doing so, he used temporality as a flexible variant to incorporate the differing types of content, namely UGV, interview, additional visual content. Accordingly, the example demonstrates how the form of discourse analysis is helpful as it allows the researcher to see how UGV is integrated temporally alongside professional material.

#### **3.2.4.3. Beyond temporality**

Further to the methodology described above, an additional method was required to examine and provide insight into the decision-making processes used by the television journalists when producing their stories incorporating UGV. Erjavec (2005) developed a form of macro-structural to micro-structural textual analysis that looked beyond the temporal structure to explore the decisions made by journalists when creating stories from the pre-existing texts created by public relations workers. The study adapted Erjavec's model to analyse key



decisions made by television journalists when producing stories that incorporated pre-existing UGV and this is shown in table 3.3. below.

**Table 3.3. Adapted macro-structural to micro-structural textual analysis model.**

Areas of enquiry: Erjavec (2005, pp. 167-169)	Areas of enquiry: Adaptation by this study
Generic structure	Temporal structure
Topic: Public Relations	Topic: UGV content
Perspective	Perspective
Choice of sources	Treatment of sources

The above table shows how Erjavec's (2005) conditions on the left-hand section of the table were adapted to form those applied in this study in the right-hand section. Each adaptation is explained below:

- i. Temporal structure – by examining the temporalities of past, present, and future within the narrative structure it was possible to explore the challenges and opportunities affording the creation of a television news narrative when UGV was present. This was discussed in the previous section and the abovementioned model was adapted from “generic” to “temporal” structure to meet this requirement.
- ii. Topic – the topic of a news story should adhere to the norms of what is deemed “newsworthy” (Sissons, 2012, p. 277), a view applied to textual stories. However, when UGV was present and the three-dimensional nature of television news (text, audio, and video) was taken into account, it was important to investigate how the UGV had been featured in relation to the newsworthiness of a story. Therefore, the model was adapted to incorporate how television journalists repurposed the UGV. For example, as mentioned in section 3.2.4.1. a television news story required footage that was slightly longer than the accompanying voiceover. If a script is 30 seconds in length and the available footage is only 20 seconds long, the television journalist has two options: either the scripting is compressed and word count reduced, or additional footage is added to lengthen the story accordingly.

- iii. Perspective – an important feature of the meaning of an instance of discourse is perspective, or the viewpoint from which events and actions are described (van Dijk, 1991, p. 179). A television journalist uses framing techniques (Goffman, 1974) to give a story a perspective consistent with its news value. It is hypothesised that the perspective applied to the UGV by the amateur creator sometimes may differ from the perspective of the television journalist who produces the news story, particularly if the story has been framed towards newsworthiness. This was an area the study considered worthy of further examination.
- iv. Treatment of sources – the choice of sources in television news also has been investigated in Comrie (1996), however, the treatment of sources had not been studied. The study was interested in the identification and verification of sources, and the professional practices that acted as a boundary to differentiate journalism from other forms of public communication (Hermida, 2015). As discussed in the literature review in Chapter Two, journalism’s professional boundaries have become strained as increasing numbers of citizens share content on social media, and media companies demand more from the journalist, involving notions of speed (Deuze, 2005). Hermida (2015) points out, “these are the times when verification is most valuable, given the surfeit of speculation, rumour, and opinion on social media. But the strain on established verification practices means that this is when transgressions tend to occur” (p. 38). It is acknowledged that it is not possible to identify verification practices from the text alone but it does give an indication of how the sources of the UGV have been organised and checked.

#### **3.2.4.4. Triangulation**

The abovementioned methods were used to analyse the textual evidence of actions that were imposed upon the story data. The findings were triangulated with the data gathered during semi-structured interviews and video-ethnographic style field notes to gain a deeper understanding of the actions and decisions made by the television journalists in relation to the production of the stories or others like them. Triangulation is favoured by scholars applying a mixed or multi-method approach to social inquiry as it functions as a bridge between quantitative and qualitative theories (Denzin, 2015). Drawing on the themes applied within section 3.2.4.3. above, the same variables of temporal structure, remediation of UGV,

perspective and treatment of sources were also applied within the semi-structured interviews and the video-ethnography to gather evidence that would support or challenge the findings.

### **3.2.4.5. Film logic**

This brings us to a point that should not be overlooked: that compression and temporality identifiers are only a part of the analysis. A number of visual conventions should also be taken into account when analysing television news, as the aesthetics of a television news story have a significant impact on the way the grammar of film – and video – is compiled (Glasgow Media Group, 1976). Therefore, the study drew on the common conventions of visual storytelling known as “film logic” (p. 358) that are applied to avoid disruption in the mind of the viewer and these included:

- i. The juxtaposition of any shot was determined by the content of the shot preceding it;
- ii. Where two shots of similar size and content were edited against one another, the effect of a “jump-cut” could destroy the logic of a sequence;
- iii. The camera must not cross the line of action, otherwise the action appeared to become reversed on the screen;
- iv. Actions from one shot to another should be matched to show continuity of movement, such as when a person’s hand was shown to be reaching for the door it could not be seen to be already grasping the handle in the close-up;
- v. Camera movements should stop before a cut.

(Glasgow Media Group, 1976, p. 358)

The above film logics were known to be commonly applied in non-fiction and fiction visual storytelling and therefore were taken into consideration within the analysis of the broadcast news story data. Furthermore, the Glasgow Media Group (1976) found the visuals used in television news were strongly influenced by an audio track commentary. This was defined as an alien narrative logic that was driven by journalistic interpretation and derived from their perception of news values. Furthermore, they found that footage was affected by the facilities necessary on location to record a newsworthy event where an action in the scene often cannot be repeated, as a level of intervention in the action was not permitted by the observational role of the crew (p. 359). Montgomery (2007) claimed that television news had an increased

level of narrative complexity as it focused more strongly on showing rather than telling and almost always relied on pictures and infrequently on narrative. Montgomery's view is helpful in achieving coherence between what is seen and what is heard in television news stories where, "no-one assumes, watching a news report, that the pictures have been selected randomly and that they have little bearing on the words being spoken" (Montgomery, 2007, p. 105). These concepts are explored further in the qualitative analysis in Chapter Five.

### **3.2.5. Ethics**

Ethics was approved for the gathering of newsroom data for qualitative analysis. All members of the newsroom were provided with an information sheet explaining the study and the opportunities to participate on the days when the fieldwork was conducted. The participants provided the researcher with a copy of their individual written consent to participate in the data gathering, and the participants each approved a draft transcription of the portions of the thesis in which they were anonymised. See appendices 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3.

### **3.3. Summary**

This chapter has outlined the research design and described the research procedure used in detail. A constructivist perspective was applied, featuring mixed-method methodology (Creswell, 1994) that employed quantitative and qualitative approaches, thereby enabling more insight to be gained from the combination than by either form by itself (p. 203).

Two sets of data were collected. The first was collected using simple random sampling (Lichty & Bailey, 1978) and consisted of television broadcast news bulletins recorded off-air from the country's two mainstream networks, TVNZ and TV3 on 28 consecutive weekdays between 11 June and 8 July 2018 inclusive. This equated to 56 hours or 3,360 minutes of data. Weekdays were selected as they generated a substantial amount of news (Stempel, 1989), and the study avoided the December and January "silly season", where television news content departs from the norm (Comrie, 1996, p. 194). The second data set was gathered concurrently with the story data and consisted of 447 minutes of observational video-recordings featuring semi-structured interviews with eight purposefully sampled senior television journalists, who were videoed in a contemporary newsroom setting within the news complex operated by the broadcaster. Three of the senior television journalists were

the subjects of ethnographic style fieldwork supported by field notes as they went about their daily routines while producing stories that were part of the seven stories selected for analysis.

In the first part of the chapter, quantitative methodology was discussed as providing a suitable statistical technique for obtaining precise and reliable observations (George, 2009), enabling the most frequent ideas that occur in data to be investigated (Krippendorff and Bock, 2009). From the data, a set of stories were identified as containing UGV, and these were coded by news categories (Hartley, 1989; and Harrison, 2000), news values (Galtung & Ruge, 1965: Harcup & O'Neill, 2017), and other unique attributes that reflected key elements.

The second part of the chapter discussed the qualitative analysis methods best suited to examining the data, and these included thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2012) and critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1995). Thematic analysis was applied within a prior-research-driven approach (Boyatzis, 1998) that identified a number of commonly occurring themes representative of the total set, in order to extrapolate a set of ideal types (Weber, 1949) featuring universally recurring frames inherent in television news stories (Cottle & Rai, 2009). A critical discourse analysis framework was selected to investigate the textual-cultural practice and socio-cultural practices that were applied by the television journalists, drawing on Van Dijk's (1988) theory of "macro propositions", and Labov's (1972) "news schemata". Within the framework, a model by Neiger and Tenenboim-Weinblatt (2016) was adapted and applied to explore the temporal shifts between past, present and future in the narrative structures of the stories. To gain a greater insight into the decision-making processes of the television journalists, a macro-structural to micro-structural textual analysis model was adapted from Erjavec (2005) to investigate evidence of the decision-making conducted by television journalists when UGV was present. Semi-structured interviews were conducted and video-ethnographic style field data with field notes gathered were used to triangulate (Denzin, 2015) the analysis of ideas, thoughts and decision-making.

Within each section discussed, limitations to the methodology were identified, and this section provides additional details that the methodology chapter has not addressed thus far.

Firstly, this research project aimed to collect data off-air from all of New Zealand's mainstream broadcasters of primetime evening television news bulletins. However, at the

time of research design, news stories within Māori Television's main news bulletin, *Te Kaea*, did not feature UGV. Therefore, no relevant data could be gathered, although there is potential to review whether this situation has changed in the future.

Secondly, access to interview and ethnographic data was limited to one network newsroom despite discussions face-to-face and email communications with the second network. This was explained as being because of the limited time availability the newsroom staff felt they had, compounded by the increased demands of training interns and junior staff. However, the study is satisfied that the participants who did make themselves available were able to provide an informed and representative perspective on the areas discussed, as several had worked for multiple television news networks locally and internationally, including BBC and Al Jazeera. Therefore, this mitigated any potential risk of bias.

And thirdly, the field data were gathered at a time when the newsroom represented typical operational conditions and processes. However, since then, and similar to its international counterparts, the New Zealand television news sector experienced a tumultuous two years as major broadcasters recorded substantial losses in advertising (Myllylahti & Baker, 2019) as discussed in section 2.1.2.3. Moreover, in 2020 there was an influx of global video-streaming services and increased competition from companies such as Facebook, Google and Netflix (Myllylahti & Hope, 2020). These conditions were combined with constraints caused by a global pandemic that increasingly put financial pressure on the broadcasters. As a result, there have been job cuts across both networks while journalists were pressured to keep up with the news cycle dominated by reporting on coronavirus-related issues (Myllylahti & Hope, 2020, p. 58). What is more, during the pandemic the nature of television news was altered, as television journalists were limited in their ability to record and produce visual stories while the nation was in a lock down. While it was not possible to foresee these circumstances at a time of data collection, the economic effects on the sector and the impact of Covid-19 have been addressed in the literature review.

## **Chapter Four: Quantitative analysis and results**

### **4.0. Introduction**

This chapter draws upon a quantitative methodology described in Chapter Three, section 3.1 to identify a valid broad selection of representative stories that provide a benchmark for further investigation within a qualitative paradigm in Chapter Five.

The study sought to answer the following research questions, which were discussed in detail in Chapter 3.1.

RQ1: How frequently is UGV featured in television news stories?

RQ2: What categories can be applied to the television news stories featuring UGV, and how frequently do they occur?

RQ3: What are the most frequent news values that can be applied to television news stories that feature UGV?

RQ4: How often is UGV either the principal focus of a story topic, or drawn on to supplement existing professional footage?

RQ5: Is UGV more likely to be incorporated into locally produced or internationally sourced stories?

The outcomes of these research questions would inform the following hypotheses:

H1: UGV has become a common factor in the production of television news stories, and therefore is a desirable source of alternative content drawn on by journalists when professional footage is not available.

H2: UGV fills a gap in visuals when unscheduled news events cannot be easily accessed within the confines of news production resources, geographic location and daily television news routines.

H3: UGV footage has a news value and it can influence the decision-making process in relation to the treatment of stories, as well as introducing topics into the news agenda that would not otherwise be covered by television news.

H4: A story featuring UGV is more likely to have been internationally than locally produced, and therefore is likely to reflect the high threshold that international stories meet in order to be sold offshore for local broadcasting.

It is more than 20 years since Comrie (1996), which featured data from 1990, 28 years prior to the data gathered for the present study.

#### **4.1. Story categories applied within the overall data**

In order to measure the subjects featured in the 2018 data, 11 story categories were applied that had been adapted from Harrison (2000), as described in section 3.1.2.2. and included: *disability; disasters and accidents; economics; education; environment; health and welfare; law, order and crime; politics; religion; science and technology; war and terrorism; and weather*. The study added seven further categories that were found to be relevant to New Zealand conditions, and these were: *animals and wildlife; children; entertainment; fire; sport; social issues* and *other*. Where a story could be seen as fitting into more than one category, the dominant category was coded. The results are presented in the table below, and for clarity the categories have been presented in *italics* in the following discussions.



**Table 4.1. All stories categorised and ranked from the most to least frequent.**

2018	Number	%
Sport	460	34.7 %
Law, order and crime	183	13.8 %
Disasters and accidents	90	6.8 %
Economics	86	6.5 %
Politics	81	6.1 %
Science and technology	67	5.1 %
Children	58	4.4 %
Entertainment	51	3.9 %
Health and welfare	46	3.5 %
Animals and wildlife	33	2.5 %
Social issues	33	2.5 %
Weather	32	2.4 %
Environment	31	2.3 %
Fire	27	2.0 %
War and terrorism	15	1.1 %
Education	14	1.1 %
Other	12	0.9 %
Religion	4	0.3 %
Disability	1	0.1 %
TOTAL	1324	100%

The results show that *sport* was the most common category with 460 stories or 34.7 percent of the total and two-and-a-half times greater than the next highest category, *law, order and crime*, categorised in 183 stories or 13.8 percent of the total. The next three categories were similar in size, *disasters and accidents* with 90 stories or 6.8 percent, *economics* with 86 stories or 6.5 percent, and *politics* with 81 stories or 6.1 percent. These categories were followed by *science and technology* with 67 stories or 5.1 percent, *children* with 58 stories or 4.4 percent, *entertainment* with 51 stories or 3.9 percent, and *health and welfare* with 46 stories or 3.5 percent of the total. The categories with the fewest stories included *animals and wildlife*, and *social issues* each with 33 stories or 2.5 percent, *weather* with 32 stories or 2.4 percent, *environment* with 31 stories or 2.3 percent, *fire* with 27 stories or 2 percent, *war and terrorism* with 15 stories or 1.1 percent, *education* with 14 stories or 1.1 percent. *Other*, *religion* and *disability* stories were present in less than 1 percent of the total data.

Next, the study examined what changes in the frequency of categories within New Zealand television news analysed in Comrie (1996). Rather than counting the number of stories, the analysis used percentages of the total bulletin, as the 1996 study was based on a commercial half-hour bulletin whereas this study was based on a full commercial hour. The following analysis addresses the top three and the bottom three changes between the two time periods only, as this provides context to the study but is not the main focus of the research.

**Table 4.2. A comparison of story categories present in 2018 and 1990.**

Categories	2018	% of total	1990	% of total	Increase or decrease
Law, order and crime	183	14%	22	6%	8%
Sport	460	35%	100	28%	7%
Science and technology	67	5%	3	1%	4%
Economics	86	6%	35	10%	4%
Entertainment (defined as Culture in 1990 data)	51	4%	3	1%	3%
Fire	27	2%	0	0%	2%
Other	12	1%		0%	1%
Religion	4	less than 1%	0	0%	less than 1%
Disability	1	less than 1%	0	0%	less than 1%
Health and welfare	46	3%	12	3%	0%
Disasters and accidents	90	7%	27	7%	0%
Education	14	1%	4	1%	0%
Human interest (separated into Animals and wildlife, Children, and Weather in 2018 data)	123	9%	34	9%	0%
Environment	31	2%	10	3%	-1%
Maori	0	0%	3	1%	-1%
Social issues (defined as Moral problems in 1990 data)	33	2%	15	4%	-2%
Diplomacy	0	0%	18	5%	-5%
Politics	81	6%	45	12%	-6%
War and terrorism	15	1%	30	8%	-7%
TOTALS	1324	100%	361	100%	

(1990 data from Comrie, 1996, p. 223)

The table above shows the greatest change in percentage by category between 1990 and 2018 was in *law, order and crime* stories which increased by 8 percent. A number of factors may have contributed to this, including population growth and an overall decrease in crime in New Zealand relative to the population (Parliamentary Services, 2018). The second highest increase was 7 percent in *sport*. Sport has long been a significant element of the network news coverage watched by a nation of sports-lovers. Comrie (1996) found that sports-related news provided the largest single segment of the news yet sport was a significant part of network news coverage, yet Atkinson (1994) and Edwards (1992) said it was not often considered to be news therefore excluded in measures of content. The third highest increases were in *science and technology* and *economic* stories which both increased by 4 percent. The increase in *science and technology* is likely to be due to the reporting of new technologies including the introduction of the Internet, and events such as climate change. The increase in *economic* stories suggests the proportion of stories relating to the economy continued to have a consistent place in television news, despite the fact that New Zealand's economy entered into the longest period of significant growth in 1998-2006 (The Reserve Bank, 2007) between the gathering of the two data sets.

There were three categories that showed the greatest decrease. *War and terrorism* stories decreased by 7 percent. As the 1990 data were gathered during a period of the Gulf War between the United States and Iraq (Taylor, 1992), this was likely to have had a major effect on stories covered at the time. Furthermore, in 2018, there were no major wars involving the Western world, which may account for the decrease, along with broadcasters' awareness of the increased public sensitivity towards the publication of war and terror acts, which is discussed further in section 5.2.4. *Politics* decreased by 6 percent, consistent with a reported decreasing engagement with political news by audiences (Wike & Castillo, 2018).

In consideration of the absent/present category paradigm (Hartley, 1989), the third greatest decrease was in *diplomacy*, a category that did not appear in the 2018 data but was present in 1990. Comrie (1996) defined *diplomacy* as foreign relations, including the United Nations, ANZUS and the nuclear debate during the late 1980s and early 90s that had a significant impact on news coverage in New Zealand. Also absent in 2018 but included in 1990 was *Māori*, a category designed to reflect news stories with an interest in Māori culture and society (p. 197). This finding was attributed to the introduction of the Māori Television network in

2004 that provided an alternative outlet for stories that previously had been covered by mainstream media.

Schlesinger (1978) claimed television news created its own set of news values where visuals were prominent and that technical imperatives dominated news selection more than the “substantive news judgments” (p. 51). He argued the driving forces behind news values contained assumptions about audience interest, professional duty, and actuality or the value of selected pictures that made television a strong news medium. The study considered a range of ways academics had applied news values to their data (Caple & Bednarek, 2015; Galtung & Ruge, 1965; Gans, 1980; Harcup & O’Neill, 2001, 2017; O’Neill & Harcup, 2008). However, despite the fact that Harcup and O’Neill (2017) referred to newspapers, their news values were found to be the most useful to the study as they reflected aspects of the post Web 2.0. environment as described in detail in section 3.1.2.4. including the values of audio-visual, shareability and surprise. These are discussed next.

#### **4.2. News values applied within the overall data**

To gain some insight into the decision-making processes in relation to the topics selected for news coverage by the networks’ editorial teams, the study drew on news values, the cultural determinants that influence news selection (Galtung and Ruge, 1965). While there has been much debate relating to the news values applied to newspapers as discussed in section 2.3.1, the scholarship of news values applied to television news was found to be less common. Therefore, this study is one of a small set measuring news values present within television news.

Harcup and O’Neill (2017) argued that the interpretation of the news value coding criteria could be subject to contest due to practical considerations, subjective and cultural influences, the environment in which a television journalist works, their position in the workplace hierarchy and their audience. Furthermore, they argued that the objectivity of the coder needed to be monitored through reliability tests on selection of the appropriate coding.

The broadcast news stories were coded in relation to the news values as described in section 3.1.2.4. as listed below and the totals and percentages were calculated. Many stories were coded with more than one news value; therefore, the totals of each column do not add up to

the total 1324 stories. For clarity purposes the news values applied have been *italicised* in the discussions.

**Table 4.3. News values by percentage and number.**

News value	Percentage	Number
Entertainment	37.0 %	490
Conflict	25.0 %	331
Bad news	21.3 %	282
Magnitude	18.8 %	249
Power elite	16.0 %	212
Good news	14.0 %	185
Audio-visuals	11.8 %	156
Relevance	10.7 %	142
Drama	9.1 %	120
Shareability	7.9 %	105
Follow-up	4.5 %	60
Surprise	4.0 %	53
Celebrity	3.5 %	46
Exclusivity	0.8 %	10
*News orgs agenda	0.0 %	0

\*Abbreviation for *News organisation's agenda*

The most frequent news value was *entertainment*, which was applied to more than a third or 37 percent of all broadcast news stories. The code was applied to many stories within *sport*, which was the largest category as discussed in section 4.2. It was also applied to lighter categories such as *animals* and *human interest*. This reinforces a general trend in New Zealand of an increasing amount of soft stories appearing in television news bulletins (Jones, 2017). The second most commonly applied news value was *conflict*, which was applied to one quarter or 25 percent of the stories. According to Cottle and Rai (2009), television news routinely presents conflictual news frames that feature contending claims, propositions and arguments that take on an analytical form that invite public deliberation. Others present included *bad news* applied to 21.3 percent of the stories, and *magnitude* with 18.8 percent. Each of these categories reflected attributes of a negative nature, likely to have a significant impact on large numbers of people, and therefore frequently found in news stories irrespective of their broadcast, published or online platform.

Other news values ranged from 16 percent of the total or less, however, the news values that were of greatest interest to the study were those of *audio-visual*, *shareability* and *surprise*. As discussed earlier in this section, these three news values reflected attributes present in social media and user-generated content and therefore provided some context to the news selection of UGV where these values were likely to be prominent. However, the study found that *audio-visual* news values were applied to just 11.8 percent of the broadcast news stories. This was lower than expected, as television news stories are generally considered to rely on their visuals where the old adage, no pictures, no story is often attributed. Gunter (2015) argued that television news was not just about presenting the public with regular information that kept them up to date with the world; it was also a form of storytelling that presented events in the world as plot-driven narratives that engaged people intellectually and emotionally (p. 71). Furthermore, he found when people tuned into the news on television, not only did they want to see and hear about the latest news events, they also wanted to be engaged by the way stories unfolded (Gunter, 2015). This suggests visuals are critical to television, and therefore it is reasonable for the study to assume that *audio-visual* news values would have been more frequently applied than they were found to be.

The news values of *shareability* and *surprise* were applied to even fewer stories than *audio-visuals*, at 7.9 percent and 4 percent respectively. However, it was expected both these news values would be more common among stories containing UGV as these values were more directly connected with user-generated content than conventional news stories produced from professionally recorded material. The shortfall of these two news values in the broadcast data suggest that *shareability* or *surprise* are not attributes that influence a story's selection. This finding supports García-Avilés (2020) who argued that a weakness of contemporary television newscasts was that broadcasters were unable to attract younger audiences that were actively engaging online, and this was a reason why television news audiences were declining. Therefore, they are focused on being dramatic, authoritative, or expert rather than connecting with audiences.

The lowest number of stories featured the news value of *exclusivity* at ten stories or 0.08 percent. This was a difficult news value to code, as it required a coder's prior knowledge of the news agenda at the time of the data-gathering, therefore it was only applied to stories where exclusivity was referenced by the network either in the voiceover or in an on-screen

graphic. No stories were coded with *news organisation's agenda* as none were found to promote a network's ideology or campaign.

These findings provided a benchmark that could be compared with the stories that featured UGV, the findings of which are presented and discussed next.

### **4.3. User-generated content**

The review of literature in chapter three found that the presence of user-generated content (text, audio and video) in news was explored in studies in the early 2000s (Harrison, 2010; Wardle, Williams, 2010; Williams et al., 2011a), but the frequency at which the phenomenon was occurring was not quantified. New Zealand scholars Comrie (1996) and Cook (2002) published their studies based on data gathered in the 1990s prior to the emergence of user-generated content. Therefore, it is believed that this is one of the first studies of its kind to measure the prevalence of user-generated content in television news.

The study found that nearly a third (398 of the total 1324; or 30.06 percent) of the broadcast news stories featured user-generated content, including text, audio, still image or video. The percentage is consistent with the results of the 2017 pilot study conducted by the researcher, suggesting the figure is valid.

### **4.4. User-generated video (UGV)**

As this study was particularly interested in user-generated video content, or UGV, it was necessary to investigate the data more deeply to address research question one:

RQ1: How frequently is UGV featured in television news stories?

The study found that 133 of the total 1324 or 10.04 percent of the total broadcast news stories featured UGV. When this figure is considered in relation to the mean number of 23 television news stories in a typical broadcast bulletin, it suggests that at least two stories per television news bulletin featured UGV. The finding supports the hypothesis that:

H1: UGV has become a common factor in the production of television news stories, and therefore is a desirable source of alternative content drawn on by journalists.

The finding is consistent with the results of the 2017 pilot study and confirms that UGV is now part of the content in each mainstream primetime television news bulletin broadcast in New Zealand. It also provides a point of reference for longitudinal studies that may be conducted at a later date.

#### **4.4.1. Story categories**

The study counted the number of stories that featured UGV within each of 18 categories in order to identify some of the distinctive characteristics present in stories containing UGV. It then compared the results with the number of stories per category that did not feature UGV in order to address the second research question:

RQ2: What categories can be applied to the television news stories featuring UGV, and how frequently do they occur?

The table below shows the number of UGV stories by category in numbers and as a percentage of all the UGV stories.



**Table 4.4. Categories of UGV stories by number and percentage.**

Category	Stories featuring UGV	%
Sport	33	24.81 %
Law, order and crime	21	15.79 %
Weather	16	12.03 %
Fire	14	10.53 %
Disasters and accidents	14	10.53 %
Animals and wildlife	8	6.02 %
War and terrorism	6	4.51 %
Social issues	4	3.01 %
Children	4	3.01 %
Science and technology	3	2.26 %
Politics	3	2.26 %
Health and welfare	2	1.50 %
Entertainment	2	1.50 %
Disability	1	0.75 %
Environment	1	0.75 %
Economics	1	0.75 %
Religion	0	0.00 %
Other	0	0.00 %
Education	0	0.00 %

The table above shows that a quarter or 24.81 percent of stories that featured UGV were *sport* stories; 15.79 percent were *law, order and crime* stories; 12.03 percent were *weather* stories; and just over 10 percent were stories about *fire*, or *disasters and accidents*. Stories that featured UGV in less than 10 percent of the total included *animals and wildlife* at 6.02 percent, *war and terrorism* at 4.51 percent, *social issues* and *children* at 3.01 percent each, *science and technology* and *politics* at 2.26 percent each, *health and welfare* and *entertainment* at 1.5 percent each, and *disability*, *environment* and *economics* at less than one percent each. There were no stories featuring UGV categorised as *religion*, *education* or *other*.

These results were compared with the number of stories in each category that did not feature UGV, and this provided a ratio between the two data sets that is shown in the next table.

**Table 4.5. Percentages and ratios between stories with and without UGV**

Category	From total of 1324 stories	Stories featured UGV	Stories did not feature UGV	As a percentage	As a ratio
Disability	1	1	0	100%	1:0
Fire	27	14	13	52%	14:13
Weather	32	16	16	50%	1:1
War and terrorism	15	6	9	40%	2:3
Animals and wildlife	33	8	25	24%	8:25
Disasters and accidents	90	14	76	16%	7:38
Social issues	33	4	29	12%	4:29
Law, order and crime	183	21	162	11%	7:54
Sport	460	33	427	7%	33:427
Children	58	4	54	7%	2:27
Science and technology	67	3	64	4%	3:64
Health and welfare	46	2	44	4%	1:22
Entertainment	51	2	49	4%	2:49
Politics	81	3	78	4%	1:26
Environment	31	1	30	3%	1:30
Economics	86	1	85	1%	1:85
Education	14	0	14	0%	0:1
Other	12	0	12	0%	0:1
Religion	4	0	4	0%	0:1
TOTAL	1324	133	1191		

In the table above, a comparison by category is provided between the stories that featured UGV and those that did not. The results have been presented in the right-hand columns as a percentage and also as a ratio, and are discussed next.

The categories that showed the highest percentage of UGV to non-UGV stories were *fire* at 52 percent or a ratio of 14:13 and *weather* at 50 percent or a ratio of 1:1. In other words, the use of UGV in *weather* stories was just as common as those without UGV. This suggests that there is a significant uptake of UGV in the coverage of ‘unscheduled events’, a category likely to have high audio-visual news values. But it does not account for other unscheduled events such as *disasters and accidents* that ranked lower than was expected at 16 percent or a ratio of 7:38. Neither does it account for the reporting of *social issues* at 12 percent or a

ratio of 4:29, or *law, order and crime* at 11 percent or 7:54 where the material may present as eyewitness evidence. Therefore, the following hypothesis can only be supported in part:

H2: UGV fills a gap in visuals when unscheduled news events cannot be easily accessed within the confines of news production resources, geographic location and daily television news routines.

Another category that rated highly was *animals and wildlife*, found to be among 24 percent of UGV or a ratio of 8:25. This suggests that, while academics have argued news organisations were only interested in video content that was newsworthy (Vujnovic et al., 2010), the bar has been lowered and lighter UGV content has now found its place in the bulletin mix. *Animals and wildlife* stories often presented a lighter news item that provided relief from bulletin stories that mainly weighed on heavier topics.

A surprising result was that while *sport* stories dominated the overall story data, few or only 7 percent or a ratio of 33:427 featured UGV. This suggests that sport stories featuring UGV were very rare. Other rare categories included *children, science and technology, health and welfare, entertainment, politics, the environment and economics*. Four categories accounted for approximately one percent of the total number of 1324 stories, and therefore the sample size was considered to be too small to draw any conclusions from. These categories included *disability, war and terrorism, education, religion and other*.

Accordingly, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- i. Unscheduled events – UGV provides a helpful source of visual content in the coverage of unscheduled events that are a disruption to the regular news agenda, and add to other previously identified alternatives such as footage of the reporter on the scene, library footage, images of the aftermath and interviews with witnesses (Sjøvaag, 2012). The study found that, in particular, the UGV of extreme *weather*, significant *disasters or accidents*, and major *fire* stories was desirable as it featured engaging audio-visual properties that enhanced the news value of the report. *Social issues* and *law, order and crime* are categories where it is likely that people are willing to create and or share content, therefore there is a limited quantity for television journalists to harvest. This

raises a point that there are naturally occurring limitations in the breadth and volume of categories where UGV may be useful in television news, as journalists can only draw on content that a person has felt motivated to create and share. This was confirmed during the interviews with senior journalists discussed in the next chapter.

- ii. Lighter stories – While there has always been a place in television news for animal stories that entertain, UGV of *animals and wildlife* is now placed higher up the bulletin than has been done traditionally, also showing that the news bar has been lowered beyond reportage to place a higher news value on content that entertains. This suggests that the mix of stories has become more dynamic, incorporating content that brings levity to a television news bulletin that previously has focused on the less appealing and or negative aspects of society (Soroka & McAdams, 2015). The placement of lighter stories is frequently towards the end of the news hour, a finding that is consistent with Redfern (2014) who discussed how the last news item was often a lighter, human-interest story. However, the study found that not only was professional content recorded for this purpose, but that UGV was a helpful source also. Redfern (2014) claimed that while the discourse structure of television news has been extensively studied, the same attention had not been devoted to the formal structure of television news. The study contributes to this enquiry by identifying that UGV with strong audio-visual properties can feature in the structure of a contemporary news bulletin, where it is used to engage and retain viewer attention. This point is relevant to the composition of a television news bulletin where the threshold value for lighter news items may be higher than would otherwise have been the case, due to a network's desire to present a balanced bulletin (Galtung & Ruge, 1965).
- iii. Sport – UGV provides an alternative source of content for use in sports stories. Because of competition from telecommunications companies who are entering into the entertainment arena, television companies are now having to compete for sporting rights with a broader range of suppliers (Reidy, 2019). At more than a third or 34.7 percent, sports news represents a significant component of primetime television news in New Zealand. However, the proportion of *sport* stories that featured UGV in the study was relatively small at seven percent. Kwak, Kim and Zimmerman (2016) found

user-generated content in sport was pervasive and expanding across mainstream and non-mainstream media. Therefore, sport is an area that would benefit from a longitudinal study as it is expected television journalists will draw on amateur content more and more as the sporting rights market becomes increasingly more competitive.

- iv. A legal bar – UGV can be a source of visuals of victims of crime that allows television journalists greater flexibility in their storytelling.<sup>5</sup> Examples in the data showed that the journalists drew on Facebook or Instagram footage to identify victims of crime but not the perpetrators. However, Hess and Waller (2014) found that users could take a different approach and post the perpetrators performing criminal activities on social media, known as ‘shaming’. Shaming has empowered the ordinary citizen to alert the world to acts of immoral or illegal behaviour, and is also known as “isurveillance” (Hess and Waller, 2014, p. 105). An example of ‘shaming’ was found in the broadcast data, where individuals sent UGV footage to a network that featured some tourists defecating in public places. The footage was used by the network and has been analysed in section 5.2.7. Broadcast news organisations are influenced by this form of vigilante justice to show crime beyond the confines of the court or police activities, but they are limited by ethical concerns and regulatory codes. For more, see Broadcasting Standards Authority (2020).
- v. Social issues and children – Although there were no specific instances of a breach found in the data, it is proposed that drawing on UGV that has been shared through social networks may be a way for television journalists to circumnavigate privacy constraints under the New Zealand Broadcasting Act 1989<sup>6</sup>. Standard 10 requires that, “Broadcasters should maintain standards consistent with the privacy of the individual” (Broadcasting Standards Authority, 2020, p. 43). In relation to children, Standard 10g states:

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<sup>5</sup> A shortage of accessible footage can make *law, order and crime* stories a challenge for a television journalist to produce. This includes limited access to smart phones or video cameras in courtrooms unless a judge grants a special permit if a case is made by the news organisation at least 10 working days before a hearing is due to start (Department of Justice, 2020).

<sup>6</sup> Under the Broadcasting Act 1989, the Broadcasting Standards Authority (BSA) has the jurisdiction to penalise broadcasters for breaches in standards cited by the public (Cheer, 2015).

It is not a breach of privacy where the person concerned has given informed consent to the disclosure or intrusion. A parent or guardian, or other person aged 18 or over in loco parentis (standing in the shoes of the parent or guardian), can consent on behalf of a child under the age of 16 years, but the broadcaster must be satisfied that the broadcast is not contrary to the best interests of the child.

(Broadcasting Standards Authority, 2020, p. 43)

Essentially, the standard above requires that a television news organisation must gain parental consent to broadcast video content of children under 16 years of age and may only do so if the organisation believes the broadcast is not contrary to the best interests of the child. In New Zealand, the television news broadcasters hold themselves to account through a set of guidelines that were introduced in 2018 and are supported by the Broadcasting Standards Authority. The guidelines encourage broadcasters to consider whether the content is true, newsworthy, harmful or could any risk of harm be mitigated (Broadcasting Standards Authority, 2018). Speaking on behalf of the broadcasters, TVNZ's head of newsgathering Phil O'Sullivan said:

Broadcasters and all journalists work hard to bring news and stories to the people of New Zealand quickly, accurately and respectfully. We need to get the story right, to think about and respect those impacted. We give careful thought to using content provided by others, such as social media posts. This guidance note has been prepared by broadcasters, with the support of the BSA, to help our industry make good decisions about using third party content in the stories being told.

(Broadcasting Standards Authority, 2018)

The abovementioned standards are part of a discussion advanced further in section 5.2.4. There is a consistency between the New Zealand approach towards UGV and research in the United Kingdom on the incorporation of all forms of user-generated content into television news. Wardle, Dubberley and Brown (2014) found that the ethical issues were no different than other types of ethical decisions. Their study interviewed senior producers at the BBC who argued that journalists simply needed to use appropriate judgement when it came to using user-generated content in the same way they would apply to all news (p. 109).

- vi. UGV does not satisfy the need for visuals of a thought-provoking nature such as *science and technology, politics, disability, the environment and economic* stories. This is likely to be because they are more informational and expert-centric and therefore, less prone to shareable visual content. This suggests that UGV in television news is limited by type and not volume. As discussed in section 2.2, the factors that motivate users to create content include connecting with peers, achieving a certain level of fame, notoriety, or prestige, and the desire to express oneself (Wunsch-Vincent & Vickery, 2007). These are not synonymous with the factors that motivate the creation of television news as a hierarchical system of information gathering (Tuchman, 1978).
- vii. *Entertainment and celebrity* UGV content that is less frequently selected by television news. The data showed that news organisations do not appear to favour broadcasting content that already has had a high level of exposure on social media. This point supports Bell (1995) who found that ‘timeliness’ was important in a medium that strived to be first, although there has also been academic speculation that journalists would chase any viral video.

#### **4.4.2. News values**

The study explored whether UGV-rich stories followed the principle observed in the news values literature that, the more criteria applied, the more likely a story would be registered or selected as news (Galtung and Ruge, 1965, p. 71). Stories were more likely to be selected when they reflected multiple news values. Firstly, the findings addressed the most common news values present, and secondly, whether a hierarchy of news values could be applied to the data.

RQ4: What are the most frequent news values that can be applied to television news stories that feature UGV?

As described in section 4.1.2., 20 news values (Harcup and O’Neill, 2017) were drawn on for coding each story. Ninety-five percent of the data showed a match between at least one of the news values applied to the professional footage and the news values applied to the UGV. Therefore, as the variance was only five percent, which was considered to be minimal,

the study drew on the news values applied to the overall story, rather than the UGV separately. An abridged version of the news values are repeated here for convenience:

*audio-visuals* – arresting video, audio, photographs and info graphics  
*shareability* – likely to generate sharing or comments on social media  
*relevance* – groups or nations perceived as influential with the audience  
*bad news* – negativity  
*magnitude* – significantly impacting on large numbers of people  
*entertainment* – lighter stories and includes sport  
*surprise* – an element of surprise, contrast and/or the unusual  
*drama* – unfolding escapes, accidents, searches, sieges or court cases  
*follow-up* – subjects already in the news  
*good news* – positive overtones  
*conflict* – controversies, arguments, splits, strikes, fights and warfare  
*power elite* – powerful individuals, organisations or institutions  
*celebrity* – people who are already famous

(Harcup & O'Neill, 2017)

The table below shows the story categories listed on the left, with the news values listed across the page, by the number of stories and the percentage in that category in brackets. It has been vertically ranked by story categories with the most to least news values, and horizontally by the most commonly applied news values to the least common. (It is noteworthy that the totals and percentages across the bottom of the page do not add up, as most stories featured multiple news values.)



**Table 4.6. UGV by category and news value**

	Total stories	Audio-visuals	Shareability	Relevance	Bad news	Magnitude	Entertainment	Surprise	Drama	Follow-up	Good news	Conflict	Power elite	Celebrity
% of total		(63%)	(52%)	(38%)	(33%)	(28%)	(27%)	(25%)	(23%)	(17%)	(17%)	(11%)	(11%)	(10%)
Law, order and crime	21	16 (76%)	15 (71%)	10 (48%)	13 (62%)	4 (19%)	0 (0%)	9 (43%)	9 (43%)	2 (10%)	1 (5%)	4 (19%)	3 (14%)	1 (5%)
Fire	14	14 (100%)	7 (50%)	9 (64%)	10 (71%)	6 (43%)	0 (0%)	4 (29%)	6 (43%)	6 (43%)	0 (0%)	1 (7%)	0 (0%)	1 (7%)
Disasters and accidents	14	13 (93%)	10 (71%)	7 (50%)	9 (64%)	5 (36%)	1 (7%)	4 (29%)	10 (71%)	2 (14%)	1 (7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Weather	16	13 (81%)	5 (31%)	2 (13%)	5 (31%)	12 (75%)	0 (0%)	1 (6%)	1 (6%)	9 (56%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)
Sport	33	9 (27%)	17 (52%)	6 (18%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	27 (82%)	5 (15%)	1 (3%)	1 (3%)	13 (39%)	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	9 (27%)
Animals and wildlife	8	8 (100%)	7 (88%)	1 (13%)	2 (25%)	0 (0%)	2 (25%)	7 (88%)	2 (25%)	0 (0%)	1 (13%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Children	4	3 (75%)	3 (75%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	0 (0%)	1 (25%)	0 (0%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)
Entertainment	2	2 (100%)	2 (100%)	2 (100%)	1 (50%)	0 (0%)	2 (100%)	1 (50%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Disability	1	1 (100%)	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)
Economic s	1	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Environment	1	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Health and welfare	2	1 (50%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (100%)	0 (0%)
Politics	3	1 (33%)	2 (67%)	2 (67%)	1 (33%)	1 (33%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (33%)	0 (0%)	1 (33%)	3 (100%)	0 (0%)
War and terrorism	6	1 (17%)	0 (0%)	6 (100%)	2 (33%)	1 (17%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (17%)	0 (0%)	6 (100%)	2 (33%)	0 (0%)
Science and technology	3	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (33%)	1 (33%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Social issues	4	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (100%)	0 (0%)	4 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (50%)	0 (0%)	2 (50%)	0 (0%)
Education	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Religion	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	133	84	69	50	44	37	36	33	30	23	23	14	14	13

In the table above, the *audio-visual* news value was the most commonly applied, to 63 percent or nearly two-thirds of the total UGV stories. This demonstrated a significant bias towards

audio visual news values and was consistent with Tuchman (1975) who found that visuals were an integral part of television news, as discussed in section 2.2.1.

The second most common news value was *shareability*, applied to just over half the total stories or 52 percent. Harcup and O'Neill (2017) claimed the qualities that gave one story more *shareability* than another were hard to define. However, the very nature of UGV is that it was created to be shared (Wunsch-Vincent and Vickery, 2007). Wardle et al. (2014) and Vujnovic et al. (2010) argued that virality was not a news value and that news organisations' judgements were influenced by the newsworthiness of the events covered. However, the study suggests that newsworthiness has developed since 2010 and that *shareability* has become a valuable attribute, particularly within the *sport* category where it was applied to 27 percent of the stories.

The third most common news value was *relevance*, applied to just over a third or 38 percent of the UGV stories. Relevance is likely to resonate with user-generated content creators who are motivated to produce and share content that enables them to connect with their peers, "achieving a certain level of fame, notoriety, or prestige, and the desire to express oneself" (Wunsch-Vincent & Vickery, 2007, p. 8) as discussed in section 2.2. It also suggests that the democratisation of media is less likely when journalists select UGV that fits existing relevance filters.

Other values identified were *bad news* at 33 percent of the total, *magnitude* at 28 percent, *entertainment* at 27 percent, and *surprise* at 25 percent of the stories. *Drama* occurred at 23 percent, *follow-up* and *good news* at 17 percent each, *conflict* or *power elite* at 11 percent and *celebrity* at just 10 percent. The news values of *exclusivity* and *news organisation's agenda* were not applied to any of the UGV stories and were therefore excluded from the table.

The categories showed that *Law, order and crime* stories held the greatest number of the four most common news values. *Audio-visual* was coded in approximately three-quarters or 76 percent of the stories, closely followed by *shareability* at 71 percent, *bad news* at 62 percent and *relevance* at just under half or 48 percent. UGV was frequently used in *law, order and crime* stories a finding that suggests, then, that the use of UGV is pulling law and order coverage towards user-generated content – although not hugely.

The second-highest number of the most dominant news values was applied to the *fire* stories followed by *disasters and accidents*, and *weather* stories. These three categories naturally lend themselves to engaging visuals due to the dramatic nature of their topic, therefore, it was no surprise that all of the fire stories were coded with an *audio-visual* news value, 93 percent of *disasters and accidents* and 81 percent of *weather* stories.

#### 4.4.2.1. Impact of multiple news values

The total number of news values coded in the dataset of 133 stories was 470, in other words there was an average of 3.5 news values found in each story. This suggests that there is a high newsworthiness threshold for content featuring UGV as demonstrated in the following table.

**Table 4.7. UGV featuring news values per story per category**

	Total number of news values	Total number of stories	Average per story
Disability	5	1	5.00
Entertainment	10	2	5.00
Fire	64	14	4.57
Disasters and accidents	62	14	4.43
Law, order and crime	87	21	4.14
Environment	4	1	4.00
Politics	12	3	4.00
Animals and wildlife	30	8	3.75
Children	13	4	3.25
War and terrorism	19	6	3.17
Weather	49	16	3.06
Social issues	12	4	3.00
Sport	91	33	2.76
Health and welfare	5	2	2.50
Economics	2	1	2.00
Science and technology	5	3	1.67
Totals	470	133	3.53

In the table above, there was an average of five news values found in the stories categorised as *disability* and *entertainment*, with *fire* averaging four and a half. This suggests that a story

featuring UGV in these categories needs to satisfy a significant number of news values in order to be considered newsworthy enough for broadcast.

An average of four news values were found in stories in the categories of *disasters and accidents*, *law, order and crime*, *entertainment* and *politics*, with an average of three and three-quarters found in stories categorised as *animals and wildlife*. An average of three news values were found in the categories of *children*, *war and terrorism*, *weather* and *social issues*. These findings represent a curious mix of genres that would require further analysis beyond the scope of this study, in order to be explained in any depth.

An average of just two news values were found in the categories of *sport*, *health and welfare*, *economics* and *science and technology*. This suggests these categories may be considered more desirable by news organisations in the interests of audience retention.

The newsworthiness of a story can also be determined by the position at which it has been ranked within a television news bulletin (Comrie, 1996) and this is investigated next.

#### **4.4.2.2. News values and ranking**

Greguš and Mináriková (2016) found that stories containing more news values were ranked at the beginning of evening news programmes. However, there appears to be no literature that has interrogated the ranking applied to stories featuring UGV. The study applied a pivot table to the data to determine the ranking of stories in relation to the number of news values it contained. The purpose was to identify whether multiple news values had an impact on the ranking of stories when UGV is present. The results are presented in the next table and are based on the potential ranking of up to 25 stories per bulletin, while most bulletins featured a mean of 23 stories. Therefore, if a story was ranked at 23 or more, it was more than likely the final story in the bulletin.

**Table 4.8. Ranking compared with the number of news values present.**

Ranking of stories	Stories featuring 7 *NV	Stories featuring 6 NV	Stories featuring 5 NV	Stories featuring 4 NV	Stories featuring 3 NV	Stories featuring 2 NV	Stories featuring 1 NV
1	1			1	4	2	
2			2		1	2	
3			1	2	1	1	
4	1			1	3		1
5			2	2	3	2	
6	1			1	1	1	
7				4	1	1	
8	1		4	1	3		
9		1	1		2	1	
10	1		2	3	2	3	
11		2	1	1	1	3	1
12		1		1	2		
13	1	1	1	1	3		
14		1	1	5		2	
15		1	1	3	1	1	2
16					1	1	
17				1		1	1
18			1			1	2
19			1			1	
20			1		1	1	
21			2		1	1	
22						3	
23							
24					2	1	
25					2	1	
Totals	6	7	21	27	35	30	7

\*NV = News Values

In the table above, on the left-hand side the ranking within the bulletin of the UGV stories is identified from 1st to 25th position. The number of news values present in each of the 133 stories featuring UGV is listed across the top of the table, with the total stories for each of the sets of news values across the bottom. The shaded squares appear where there was no data to enter. The table demonstrates that there is no correlation between ranking and number of news values with the UGV stories featured in the broadcast news bulletin data:

- i. Seven news values were applied to a total of six stories, yet only one story was ranked in the top position in the bulletin, while the others were ranked at 4th, 6th, 8th, 10th and 13th;
- ii. Six news values were applied to seven stories, that were ranked between 9th and 15th in the bulletin;
- iii. Five news values were applied to 21 stories, that were ranked fairly evenly between 2nd and 21st in the bulletin;
- iv. Four news values were applied to 27 stories, one of which was ranked 1st in the bulletin while others ranged between 3rd and 17th;
- v. Three news values were the most commonly applied to the majority of 35 stories, four of which were ranked 1st in the bulletin, while others were distributed throughout, including four at the end of the bulletin;
- vi. Two news values were the second most commonly applied to 30 stories, two of which were ranked 1st in the bulletin, and the others distributed throughout, including two at the end of the bulletin; and
- vii. One news value was applied to seven stories that were ranked between 4th and 18th in the bulletin.

Greguš and Mináriková (2016) argued that there was a direct connection between the number of news values present and the ranking of the UGV stories in a news bulletin. But the study found this not to be the case for the New Zealand television data. For example, a story featuring seven news values is not always likely to lead a bulletin, and a story featuring only one news value can be ranked as highly as 4th. Therefore, the study proposes that story placement is affected by other factors, for example *audio-visual* news value may be considered more desirable than *drama*; and traditionally applied news values such as *bad news* and *conflict* are being overridden by values of a more populist nature, as audiences migrate to a wider range of sources and self-select their own news.

The findings were compared with Harcup and O'Neill's (2017) research into the frequency of news values identified in 10 English-language newspapers in 2001. It is acknowledged that the table has compared newspapers with television news, and the United Kingdom with New Zealand; however, these values are likely to be applied across all media in the current media climate because of the multiplatform nature of the contemporary news.

**Table 4.9. A comparison between newspapers in 2014 and television news in 2018.**

Harcup and O'Neill's news values identified in newspapers in 2001	Ranking in newspapers 2014	Ranking in television news 2018	Ranking in UGV stories 2018
Bad news	1st	3rd	4th
Surprise	2nd	12th	7th
Entertainment	3rd	1st	6th
Follow-up	4th	11th	9th
Power elite	5th	5th	12th
Relevance	6th	8th	3rd
Magnitude	7th	4th	5th
Celebrity	8th	13th	13th
Good news	9th	6th	10th

(2014 figures from Harcup and O'Neill, 2017, p. 1478)

The table shows a significant shift in news values ranked in newspapers in 2014, television news in 2018 and television news stories that featured UGV in 2018. Several news values that ranked highly in 2014 showed a drop in 2018. For example, in the top three news values *bad news* which was ranked first in 2014 dropped two places to third in 2018, and fourth among UGV stories; *surprise* which was ranked second dropped to 12th, and seventh among UGV stories; and *entertainment* which was ranked third climbed to first place, although dropped to sixth among UGV stories. All other shifts showed a decrease in ranking between

2014 and 2018, apart from *power elite* which remained the same between 2014 and 2018 but dropped among UGV stories, while *magnitude* and *good news* climbed slightly in 2018 but not as high among UGV stories.

Harcup and O'Neill (2017) argued that news values were contestable as they were also governed by practical considerations. This included the availability of resources and time, the social, educational, ideological and cultural influences on journalists, the environment in which they worked and the type of audiences (pp. 1482-1483). However, the changes in the news environment since the adoption of the Internet continue to evolve and this study proposed that these fluctuations are likely to continue for some time. Harcup and O'Neill also argued that any exploration of news values could only provide a partial explanation, adding that it can complement other forms of research such as ethnographic studies, interviewing or critical discourse analysis (p. 1475). These research methods are addressed in the qualitative portion of this study.

#### **4.4.3. Origination**

According to Bell (1991), most news outlets carry far more news originated by other organisations than by their own journalists. Also, a large number of stories that appear to be produced by an outlet's own staff are sourced from external agencies and rewritten, or within broadcast news, revoiced for local consumption (Bell, 1991, p. 17). By identifying a story's origin, it was possible to gain an understanding of local and international trends relating to UGV in television news production. Accordingly, the coding of production origination was applied to the data to identify whether the story was produced by one of the two networks featured or whether it was provided to the network by an international affiliate network. The results showed just over a third or 38 percent were produced by the local networks, while the majority of 59 percent were produced internationally. Additionally, four stories or 3 percent included both local and international production elements where the international story remained intact, and a New Zealand television journalist simply added a local aspect to it. The findings support this hypothesis:

H3: A story featuring UGV is more likely to have been internationally than locally produced, and therefore likely to reflect the high threshold that international stories meet in order to be sold offshore for local broadcasting.



Further analysis was conducted to identify the categories of international stories that featured UGV. The results are presented below:

**Table 4.10. Percentage of international stories featuring UGV by category.**

Category	number of stories	percentage of total
Sport	24	28.57%
Law, order and crime	15	17.86%
Disasters and accidents	11	13.10%
Fire	10	11.90%
Animals and wildlife	7	8.33%
War and terrorism	6	7.14%
Social issues	4	4.76%
Politics	3	3.57%
Children	2	2.38%
Entertainment	2	2.38%
Science and technology	2	2.38%
Weather	2	2.38%
Disability	1	1.19%

The table above shows that the most common category of international story to feature UGV was sports stories at 28.57 percent of the data, while all other categories were nearly half that percentage or less. This suggests that networks draw on international sport stories to fill the finite sports news hole when there are insufficient local sports stories.

#### **4.4.4. Influence**

The study explored the threshold of newsworthiness applied by decision-makers during the production of a television news bulletin, to identify the extent to which UGV influenced news selection as outlined in chapter 3.1.2.5. A coding of principal was applied to the data when the UGV was the main factor influencing the decision to produce the story, and supplementary when the UGV merely added interest to the professional footage. The results showed nearly two-thirds or 64 percent of the stories were supplemented by UGV, while the newsworthiness of more than a third or 36 percent of stories relied principally on the UGV.

This suggests that UGV is nearly twice as likely to be used as filler material, but it also demonstrates the power and influence of UGV as amateur creators' content is featuring in more than a third of the stories within a news bulletin.

#### 4.4.5. Type

The treatment of content in television news is usually decided upon by the daily news editors, who design the news bulletin and all its features, including stories, reader-voiceovers or RVOs, teasers, highlights and recaps. When a story idea has news merit but due to limited resources and a finite bulletin duration does not warrant treatment as a full story it may be produced as an RVO where edited footage is broadcast alongside a newsreader's live voiceover. The study wanted to determine whether stories featuring UGV were or were not treated in this way as this would also provide an indication of the editorial decision-making in relation to UGV. Therefore, the data were coded by type, either as a 'story' or 'RVO'.

**Table 4.11. UGV stories by type.**

	Total stories	Story	RVO	Package
Stories containing UGV	133	95 (71%)	37 (28%)	1 (0.8%)

The table above shows the number and percentages of UGV stories by type, showing that nearly three-quarters (71 percent) of the UGV data were self-contained stories, while just over a quarter (28 percent) were RVOs. These findings provide further evidence that UGV has influenced the production of a news story, suggesting that it is more frequently applied in fully fledged stories than RVOs.

Moreover, the UGV present in stories was also selected for use in structural elements of the news bulletins, and this included 25 promos and seven highlights. The promotions of upcoming stories and highlights demonstrate the different ways the UGV content was re-packaged within each of the news bulletins. Some stories were promoted multiple times, for example in story #61 an American doctor fined for sharing videos of herself dancing while conducting surgery appeared three times throughout the bulletin. Again, this suggests a value placed on UGV as part of the news bulletin.

#### 4.5. Summary

The purpose of the quantitative analysis of the research data was to find out how frequently UGV appears in television news stories in New Zealand, and gain an understanding of typical characteristics present. This section has discussed the findings and provides an overall perspective, while raising questions to be considered for further investigation and analysis qualitatively.

Firstly, the study analysed all stories in the data in order to set a benchmark among typical television news stories irrespective of user-generated content presence. The findings are summarised next.

Nineteen story subject categories were applied to all the stories in the data, where *sport* stories were found to be the most commonly present at two-and-a-half times more than the next highest category of *law, order and crime*. All other story categories were significantly lower. A comparison of the change in data between 2018 and 1990 (Comrie, 1996) showed the category with the greatest increase was *law, order and crime*, followed by *sport*, then *science and technology* and *economic* stories. The greatest category to decrease was *war and terrorism*, followed by *politics*, and *diplomacy* which did not appear in the 2018 data.

News values (Harcup & O'Neill, 2017) were coded for in order to gain a degree of insight into the editorial assumptions made about audience interest, professional duty, and the value of selected pictures (Schlesinger, 1978) by the networks' editorial teams. The study found the news value of *entertainment* was present in more than a third of the television news stories, suggesting a softening of news (Jones, 2017) continues to occur. Less frequent were the news values of a negative nature including *conflict* and *bad news* which were found in approximately a quarter of the stories. The *audio-visual* news value was surprisingly low at just under 12 percent, despite visuals being a form of storytelling central to audience engagement (Gunter, 2015). Also, *shareability* and *surprise* also were found at lower levels than expected, suggesting a reason why television news audiences were declining, where García-Avilés (2020) argued that broadcasters were unable to attract younger audiences that were actively engaging online. The study argues that broadcasters may find their news filter needs to change if they are to remain relevant within the evolving news ecology.

Secondly, the study examined stories in the data that featured all kinds of user-generated content, including posts, Tweets, still images, audio and video, and found the material in almost a third or 30 percent of all stories. UGV was found in one-tenth of the stories, or two to three stories per bulletin. This finding supports the following hypothesis that,

H1: UGV has become a common factor in the production of television news stories, and therefore is a desirable source of alternative content drawn on by journalists.

UGV is now part of the content in each mainstream primetime television news bulletin broadcast in New Zealand, a significant shift since the findings of Cook (2002) and Comrie (1996). The practice of featuring amateur video content in television news stories is not new (see Chapter 2.2.1). However, the study has progressed scholarship by quantifying the phenomenon.

The study found UGV was most frequently present in self-contained *law, order and crime* stories and the footage featured strong *audio-visual* news values that were supplementary to the professionally video-recorded news footage. For the most part, UGV is most commonly drawn on by television journalists to supplement their own professional footage, however, a quarter of stories featuring UGV are produced when the footage meets the threshold of newsworthiness in its own right.

UGV with highly-visual, dramatic properties such as in the categories of *weather, fire, and disasters and accidents* lend itself to broadcast news as it enables the television journalist to cover some of the unscheduled events that occur outside of the normative routines of news production that would otherwise be overlooked. Privacy legislation has always limited the ability to gain footage to cover social issues and stories about children, and drawing on UGV that has previously been shared through social networks may be considered a way forward. However, the Broadcasting Standards Authority guidelines released in 2017 limits broadcasters' accessibility to social media content (Broadcasting Standards Authority, 2017), and that has created an anomaly with other news platforms that do not have any formalised restrictions. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is supported:

H2: UGV fills a gap in visuals when unscheduled news events cannot be easily accessed within the confines of news production resources, geographic location and daily television news routines.

Story genres where UGV is less commonly featured include *politics, science and technology, disability, economics, the environment, and health and welfare*. This is likely to be because amateurs prefer to video-record and share topics considered more socially interesting to others rather than serious ones. Meanwhile, an unusual finding is that *entertainment or celebrity* UGV is not often drawn upon by television news.

H3: UGV footage has a news value and it can influence the decision-making process in relation to the treatment of stories, as well as introducing topics into the news agenda that would not otherwise be covered by television news.

In lieu of comparative television news data, the study drew on Harcup and O'Neill (2001, 2017) and identified a significant shift since the early 2000s (Harcup & O'Neill, 2001), when the news values of *audio-visuals* and *shareability* were not identified until 16 years later (Harcup & O'Neill, 2017). The need to attract audiences has never been greater as international trends show that television viewership is rapidly declining in favour of online platforms, as discussed in chapter two. Therefore, it is not surprising that these values are so dominant, as audiences increasingly engage in the sharing of visually interesting content online.

The study also found that the ranking of news values differed significantly from the comparisons with Harcup and O'Neill (2001, 2017). Their news values do not explain the study's findings, and this suggests that, (a) in New Zealand news values are applied differently from the way they are applied in the United Kingdom; (b) that television is very different to print; or (c) that the theory of news values-based selection and presentation does not work when it comes to UGV. These different options are difficult to resolve, given there are so few studies to compare with and try to find trends alongside.

However, despite their strong visual appeal UGV stories do not necessary lead at the beginning of a television news bulletin, the study found. This may be because prominence is

more likely to be given to the news stories judged by more traditional values such as bad news, or negativity, as “if it bleeds it leads” (Pooley, 1989). However, where arresting audio-visuals are a main justification for a UGV story to be produced, it is more likely to be included in the bulletin’s promotional packaging, and sometimes multiple times. The practice is at the discretion of the editorial decision-makers and differs from network to network. It is noteworthy that teasers and other promotional packaging within bulletins were produced more frequently by the state broadcaster than by its independent commercial counterpart.

H4: A story featuring UGV is more likely to have been internationally than locally produced, and therefore likely to reflect the high threshold that international stories must meet in order to be sold offshore for local broadcasting.

UGV is more common in internationally produced stories than those produced locally. This may reflect the high threshold that international stories must meet to be of international interest and therefore sold offshore for local broadcast. However, access to pre-produced news content can ease the local pressure to fill the news hole, particularly at a time when broadcasters are reacting to a decrease in advertising revenue and staffing levels are tight (Myllähti, 2018).

Identifying and analysing the abovementioned common characteristics of the stories that appeared in the data has provided the scope to identify a valid broad selection of representative stories for further investigation within a qualitative paradigm, and this is discussed in the next chapter.

## **Chapter Five: Qualitative analysis and results**

### **5.0 Introduction**

The audio-visual attributes of UGV were particularly powerful in the news value analysis in the previous chapter. However, quantifying news values provides only a partial explanation of how news is selected (Harcup and O'Neill, 2017) so the study drew on a qualitative analysis methodology that would focus more deeply on the data in order to explore the theories that have been applied to the production of television news texts.

Yorke (2013) commented on the importance of audio-visual content when analysing television news:

Exactly what distinguishes the excellent from the merely acceptable is virtually impossible to explain without the impact of the pictures themselves. Looking at the written script by itself will provide no clue. The purists would shudder at the use of the two-word, verbless, inverted sentences and the apparent casual regard for punctuation. The test is to ignore the script and to sit back, listen and watch as the commentary adds a delicate counterpoint to the pictures.

(Yorke, 2013, p. 85)

In the citation above, Yorke described television news as a medium that could not be considered only from a textual perspective as it also required an assessor to look at the visual artifact in its own right. Accordingly, the study considered the data from an holistic perspective, drawing on the researcher's own knowledge and experience of more than 20 years in the television industry as a producer, director and television journalist. Through this practice-based lens, the following chapter forms the second component of the mixed-method approach to the study, and found that UGV has become embedded in television news practice to a point that it is no longer considered outside normal information sourcing.

#### **5.1. Outlining the analytical approach**

The qualitative methods were applied to the same 133 broadcast news stories containing UGV that were part of the quantitative analysis in the previous chapter. This is discussed further in section 5.1.1. A second set of data consisted of semi-structured interviews and video-ethnographic style recordings that were gathered by the researcher during field work

conducted for five working days between 11 to 15 June 2018 as outlined in section 3.2.2. This is discussed in section 5.1.2.

### **5.1.1. Broadcast news stories containing UGV**

Thematic analysis was applied to the broadcast news stories containing UGV in order to select typical story examples that could be investigated in depth. The framework was found to be the most suitable technique as it was flexible and could easily be combined with discourse analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

#### **5.1.1.1. Thematic Analysis**

The study drew on a prior-research-driven approach that built on the reliability of others who had worked within a similar data context (Boyatzis, 1998). The themes were based on three communicative frames found within television news (Cottle and Rai, 2009) that were described in section 3.2.3.2. and are summarised here:

- i. Report – a succinct, up-to-date report delivered within a short duration of approximately 1-and-a-half minutes long;
- ii. Reportage – a slightly longer report that included detailed background information for context;
- iii. Reconciliation – extending beyond the reportage frame, and used technology such as a ‘live’ face-to-face confrontation between conflicting entities for the purposes of reconciling an issue.

(Cottle & Rai, 2009, p. 53).

These frames were divided within two polemic sub-frames to differentiate between conflictual and consensual stories, each reflecting a range of voices identified in Cottle and Rai (2009) as described below:

- i. Conflictual sub-frames communicate conflict in a propositional or analytical form, and also invite public deliberation, and include:
  - a. A dominant, single external voice that is unchallenged;
  - b. A contesting voice featuring two opposing views structured adversarially;
  - c. Contention of multiple voices or perspectives;
  - d. A campaigning voice, such as when a news service declares its stance on an issue;
  - e. An exposé/investigative voice, that uncovers information from outside the



public domain.

- ii. Consensual sub-frames are of a culturally expressive nature, that do not highlight any obvious issue nor contending perspectives:
  - a. A community service voice takes on an advisory or service-oriented role;
  - b. Collective interests voice that elaborates on common interest subject matter;
  - c. Cultural recognition, a voice that affirms shared values celebrating events, individuals or groups represented;
  - d. Mythic tales, a voice that activates cultural myths symbolising normative cultural goods.

(Cottle & Rai, 2009, p. 53)

From the full data set of 133 stories that featured UGV, the abovementioned communication frames were applied to 16 stories that were found to demonstrate characteristics representative of the whole. These stories included a wide range of footage including a wild bear running amuck in a suburban setting, inflight footage of a plane engine catching fire recorded by a passenger, to a woman publicly exposing her dead husband as a pedophile. Six stories were drawn on to discuss the data analysis, while seven stories that featured recurring themes were identified as “ideal types” (Weber, 1949, p. 92) and selected for deeper analysis. These included:

Story 1 and 2: Whale (featuring two versions, one from each broadcaster)

Story 3: Storm (a typical weather story)

Story 4: Rampage (an international crime story featuring eye-witness UGV)

Story 5: Warriors (a typical sports story)

Story 6: Arden (use of UGV by persons in a position of power)

Story 7: Tourist Tax (use of UGV for sensationalism).

As the data also included stories from TVNZ and TV3 on simultaneous days, in a small number of cases both networks were found to have covered the same stories (see Story 1 and 2). Therefore, it was possible to compare the similarities and differences in the treatment of the same UGV by two different models of a public broadcaster and a commercial broadcaster.

#### **5.1.1.2. Critical discourse analysis (CDA)**

A critical discourse analysis framework (Fairclough, 1995) was applied to the seven representative stories to investigate the texts, discourse practice and socio-cultural practices.

Because of the multimedia nature of television news, the study addressed text, audio and video forms. Each was explored by applying three analytical frameworks (Van Dijk, 1988) that included compression, temporality and textuality and these are described in detail next.

#### 5.1.1.3. Compression

Van Dijk (1988) found the analytical framework of compression was used to identify the structural characteristics of news schemata that determined the order of the topics, sequences and sentences within a text. Identified as “macro propositions” (p. 59), van Dijk’s theory proposed a set of rules that could be applied when a journalist performed subconscious actions that resulted in the compression of details within a story without compromising its meaning (van Dijk, 1988). As discussed in section 3.2.4.1, Bell (1991) pointed out that these compressions were similar to the actions performed when television news stories were edited to become shorter in length, or duration in order to become embedded in the larger textual structure of a news bulletin that is of a fixed duration.

#### 5.1.1.4. Temporality

The second framework applied was that of temporality, drawing on a systematised categorisation of narrative patterns (Neiger & Tenenboim-Weinblatt, 2016) to identify the use of past, present and future temporalities within television news. The study drew on a selection of tenses that were found to be commonly applied within broadcast journalism Alysen (2012) and are presented in the table below:

**Table 5.1. Tenses applied to the stories featuring UGV**

Tense	Sentence – active voice
<i>Simple present</i>	Demonstrators protest against airport noise.
<i>Present perfect</i>	Demonstrators have protested against airport noise.
<i>Present continuous</i>	Demonstrators are protesting against airport noise.
<i>Present perfect continuous</i>	Demonstrators have been protesting against airport noise.
<i>Simple past</i>	Demonstrators protested against airport noise.
<i>Past continuous</i>	Demonstrators were protesting against airport noise.
<i>Past perfect</i>	Demonstrators had protested against airport noise.
<i>Past perfect continuous</i>	Demonstrators had been protesting against airport noise.
<i>Simple future</i>	Demonstrators will protest against airport noise.
<i>Future continuous</i>	Demonstrators will be protesting against airport noise.

<i>Future perfect</i>	Demonstrators will have protested against airport noise.
<i>Future perfect continuous</i>	Demonstrators will have been protesting against airport noise.

(Alysen, 2012, p. 106)

#### 5.1.1.5. Textual analysis

The third framework of textual analysis was drawn from a macro-structural to micro-structural textual analysis model adapted from Erjavec (2005) that looked beyond the temporal structure to explore the decisions made by journalists when creating stories from pre-existing texts. By positioning the UGV as a pre-existing text, the study applied a modified version of Erjavec's model as discussed in section 3.2.4.4. where the temporal structure, topic, perspective and sources were explored. The framework was also considered within the context of news values as they have historically proven to be a measure in the judgement of a story's newsworthiness, as discussed previously.

#### 5.1.1.6. News values

The analysis frequently refers to news values, as a means of understanding the decision-making processes applied within the judgment of newsworthiness of stories featuring UGV. To maintain consistency, the study drew on the same set of news values applied in the quantitative analysis in section 3.1.2.4. (Harcup & O'Neill, 2017) and these are repeated here in an abridged version below:

- i. Exclusivity – generated by, or available first to, the news organisation.
- ii. Bad news – negative, including death, injury, defeat and job loss.
- iii. Conflict – controversies, arguments, splits, strikes, fights and warfare.
- iv. Surprise – an element of surprise, contrast and/or the unusual.
- v. Audio-visual – arresting video, audio, photographs and/or info graphics.
- vi. Shareability – likely to generate sharing or comments on social media.
- vii. Entertainment – sex, show business, sport, human interest, animals or humour.
- viii. Drama – escapes, accidents, searches, sieges, rescues, battles or court cases.
- ix. Follow-up - subjects already in the news.

- x. Power elite – powerful individuals, organisations or institutions or corporations.
- xi. Relevance – groups or nations of influence including government announcements.
- xii. Magnitude – perceived as significantly impacting on large numbers of people.
- xiii. Celebrity – people who are already famous.
- xiv. Good news – positive, including recoveries, break throughs, wins and celebrations.
- xv. News organisation’s agenda: stories that set or fit an organisation’s own agenda.

(adapted from Harcup & O’Neill, 2017, p. 1482)

The news values featured in the list above were found by the study to best reflect the post Web 2.0. environment of which social media and user-generated content is a fundamental characteristic. In particular, the list included the news values of *surprise*, *audio-visuals*, and *shareability*, which were found to be dominant in the quantitative findings as discussed in section 4.8.

### **5.1.2. Semi-structured interviews and video ethnographic-style field work**

Further to the abovementioned data, eight semi-structured interviews were conducted with senior television journalists in order to triangulate (Denzin, 2015) the findings in the story data with the real-world experiences expressed by the senior television journalists. The data were analysed based on the same themes applied within the critical discourse analysis, and these were: temporality, treatment of story topic, the perspectives applied to the stories, and the relationship with and treatment of sources. In three cases, the participants were also the creators of three of the stories selected for deeper analysis, and these have been identified in the findings.

### **5.2. Presentation of the analysis of the data**

Each story is briefly introduced, and codings are presented in italics. A transcription is provided where the terminology and layout used reflects television production industry

conventions and industry-recognised abbreviations (Ascher & Pincus, 2013) as shown in figure 5.2 below.

Running time	Vision/video	Newsreader/Reporter's voiceover/audio	
RT	Vision	Audio	
0.00	(MCU News presenter against video-wall, network watermark bottom R throughout)	(music fx under)	Production instructions italicised
0.01	Video-wall still image: WS men in truck and on a motorbike travelling through the desert	(News reader): A fragile cease-fire in Afganistan declared for the Muslim holiday of Eid has been shattered with the second suicide bombing in two days. Afgan officials had been hoping to extend the truce. ABC's Ian Pannell is in Kabul.	
0.04	WS damaged cars with police and firemen looking on/milling about	(Reporter's voiceover): It was a shattering blow to three days of relative peace in Afganistan. A	
0.20	CU steps showing shrapnel	suicide bomb attack in the eastern	
0.22	MS two bombed cars side-on	city of Jalalabad	
0.23	WS interior of hospital, victims in beds	killing at least nineteen, more wounded.	
0.25	MS crowd waving flags (caption) Tola News (caption) gglb? (Arabic)	But the last three days will be remember for not the war, but peace.	
0.29	<b>CU selfie of young man with flag waver in background</b> (caption) <b>Qarib Rahman Shahab</b>	An unprecedented cease-fire by the men of the white flag, the Taliban. Here joining ...	

UGV footage highlighted in **bold text**

Figure 5.2. Example of script layout provided as a reference for analysis and discussion

### 5.2.1. Whale 1 (RVO)

The first story to be analysed was based on UGV content that was drawn upon by both networks. Whale 1 was produced by a public broadcasting network, and broadcast as a reader voiceover (abbreviated to RVO<sup>7</sup>).

Whale 1 featured rarely-seen UGV of a hump-backed whale breaching the ocean in front of a group of tourists on a boating trip off the coast of Australia. It followed the communicative frame of a *report* (Cottle & Rai, 2009, p. 53), as it was succinct, up-to-date and of a short duration. The subtheme of *consensual – collective interests* was applied, as it was a positive story that targeted the interests of like-minded individuals, in this case animal lovers. The RVO was coded under the *animals and wildlife* category, *international* as it was produced by an international network and licensed to be re-edited by a local television news network and *principal influence* as the strong visual quality of the UGV content would have influenced the editorial decision to include the story in the bulletin. Video-ethnographic style footage was gathered when a television journalist edited this item.

An annotated transcription is presented in figure 5.3. on the next page.

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<sup>7</sup> An RVO is a short-form story where the narration to the pictures is added by the news reader at the time of broadcast, or live (Alysen, 2012). This provides a story that is flexible in its delivery as the script can be altered right up until the broadcast, instead of having to be recorded and edited into the story's structure in advance.

			Temporalities
RT	Vision	Audio	
0.35	<i>(MCU News presenter behind desk + b/g still image)</i> <b>MS breaching whale</b>	<i>(news reader's intro)</i> A whale-watching expedition has <u>left tourists</u> with the memory of a <u>lifetime</u> after a soaking <u>display</u> by a hump-back whale in <u>New South Wales</u> .	Present perfect
0.43	<i>(video starts)</i> <b>WS ocean</b> <i>(caption)</i> PORT MACQUARIE	<i>(news reader continues voiceover)</i> The video <u>shows</u> the mammal	
0.45	<b>WS as whale breaches completely out of the water</b>	breaching ( <i>whale sound fx</i> ) just metres	Simple present
0.47	<b>whale splashes back into water</b>	from the whale-watching boat creating an almighty	
0.49	<b>WS breaching repeated</b>	splash.	
0.50	<b>shot freezes as the whale's full body is out of the water</b>	The tour group <u>had been following</u> whales	Past perfect continuous
0.53	<b>shot unfreezes and whale splashes back into the ocean</b>	about 20-minutes and the pod had been swimming	
0.56	<b>pan R across MS tourists to ocean and WS sea with whale</b>	under and around the boat <u>near</u> Port Macquarie.	
0.58	<b>breaking through the surface</b>	Whales <u>are currently migrating</u>	
1.00	<b>WS breach to splash repeated in slomo</b>	from the Antarctic to the <u>warmer</u> waters of ( <i>slows down</i> ) <u>Australia</u> .	Present continuous
1.04	<i>MCU news reader in studio against neutral background</i>	<i>(news presenter smiles)</i> Amazing. Weather time now .....	

**Figure 5.3. An annotated transcription of Whale 1 (RVO).**

#### 5.2.1.1. Compressions

This was a typical example of an RVO, a compressed piece of news that crossed the threshold of newsworthiness, in this case because of its strong visual properties. To calculate the length of a script, a television journalist works on the premise that the average person reads text copy at a rate of three words a second (Yorke, 2013). Accordingly, the scripted voiceover was limited in length to 28 seconds – or a maximum of 84 words – in order to match the duration of the UGV footage available. As the voiceover was read live by the newsreader, there was

a risk that a hesitation or “fluff” may have caused the reader’s speed to vary and resulting in the words being out of step with the pictures (Yorke, 2013, p. 47). Therefore, as a measure of control, the script was slightly shorter than the pictures. This was evident at the end of the item when the newsreader slowed down her delivery to match the final shots of the RVO.

There were two instances of compression where several nouns were redacted to one generic term. These included tourists meaning the men, women and children on the boat, and display, providing a collective of a number of activities the whale undertook in its public demonstration. There was no evidence of the compression of verbs.

Other attributes identified were typical of television news and not influenced by the presence of UGV. Firstly, the date and time the event occurred were omitted, which Bell (1995) argues reflects the fact that journalists’ and consumers’ presumption of recency in news is so strong, time is rarely specified (p. 320). Secondly, the location was referred to in three stages: on first mention, New South Wales, a location that would be easily recognised by audiences because of its proximity to New Zealand; secondly at 0.56, near Port Macquarie, which provided a more detailed account of the location, and finally, at 1.00 where the use of Australia was used for the benefit of viewers who may not have understood the geography of the first two locations.

#### **5.2.1.2. Temporality**

The majority of the story was presented in the *present perfect* tense identified in the intro, by “A whale-watching expedition has left tourists ...” The intro provided the audience with the newest information about the news event and the intro was typically consistent among all the broadcast news stories analysed, where the majority of intros were no more than 15-16 seconds long.

In the body of the RVO, the script provided a real-time account of the action as it happened, the aim of which was to give the audience a sense of being there. At 0.43, the *simple present* tense was applied as the voiceover begins with “The video shows the mammal breaching ...” This is a key finding as the television journalist exploited the audio-visual quality of the UGV rather than focus on the event itself which was located in a specific time. At 0.50, the *past perfect* tense was identified with “The tour group had been following whales ...” and



provided background information on how the news event came about. At 0.58, there was a temporal shift to the *present continuous* tense, with “Whales are currently migrating” reinforced by the temporal adjective “currently”. The shift suggested an ongoing behaviour of the whales that projected the RVO forward and introduced an ongoing action that was subsequent to the main action of the event.

By applying the abovementioned temporalities, the RVO provided an example of how a script used temporality to support the UGV by providing an immediate account of a news event.

### **5.2.1.3. Repurposing of UGV**

In the editing of the RVO, the television journalist drew significantly on the UGV footage of the breaching humpback whale, using it three times: firstly, at 0.45; again at 0.49; paused temporarily as a freeze frame at 0.50; and repeated again in slow motion (slomo) that ended in a freeze frame at 1.00. By repeating the footage in this way, the duration of the piece was extended so the length of the voiceover could be accommodated. Varying the ways it was presented avoided the risk of disengaging audience interest through repetition. It also afforded the audience with a number of opportunities to marvel at a natural wonder they were unlikely to experience themselves. It is rare to find a repeat of professional footage in this way, so this demonstrates a difference in the treatment of UGV.

The freeze frame at the end of the RVO gave the newsreader a visual image to react to with the words, “Amazing” and a smile, while returning to camera and reading the next story intro. The aim of the reaction was to create a sense of seamlessness and cohesion in the news bulletin that encouraged the viewer to continue watching (Atkinson, 1994a). Again, the use of this technique within this story has reinforced the value that has been placed on the audio-visual newsworthiness of the UGV footage.

Observational videographic-style ethnography was analysed to understand some of the decisions participant 1 made when producing Whale 1. The participant explained the clip had come from an affiliate network and that while some affiliates provided a “clean” version of a story, in this instance the network had edited its branding into the footage. Participant 1 said that a clean version of the footage would have provided more scope when editing, but the participant would have to edit out the graphics while maintaining a cohesive story

narrative. So, the participant searched for the raw social media posting on Facebook and edited that footage instead. Participant 1 said resourcing UGV from its social media source was a common practice conducted in the newsroom. The footage was edited by the participant, then passed on to a video editor to add the special effects of freeze frames and slo-mos. The participant described the repurposing of the clip:

I wanted it to freeze frame as well and slo-mo so you can get the most of it ... I mean it's just amazing pictures and we wanted, I mean we could have used the [source network] version, but we certainly wanted the clean version so we went back to the actual original source, got as much material as we could and then we could, you know, enhance it, repeat it, slo-mo it to our heart's content, yeah and not be restricted by it ... (laughs) so we've completely milked it ... so you know, at the end of the bulletin you might have seen that whale leap five times (laughs) but everyone will be going, woohoo!

(Participant 1)

The participant's comments speak to the emotional impact of the image, instead of its conventional news values as a reported event. Rather than attempting to recuperate the use of the image to an idea of a serious story, it has been used to grab the viewer's attention and provide them with some viewing pleasure. This is an approach that differs from informing an audience according to conventional news values of what is important or interesting, and may be a clue to solving the differences in the ranking of news values between Harcup and O'Neill (2017) and this study, as discussed in section 4.6. and shown in table 4.6.2.

Natural audio of the whale and the whale watchers that came from the UGV was also incorporated into the story, including at 0.45, a short burst of audio was applied in between the voiceover. This is a commonly used technique in television news that aims to bring a realistic element to the RVO while also providing auditory relief from the continuing voiceover. Natural sound helps viewers assimilate the pictures and the words they are looking at and listening to (Ray, 2003).

The use of the whale image also appeared in the intro to the story, where the newsreader appeared in front of a video wall (Ray, 2003). Typically, video wall images are created by a graphic artist who may have been briefed by news editorial team but works independently to produce a stylised image that is consistent with the style and look of the overall news bulletin. Graphics designers/artists are engaged full-time to produce artwork such as maps, charts,

diagrams and the name captions of people appearing on the screen (Yorke, 2013). However, the image of a breaching whale did not appear to come from the UGV footage as demonstrated in figure 5.4.

**Original UGV footage**



**Video wall image**

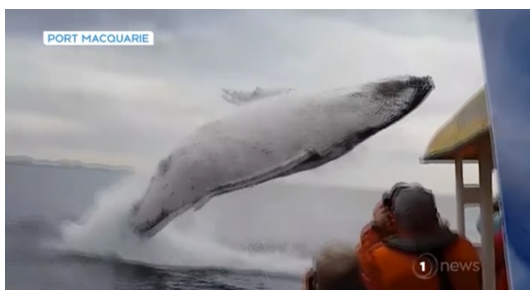


**Figure 5.4. The breaching whale UGV compared with the intro image.**

The figure above shows significant differences between the UGV footage and the image used in the video wall behind the newsreader. On the right, the video wall image featured a whale breaching at a distance closer to the camera compared with the UGV footage, more water appeared to be splashing off a more detailed whale belly, and the background featured a hilly landscape was inconsistent with the flat-shaped horizon that had been videoed off the coast of Australia. Furthermore, a blue-coloured filter had been applied that coordinated the image with the programme's overall graphic colour palate.

Furthermore, a whale image appeared in the tease package, that also did not appear to have come from the UGV footage, as shown in figure 5.5.

**Original image**



**Tease package**



**Figure 5.5. The breaching whale UGV compared with the tease package image.**

Again, using the same whale footage, the two images differ as there is additional water detail and an altered horizon in the image on the right.

In both the figures above, the differences between the original image and the tease package have addressed common issues with UGV as outlined in the methodology in section 3.1.3.2. These included the appearance of uneven horizons typically caused by the original image creator's inattention to background detail and/or the lack of a tripod for stability, and a lack of focal clarity in the footage when a smartphone's technical limitations become apparent in low light conditions, such as an overcast day as seen in the RVO.

#### **5.2.1.4. Perspective**

To understand the perspective from which a story was presented, it was necessary to look beyond a single word or sentence, to establish how the text had been described throughout the entire piece of data (van Dijk, 1991). This was achieved by identifying the perspective indicators within the visuals and the texts, and the news values that were applied during coding (Harcup & O'Neill, 2017). The perspective indicators in the text were found in phrases such as in the intro, "memory of a lifetime", at 0.47, where the breach was described as "an almighty splash", and also in the newsreader's reaction after the RVO with the exclamation of "amazing!" This framed the RVO as a rare experience by observers witnessing nature in close proximity, that brought with it an element of surprise but potentially that also put them at risk of danger. The news values of *audio-visual*, *shareability* and *surprise* were emphasised in the newsreader's intro, and in the repeated use of the footage in the RVO.

Because of the value placed on the newsworthiness of the audio-visuals present in the UGV, the story was given prominence within the news bulletin, as it was featured as part of a tease package. Participant 1 said it was not common to tease an RVO due to its shortness, therefore, the fact that it was selected once more reinforces how the *audio-visual* news value of UGV can influence the structure of a television news bulletin. A transcription of the tease is featured in figure 5.6.

Running Time	Vision	Audio/script
0.00	<i>WS Newsreader + BG:</i> WS protesting crowd (caption: MASS MARCH) <i>BG changes to video:</i> Zm out to WS protesters MS street protesters MCU of flag holder WS street protesters	(music fx)  <i>Newsreader:</i> Still to come, much more including the cause that got tens of thousands of women onto the streets of Britain including a contingent of ex-pat Kiwis.
0.10	<i>BG changes to still image:</i> <b>CU breaching whale</b> (caption: BIG SPLASH)	And a <u>close call</u> , whale watchers getting a soaking
0.14	<i>BG changes to video:</i> <b>MS whale breaching (slomo)</b>	and the <u>experience of a lifetime</u> after a <u>hump-backed whale</u> <u>breeched right in front of their boat.</u>
0.21	<i>BG changes to still image:</i> CU soccer ball and trophy (caption: WORLD CUP WELCOME)	And Russia's footballing singing grannies creating a friendly face
0.24	<i>BG changes to video:</i> WS Russian soccer game MS granny as goalkeeper OS MS grannies playing soccer	to the world as Russia tries to make over its image ahead of the start of the football world cup.

UGV featured in mid-bulletin tease package

**Figure 5.6. An annotated transcription of Whale 1 (tease).**

The figure above shows the UGV of the whale featured in the tease package was positioned between a political story and an historic piece. This suggests the UGV was intended to provide light relief between the teases of two stories of a formal or serious nature. The UGV of the whale breaching appeared in slomo alongside the newsreader's voiceover that used phrases to gain the audience's attention by reinforcing proximity and therefore risk, at 0.10 "close call" and at 0.14 "right in front of their boat", as well as the audio-visual and shareability implied by "experience of a lifetime".

While the inclusion of the UGV in the tease package pointed towards its perceived news values, its ranking within the television news bulletin was conflicting. It was ranked at ninth

place or within the second section of the bulletin, suggesting it was considered by the editorial team to have visual interest but not to be a particularly newsworthy report. According to Bell (1995) a television news bulletin will always lead with the strongest story, typically “hard” news which is time-bound, such as reports of accidents, conflicts, crimes, announcements and discoveries. This compares with “soft” news that has fewer news values and is not time-bound to immediacy and typically is ranked towards the bottom end of the bulletin (Bell, 1995).

#### **5.2.1.5. Sources**

The UGV content was acknowledged indirectly in the voiceover at 0.43, with “The video shows ...”. However, there was no reference to the source of the UGV, neither in on-screen graphics nor in the voiceover script. This is likely to have been because of the short duration of the RVO, or because it was not a story where the content was potentially controversial.

#### **5.2.2. Whale 2**

The second version of Whale was produced by a commercial network and a self-contained story, a third (34 percent) of which was created from the same UGV that appeared in the RVO analysed in section 5.2.1. above. The story also included professionally recorded interviews and still photographs that were taken by a photographer aboard the boat at the time of the whale sighting.

The story fulfilled the communicative frame as a *report* with a subtheme of *consensual – collective interests* as described in section 5.2.1. It was coded with the same attributes as the RVO, the category of *animals and wildlife*, from an *international* source, where the UGV was of *principal influence*. The same news values applied also, and these were *audio-visual*, *surprise* and *shareability*.

Whale 2 was allocated a larger space in the bulletin than Whale 1, with a duration of 1 minute and 23 seconds compared with the RVO of just 28 seconds. Yorke (2013) argues that duration is the fundamental influence on style: the shorter the programme, the more compressions are applied, while the longer the programme, the greater the opportunity to employ the full panoply of television techniques (Yorke, 2013). By applying this theory to the story, it is likely that the commercial broadcaster’s news editorial team elected to allocate a longer

duration to this story rather than a shorter RVO as the public broadcaster had done in Whale 1. This may be indicative of a difference between commercial and public broadcasting where commercial media need audiences and advertisers to survive resulting in the overproduction of content that is popular, while news that strengthens the democratic process is a key attribute of public service broadcasting (Soroka et al., 2012). However, the public broadcaster that was the subject of this study was not representative of a publicly funded model (Dunleavy, 2008) as it drew on commercial and contestable government funding and therefore was more closely aligned to a commercial broadcasting model.

A transcription is presented in figures 5.7 and 5.8.

RT	Vision	Audio	Temporalities
0.12	(MCU news reader + b/g still image)  <b>MS breaching whale</b>	(news reader's intro) Whale watchers <u>say</u> <u>they had the experience of a</u> <u>lifetime</u> when a hump-backed whale <u>fully breached just metres</u> <u>from their boat.</u> The <u>encounter off</u> <u>the coast of Australia</u> <u>left them stunned and soaked.</u> <u>Natasha Squarey of Channel 7</u> reports.	Simple present Past perfect Simple past
0.27	(video starts) <b>WS ocean</b>	(Reporter's voiceover): <u>An unexpected encounter</u> with a	Tenseless
0.29	<b>whale breaches</b>		
0.30	(freeze and slow zoom in) whale out of water	<u>cheeky and curious</u> hump-back	
0.32	(fast zoom) then repeats footage from ocean to breach to tourists reacting	(fx tourists squealing)	
0.41	<b>MS tourists with whale in b/g</b>	18 <u>passengers had</u> a	Simple past
0.42	<b>slow zoom in to still freeze of breached whale</b>	front-row seat as the <u>adolescent</u> whale <u>rocketed out of the ocean,</u> <u>just off Port Macquarie.</u>	
0.49	<b>WS ocean and breach repeats</b>	(i/v Collins): <u>And voom (laughs)</u> <u>it just went "whack"</u>	
0.53	MCU Collins (caption) Anne Collins, Passenger)	<u>it just went way up in front of the</u> <u>boat. Then it crashed back down.</u> <u>And then all this water still came</u> <u>down afterwards and it was just</u> <u>(laughs) it was (haha) so exciting.</u> <u>It was awesome.</u>	
1.03	MCU Boyle	(i/v Boyle): <u>Everyone was</u> <u>ducking for cover as the,</u> as splash <u>went over.</u>	Past continuous
1.06	<b>MS tourists pans right across boat to ocean, with whale breaking the surface</b>	(Reporter's v/o) continues) <u>Onlookers were,</u> and <u>still are, in awe.</u>	Simple past Present continuous

Figure 5.7. An annotated transcription of the Whale 2 page one of two.



RT	Vision	Audio	Temporalities
1.10	<b>cont. whale breaching</b>	(i/v voiceover Collins): <u>It's (fx tourist squeal) the best thing ...</u>	Present perfect
1.12	MCU Collins	<u>Oh dear, so emotional (laughs).</u>	
1.15	2S MCU Boyle looks at camera with reporter over shoulder	(Reporter's voiceover continues): Bernard Boyle <u>was</u> front and centre. His	Simple past
1.18	(still image) CU whale photo	photos showing <u>just how close it came.</u>	Present continuous
1.20	MCU Boyle	(i/v Boyle): <u>It's an experience of our lifetime.</u>	Simple present
1.22	MCU unnamed tourist	(i/v unnamed tourist): You really <u>didn't have time to get scared.</u>	Simple past
1.23	MCU Henney (caption) Anthony Henney, Port Jet Cruise Adventures	(i/v Henney): <u>You can't control what they do. And they can come over to you and hop in the boat if they want (heh) and luckily they don't.</u>	Simple present
1.30	MS Reporter PTC standing on a pier with the moored tour boat and tourists in background	(Reporter to camera): <u>The tour had been following the whale for 20 minutes; the playful pod swimming around and under the boat. Passengers didn't think it could get any better. Five minutes later they were blown away.</u>	Past perfect continuous
1.43	MCU Collins	(Interviewee #1): <u>It was fan-</u>	Simple past
1.44	<b>MS whale breaches</b>	<u>-bloody-tastic.</u>	
1.46	MCU 2S news readers	(news reader 2): (laughs) well Nicky's here with sport ...	

**Figure 5.7. An annotated transcription of the Whale 2 page two of two.**

### 5.2.2.1. Compressions

In contrast to Whale 1, this story was three times the length of the RVO and therefore the television journalist who produced the story was afforded more latitude with the amount of scripting and variety of language used. There were a number of instances when language was compressed, however, none related specifically to the incorporation of the UGV.

Nevertheless, the compressions applied have been described here in order to demonstrate typical usage within television news. Nouns were grouped collectively where the term encounter was used twice to describe the event, and tourists on the boat were referred to in three different ways: at 0.41 and 1.37 as passengers, at 1.06 as on lookers and at 1.30 as the tour. This reflects an element of lexical style where the choices made by a speaker provides optional variations in discourse to express more or less the same meaning such as physician instead of doctor (van Dijk, 1988, p. 27). At 1.42, the adverbial phrase blown away provided a generalised description of how the passengers felt. There were two instances where a selection of verbs was applied to compress a number of actions: firstly, in the intro where fully breached was applied to the activities performed by the whale, and the actions were also referred to at 0.42 as rocketed.

The study also identified other linguistic characteristics finding the journalist had applied anthropomorphosis within the voiceover script alongside the UGV footage. Anthropomorphosis is the act of assigning human personalities, emotions and motives to non-human entities, a technique commonly applied in documentaries to make non-human characters more familiar and relatable (Hight, 2017). It was used three times, at 0.30 where the whale was described as cheeky and curious, at 0.42 where it was referred to as an adolescent and at 1.30 where the collective group of whales was described as a playful pod.

#### **5.2.2.2. Temporality**

The voiceover featured six temporal shifts during the UGV footage to incorporate transitions between commentary and interviewees. The intro began in the *simple present* tense with temporal indicator “Whale watchers say ...” which enabled the television journalist to shift into the *simple past* tense and use reported speech to recap on what had occurred, with “they had the experience of a lifetime ...”. In this way, the facts provided adequate information for the audience to be able to understand what the UGV footage was about before they saw it.

At 0.27 the voiceover script introducing the first piece of UGV was *tenseless*, and featured a brief commentary that highlighted the news value of the footage with, “An unexpected encounter with a cheeky and curious hump-back”. At 0.41, the *simple past* tense was used to provide contextual background information that was central to the story and to set up the next event. This provided a lead-in to the main interviewee, Collins, and a second interviewee,

Boyle who would later become linked to the still photography. The next piece of UGV appeared at 1.06, where there was a shift from the *simple past* to the *present continuous* tense with the carefully crafted phrase, “Onlookers were, and still are, in awe”. This move enabled the incorporation of another part of the UGV along with natural sound, that was followed by a sound burst at 1.10 from interviewee Collins in the *present perfect* tense, “It’s (fx tourist squeal) the best thing”. The story concluded with a repeat of the UGV at 1.44, and a final sound burst from Collins in the *simple past* tense, “It was fan-bloody-tastic”.

Still images were also present in Whale 2. Yorke (2013) found every still image should be used to its maximum advantage by introducing it into the narrative at a point that helps to add emphasis to the story. The television journalist applied a temporal shift in order to do this at 1.15, when the *simple past* tense was used to introduce Boyle as the source of the still photos. This demonstrates how the television journalist had imposed an order that enabled the introduction of the artifacts as another form of visually illustrating the story.

While the story featured six time shifts within the UGV, this was not found to be a significant quantity when compared with 13 time shifts present among the professional footage used in the story. Therefore, this suggests that using UGV does not require temporalities to be any more complex than when using professional content.

#### **5.2.2.3. Repurposing of UGV**

Similar to the RVO, the story drew significantly on the UGV of the breaching humpback whale, using it three times and applying different editing techniques on each occasion. On the first occasion a freeze frame was added to the end of the shot at 0.30, and this was followed by a slow zoom into a close up of the mammal jumping out of the water, then a fast zoom (0.32) as the breach was completed. The breach was repeated again at 0.49. At 1.44, the story concluded with yet another repeat of the breaching whale. This gave the newsreader a visual reference to react to when returning to the camera at the end of the story, a technique that was also applied in the RVO.

Also similar to the RVO, the image of a breaching whale appeared in the video wall during the newsreader’s intro, again reinforcing the visual power of the footage. And again, the image used was not drawn from the UGV as shown in figure 5.9.

### Original footage



### Video wall



**Figure 5.9. The breaching whale UGV compared with the intro image.**

As demonstrated above, the image on the right is significantly different from the UGV as it is a different whale and the horizon differs also. Using another image could be considered misleading, as the viewing audience's expectations would not be met by the UGV footage used in the story. Therefore, it questions the credibility of news as a truth-telling medium that reports on newsworthy events, rather than aggrandising them with images that mislead.

#### 5.2.2.4. Perspective

The story came from the same perspective as version one: a rare experience by observers of nature within close proximity, that brought the potential of an element of risk and coded with the news values of *audio-visual*, *shareability* and *surprise*.

The perspective indicators were the phrases “experience of a lifetime”, “the whale fully breached just metres from their boat” and [that it] “left them stunned”. This was reinforced in the voiceover script that accompanied the UGV at 0.27 with “An unexpected encounter”, and again at 1.06, with “Onlookers were, and still are, in awe”. An element of risk was proposed in the latter part of the voiceover alongside the still photography at 1.18, where the voiceover stated, “photos showing just how close it came”. Risk was also emphasised at 1.22 where an unnamed tourist commented, “didn’t have time to get scared”, and at 1.23, where the boat’s skipper said, “You can’t control what they do. And they can come over to you and hop in the boat if they want (heh) and luckily they don’t.”

Interviewee quotes were used to reinforce the elements of surprise and risk, and while they could be considered to reinforce the news values of *audio-visual* and *surprise*, they were also used to invoke an emotional response rather than report on a newsworthy event, similar to

that seen in the RVO. Also, Collins’ recounts throughout the story brought additional colour rather than the more conventional use of quotes to provide a deeper significance of a story as news. Examples were at 0.49, “... it just went “whack” it just went way up in front of the boat. Then it crashed back down. And then all this water still came down afterwards and it was just (laughs) it was *(ha-ha)* so exciting. It was awesome!” Natural sound effects were also used to add colour, with audio of tourists squealing in delight on the UGV at 1.10, and these were followed by another quote from Collins reacting to the experience, with “the best thing ... Oh dear, so emotional! *(laugh)*”, and again at 1.44, with “it was fan-bloody-tastic.” A quote from Boyle reinforced the uniqueness of the event at 1.20, with “It’s an experience of our lifetime.”

The story was ranked 16th in the bulletin, as the final news story before the sports section. However, because of the strong *audio-visual* news value of the UGV it was given prominence by appearing in a tease mid-way through the news bulletin, a useful device for changing the pace of a programme or linking sections separated by a commercial break (Yorke, 2013). A transcript of the tease is shown in figure 5.10.

Running Time	Vision	Audio	
0.00	<i>MS 2 x newsreaders + BG of newsroom</i> <i>(caption: Newshub. Coming Up)</i>	<i>(music fx)</i> Newsreader: And still to come on Newshub	} This was the only story featured in the tease package
0.02	<b>MS whale breaching with shot ending on sightseers</b>	<u>did you get that?</u> the ultimate <u>photo-bomb</u> for sightseers in the <u>waters near Sydney</u>	
0.08	ENDS		

**Figure 5.10. Annotated transcription of Whale 2 tease.**

In the scripted tease above, the voiceover did not relate strongly to the UGV, but instead, drew on lexical devices to personalise the experience of those who were there. The language construct of synthetic personalisation was applied at 0.02, with “did you get that?” where a question is posed to an imaginary audience. The technique is commonly seen in advertising when an addresser speaks to the audience member in her own voice about a commodity that

resonates with both (Fairclough, 2015, p. 206). In the second line of the tease, the term “photo bomb” drew on an action frequently referred to in the creation of user-generated content where selfies denote the presence of a person intruding in the background of a photograph and can occur without the subject’s knowledge (Ibrahim, 2019, p. 1111). The photo bomb reference was likely to have been an attempt to use the lexis of a younger, smartphone savvy audience and motivate them to continue to watch the bulletin until the story appeared later in the news hour.

#### **5.2.2.5. Sources**

Similar to Whale 1, there were no on-screen captions to identify the sources of the UGV. The voiceover was ambiguous at the point where the interviewee, Collins, was juxtaposed alongside the UGV footage at 0.49 and 1.10. This may have led the audience to assume the footage belonged to her, as audiences naturally make a connection between what they are told and what they see (Yorke, 2013).

Furthermore, there were inconsistencies in the way the interviewees were identified. Two were captioned, a third was introduced in the voiceover and a fourth was neither named nor captioned. It is general custom that every interviewee should be identified the first time they appear in a story, with a title that gives context to his or her role within the story. Unnamed interviewees tend to fall into the category of ‘vox pops’, an entertaining sounding out of opinion among people, members of the public, gathered to gain opinions on a topic in a way similar to a small poll (Yorke, 2013).

These inconsistencies demonstrate that the UGV had a more important role to play in telling the story, while the sources – when used as quotes – performed the role of a secondary commentary, as if they were part of the audience. Therefore, this suggests that UGV has the ability to deliver its own meaning, and the text, by way of a quote or voiceover narrative, builds on the UGV.

The next story analyses the incorporation of UGV into a weather story, and discusses how UGV provided a valuable alternative to visual story telling when a television journalist was faced with real-time challenges within the daily routines of news production practices.

### 5.2.3. Storm

The next story, Storm, was a typical example of how a television journalist drew on UGV to report on a weather event at a location that was difficult to access within the confines of daily news production. In this case, the UGV contributed almost a third or 31 percent of the visuals in the completed story. As discussed in chapter 4.4., the study found that weather stories were the third most common to feature UGV. The story was an example of a *reportage* communicative frame as it was a slightly longer report that included detailed background information for context and featured a *conflictual – dominant* subtheme as it took on a conflictual and propositional form featuring an unopposed external voice as a source. It was coded as a *local* story where the UGV footage had a *supplementary influence* on a story produced by the news team. The news values applied included *audio-visual* because of the uniqueness of its imagery, *magnitude* that reflected the impact the weather event had on a large part of the country, and *follow-up* as it followed on from previous recent weather stories that had affected the wider region. A semi-structured interview and video-ethnographic style field work were gathered during the production and editing of the story, and this is discussed later in the section.

A unique aspect of the story was that the majority of UGV footage featured in the story was recorded by amateur drone users, of whom it was estimated there were 77,600 in New Zealand in 2017 (McIraith, 2019). The term drone usually refers to any unpiloted aircraft and is sometimes referred to as an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle or UAV. Drones were first used by news media in the coverage of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant in Japan in 2011, when an earthquake and tsunami crippled a nuclear plant (Tabuchi & Wald, 2011). According to one of the study's participants, drone footage was considered a more desirable form of UGV, as it provided a variety of camera angles and shots that visually enhanced the facts of a story in a way that was not able to be achieved through the terrestrial use of a smart phone.

An annotated transcription of the story is presented in figures 5.11, 5.12 and 5.13.

RT	Vision	Audio	Temporalities
0.00	MCU News reader +BG still image: WS farmer and dogs in paddock	(News reader): To other news now and the storm system that <u>hammered the East Coast</u> and Bay of Plenty <u>is tonight heading south</u> , <u>packing heavy rain and strong winds</u> . <u>It's left</u> large parts of the Gisborne region in <u>clean up mode</u> and, <u>once again, completely cut off</u> hundreds of people. Arrun Soma has been with affected <u>residents</u> .	Simple past Present continuous Present perfect
0.52	(video starts) <b>Aerial WS flood pans L</b> (caption) DAVID PIKIA	(Reporter's voiceover): The small town of Te Karaka <u>completely cut off</u> .	Tenseless
0.56	<b>Aerial WS with trees pans R</b>	More than five hundred residents <u>left without power</u> , and <u>forced to watch on</u> as the swollen river <u>threatened</u> their homes.	
1.03	<b>Aerial WS marae</b>	The local marae <u>only just escaping</u> being swamped.	
1.07	I/v Ruru (caption) ANTHONY RURU, TE KARAKA FIREMAN	(I/v Ruru): The ... ... river sort of <u>changed path</u> really and come, <u>has come</u> across the maize paddocks and just pretty run right alongside the marae.	Present perfect
1.16	WS fast flowing wide river	(Reporter's voiceover): The river <u>rising more than 10</u>	Tenseless
1.18	MS submerged fence	<u>metres, cutting off any way in</u>	
1.20	<b>MS 4WD car by river pans R</b>	<u>or out of the town.</u>	
1.22	MS lady puts on jacket by car and walks towards flooded river	On the other side Barbara Langford <u>waiting</u> for her husband Roger who was <u>saving livestock</u> .	

Figure 5.11. An annotated transcription of Storm page one of three.



RT	Vision	Audio	Temporalities
1.29	CU Langford interview	<i>(I/v Langford)</i> : Within just a few moments <u>he said</u> just try to save a couple, the water just came right over the bank.  <i>(Reporter's voiceover)</i> : He was <u>literally stranded</u> there ...	Simple past
1.41	MS farmer and dogs walk through submerged road zooms out	<i>(I/v Langford continues)</i> : stranded, the lambs <u>are stranded</u> he said. Land, but they're <u>land-bagged</u> and the <u>river's rising rapidly</u> .	Simple present
1.44		<i>(Reporter's voiceover)</i> : Farmer John Edwards and his dogs <u>were</u> on the same stretch of road.	Present continuous
1.47	CU I/v John Edwards (caption) JOHN EDWARDS FARMER	<i>(I/v Edwards)</i> : When <u>you've got</u> a day out there with four-hundred sheep out there, you've gotta swim most of them back to the shore.	Simple past
1.52	MS man lays out road cones	<u>Pretty hard</u> .	Simple present
1.56	CU in cab of road worker driving	<i>(Reporter's voiceover)</i> : Roads around the region <u>too dangerous to drive on</u> .	Tenseless
1.59	WS post and powerlines on road	<i>(Fx driver)</i> : <u>We don't want anyone getting stuck or flooded out there today</u> .	Present continuous
2.00	CU powerlines	<i>(Reporter's voiceover)</i> : Powerlines <u>were</u> damaged and	Simple past
2.02	CU wastewater drain bubbling	Gisborne's wastewater system was	
2.04	LA water running into river	<u>overwhelmed</u> , sending diluted	
2.05	WS bridge, river with slash WS bridge another angle	sewage into the rivers.	

Figure 5.12. An annotated transcription of Storm page two of three.

RT	Vision	Audio	Temporalities
2.07	WS logging caterpillar	For the second time in a week <u>slash, logging left overs, was</u>	Simple past
2.12	WS man stands in flooded orchard	<u>brought down</u> flooded rivers in Tologa Bay.	
2.16	CU Coutts (caption) TONY COUTTS, ORCHARDIST	Orchardist Tony Coutts <u>says</u> in nearly thirty years of living here it's the worst he's seen.	Simple present
2.24	WS Coutts moves flooded boxes	(I/v Coutts): And this <u>just backs up like a, like a bath really with a plug in it.</u>	
2.25	CU Coutts	The district council and us <u>have had</u> lots of meetings about how it's happening and why it's happening, um, yeah, no answers.	Simple past
2.28	PTC Reporter (caption) ARRUN SOMA, GISBORNE	(Reporter piece to camera): With all of this <u>comes</u> an economic impact for those <u>who live off the land</u> . Whether it's damage to the orchards or farmers who've lost livestock.	Simple present
2.37	MS cattle behind fence in flood	(Reporter's voiceover): The government <u>has announced</u> a welfare package for the region.	Present perfect
2.39	MS sheep run through water	(Faafai): In support, our offer	Simple past
2.42	MCU CD Minister (caption) KRIS FAAFOI, CIVIL DEFENCE MINISTER	earlier today did take into account some of the support that the farmers and the rural communities <u>are going to need</u> .	
2.47	<b>WS aerial flooded river and bridge</b> (caption) <b>JORDAN PERRY</b>	(Reporter's voiceover): With more rain expected tonight, authorities <u>are urging</u> everyone to	Present continuous
2.51	<b>WS aerial another angle</b> (caption continues)	<u>hunker down</u> and only travel if it's essential. Arrun Soma, One News.	

Figure 5.13. Annotated transcription of Storm page three of three.

### 5.2.3.1. Compressions

The story was complex because it brought together multiple pieces of content within a duration of two minutes and five seconds, which is longer than the typical duration of a news story of approximately one minute and 30 seconds. In the intro, the term storm system was used as a collective noun to identify the weather event that had been complex, bringing rain, flooding and high winds. The use of cleanup mode was the compression of a whole cognitive script of activities required to restore the region after the flood, such as pumping excess water, mopping up residue, excavating earth slippage etc. The affected residents was a reference to the multiple entities including families, farmers and homeowners that had been affected by the weather. Other collective nouns featured were at 2.07, where slash referred to the coarse and fine woody debris generated during logging operations, and at 2.28, those who live off the land was applied as a collective term for farmers, orchardists and others who relied on their land properties to exist. The phrases affected residents and those who live off the land are both indeterminate, informal collectives, used so that the journalists cannot be held accountable for precisely which residents were being discussed.

There were three points at which verbal compression was used when the UGV was present. At 0.52, the town was described as being cut off, a term that referred to the action of the flood waters isolating roads and access ways that was used during the wide aerial drone shots of the distorted flood plain. At 0.56, the residents were described as being forced to watch on inferring they had a sense of helplessness as they were unable to go about their daily routines; and at 1.03, being swamped was a phrase used to refer to the effect the flooding had on the residents and their properties. The UGV footage featured generalised visuals of the damage, and while it was not directly linked to the specific residents discussed in the voiceover script, the combined texts suggested that this was a representative example of many who did so. This is a commonly used technique in television news storytelling.

Other linguistic techniques used alongside the UGV including anthropomorphism which was used at 0.56, where the river was explained to have “threatened their homes”, and synecdoche at 1.03 where the marae was described as “only just escaping being swamped”, a figure of speech when a part of the subject represents the whole. Here, the marae has been used to mean the marae community, therefore this was a form of compression of nouns.

### 5.2.3.2. Temporality

The story featured multiple temporal shifts, used mainly to connect transitions between the UGV, the professional footage, and the interviewees. While all these shifts were identified in the transcriptions in figure 5.2.3. it is the temporalities applied when the UGV was present that is the focus of this analysis, and these are described next.

The intro began in the *simple past* tense to introduce the story as a follow-up to previous news with the phrase, "... and the storm system that hammered the East Coast and Bay of Plenty" then applied the *present continuous* tense reinforced by the temporal indicator, "is tonight heading south". The script shifted to a *present perfect* tense with "it's left large parts of the Gisborne region" to reinforce the news value, *magnitude*, and then applying the temporal indicator, "once again" to reinforce the news value of a follow up to a previous story.

Overall, the temporality in the story has taken on a *tenseless present* characteristic, similar to the language featured in captions. Alikhani and Stone (2017) found that there was a coherence relationship between a caption and its imagery, where a text featured restricted information about the image and adopted a distinctive perspective. Similarly, here the television journalist has presented caption-like information in the scripted voiceover. For example, at 0.52, the UGV featured an aerial wide shot of the floodwaters alongside the reporter's voiceover, "The small town of Te Karaka completely cut off" thereby avoiding the conventional subject-verb-object lexical structure. Further examples provided in the voiceover included: "More than 500 residents left without power, and forced to watch on as the swollen river threatened their homes" and "The local marae only just escaping being swamped". Each of these sentences serves to provide a caption-like narrative that features a coherence relationship to the visuals. In this way, the television journalist has adopted a lexical style that was applied throughout the story. This style was not commonly seen within the broadcast news story data, where the majority of stories provided a more traditional scripted narrative approach. It represents a shift in television broadcast news that is inconsequential to the inclusion of UGV as it was applied throughout the professional and UGV footage. However, when applied within the use of UGV, it takes the audience into a timeless place of 'now' and therefore provides a power of immediacy that is unable to be achieved through the use of professional footage.

#### 5.2.3.3. Repurposing of UGV

There was no evidence of the UGV footage being repurposed within the “Storm” story.

#### 5.2.3.4. Perspective

The story was a typical weather report that featured compelling visual evidence of an act of nature that was unpredictable and showed the significant impact the storm had on many individuals along its path. The UGV provided additional footage that went beyond that which the television journalist was able to gather in time for prime-time broadcast. Also, the footage introduced an emotional aspect to storytelling that, similarly to the Whale stories, took the story beyond being a factual news text. These emotional aspects were reinforced through the use of terms such as hammered and the phrase, “packing heavy rain and strong winds” to reinforce the impact of the weather event. Where the UGV was present, at 0.52, the town was described as being “completely cut off”, 0.56 residents were “left without power”, and at 0.56, “and forced to watch on”, and at 1.03, where the local marae was “only just escaping being swamped”. At 1.20, this was reinforced by the phrase, “cutting off any way in or out of the town”. The story concluded with more flooding UGV footage in the final two shots at 2.47 and 2.51, and voiceover, “With more rain expected tonight, authorities are urging everyone to hunker down and only travel if it’s essential (sign off).”

On the day of the broadcast, the bulletin's top-ranking story reported on a meeting between the super powers, United States President Donald Trump and North Korean Leader Kim Jong-un. The network had assigned the domestic newsreader to North Korea to cover the story and provide live reports into the bulletin. When a network has spent a significant amount of money to cover an event of greater news significance such as this, it is common for editorial decisions to sway towards making the most of the investment that has been made in getting the reporter and crew there. The story dominated the first part of the bulletin and this had a flow-on effect as it limited the amount of time that could be applied to other stories within a bulletin of fixed duration.

The Storm story was ranked seventh in the news bulletin and was a longer than usual report at nearly three minutes, compared to the average length of story of approximately half that duration. This suggests that, on a busy news night, both stories were found to be significantly

newsworthy to warrant greater than normal exposure, although for entirely different reasons: one for its global impact and the other for its local impact.

Both stories also were given prominence as they appeared in a tease package at the top of the bulletin as shown in figure 5.14.

RT	Vision	Audio	
0.00	<i>(WS Newsreader in front of video-wall, network watermark bottom R throughout)</i>  <i>Video-wall features still image</i> North Korean and American Presidents meet	<i>(Newsreader)</i> Ho-down, they're finally face-to	
0.02	<i>(wipe to video)</i> Zoom in on LS Presidents walk in front of Nth Korean and American flags and shake hands	-face and it's a hand-shake he said as Donald Trump and Kim Jong-un hold unprecedented talks. What's the deal ... we've got the details.	
0.11	<i>(wipe to still image)</i> WS farmer and dogs in submerged paddock	And more weather woes. Warnings for residents again as <u>flooding and</u>	} Tease
0.15	<i>(wipe to video)</i> <b>EWS flooded river with bridge</b>	<u>rain hits the East Coast</u>	
0.17	MS farmer drags dogs through flood	<u>closing major highways, schools</u>	
0.19	<b>HA aerial view of flooded farmland</b>	<u>and cutting off rural roads.</u>	

**Figure 5.14. Annotated transcription of Storm tease.**

In the figure above, the newsreader's voiceover script highlighted the points that were likely to have the greatest impact on the audience, at 0.11, with "flooding and rain hits the East

Coast closing major highways, schools and cutting off rural roads". This was prefaced with the phrase, "And more weather woes" reinforcing the news value of *continuity* with previous stories that had been covering the ongoing weather event. The tease provided sufficient details to arouse the curiosity of viewers, but leave them wanting to learn more.

The UGV footage also featured in a mid-bulletin highlights package, also known as a 'halfway head' or a summary that reflects on a small selection of stories of significant news value that have appeared earlier in the bulletin (Yorke, 2013). A transcription of the mid-bulletin highlights package is provided in figure 5.15.

RT	Vision	Audio
3.03	<i>(WS Newsreader in front of video-wall, network watermark bottom R throughout)</i>	<i>(Newsreader):</i> Welcome back. Looking at our
3.04	<i>(caption)</i> TONIGHT'S TOP STORIES	top stories and the storm system
3.06	<i>(wipe to still image)</i> WS house in flood <i>(caption)</i> STORM DAMAGE	has <u>hammered</u> the East Coast and Bay of Plenty is tonight
3.09	<i>(wipe to video)</i> <b>WS flooded river with bridge</b>	heading south, <u>packing heavy rain and strong winds.</u> It's left
3.10	MS farmer drags dogs through flooded road	large parts of the Gisborne region in <u>clean-up mode once again</u>
3.13	<b>WS aerial shot of flooded region</b>	and <u>completely cut off</u> the town of
3.16	<b>WS flooded river</b>	Te Karaka. And
3.19	MS submerged fence	
3.20	<i>(wipe to still image)</i> Nth Korean and American Presidents shake hands <i>(caption)</i> HISTORIC MEETING	in Singapore U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean Leader
	<i>(wipe to video)</i> WS Presidents shake hands zm in	Kim Jong-un held an historic meeting. The two men shaking hands
3.27	MS Presidents walking to camera and exit into a room L	warmly, numerous times as they discussed a deal to end North Korea's nuclear ambitions. Simon's across the
3.34	<i>(Picture in picture)</i> Newsreader Simon Dallow	latest developments. He joins us now live from Singapore.

Top story

**Figure 5.15. An annotated transcription of the mid-bulletin highlights package.**



Figure 5.15. shows the mid-bulletin highlights package where the UGV footage featured a repeat of an aerial drone shot seen in the tease package that appeared at the top of the bulletin, and additional pieces of UGV featuring two shots of a flooded river. The purpose of a mid-bulletin highlights package is to remind audiences of the top stories of the day, change the pace of a programme or link sections separated by a break for advertising (Yorke, 2013). As Yorke (2013) argues, mid-way packages bring variety into a bulletin and the composition of the highlights package brought together two extremely differing themes that showed the diversity of the news bulletin, as was identified in the data. The ranking of the story at the start of the highlights package gave prominence over the North Korea story that appeared second. This privileged the *audio-visual* properties of the flood UGV over the ‘talking head’ footage of the political leaders, despite the fact that the North Korea story was a more significant story from a news perspective.

#### **5.2.3.5. Sources**

There were three sources of UGV in the story, but only two were acknowledged with an on-screen textual caption. The two pieces of aerial drone footage of the flooded terrain and were captioned on screen at 0.26 and at 2.47 with the users’ names. This emphasises the value that television journalists place on drone footage as a favoured form of UGV that provided visuals that would not have been achieved at the time by the journalist. At 1.21, vertical video UGV of a 4WD car by a river was not identified. Other amateur footage featured in the story included a videoconference interview with a local fireman at 1.07, however, this footage did not meet the study’s definition of UGV as it was requested of the user by the television journalist, rather than being independently created by the user and shared on social media. He did not get paid.

#### **5.2.3.6. A battle of the best shots**

During the production of Storm, a semi-structured interview and video-ethnographic style data were gathered with the story producer, anonymised as participant 2. This enabled a triangulation of information between the analysis of the news story and decisions made at various stages of production that were representative of the typical daily routines and professional norms conducted.

The story was selected for coverage by the bulletin editors and announced at the 9am early morning news meeting, the first of several meetings that were conducted across the day. Weather reports indicated the storm was likely to escalate, and so the story had the potential to be the source of several pieces of content that would populate the news programmes throughout the day. These included live updates often favoured by networks, as they provided variety within the composition of the news bulletins, and therefore raised the production value of a story from a network's perspective (Yorke, 2013).

A story producer and a television journalist were assigned to cover the story as it was likely to be complex to produce, requiring multiple pieces of professional footage and UGV gathered from different sources and locations. Participant 2 explained that it was common for two to three journalists to cover a weather story in this way. He said that working as part of a team required a level of trust between the individuals, especially as parts of New Zealand had weak Internet connectivity that made communication and the transfer of large video files difficult.

The television journalist was dispatched to Gisborne to gather video footage and wrote a script that was sent to the network newsroom via email and a cloud-based video distribution system, called WeTransfer, for compilation by participant 2. WeTransfer is an internet-based and password protected computer file transfer service based in the Netherlands that allows users to send up to 20 GB at a time (WeTransfer, 2021).

Participant 2 researched the latest information on the impending storm from the Meteorological Service (Met Service) website and prepared scripts, referred to as "lines" (Participant 2), for the remote television journalist to deliver live into the mid-day and mid-afternoon bulletins as the escalating weather path was being tracked.

Throughout the day, participant 2 monitored the social media site Facebook for potential UGV, where he searched for postings by official sources such as the local council, Civil Defence and the local power company. This highlights the role official organisations play as a community message board when unscheduled news events occur, and how valuable the UGV footage they share can be for news workers. Sourcing UGV from an official company's Facebook page was considered "safe to use" and did not require verification according to the

participant, while acknowledging that the process was not full-proof. The participant said verification was important, as previously some suppliers had been found to be “dubious in terms of their origin and description”, particularly when historic or unrelated visuals of flooded rivers were known to have been “put it up for a laugh”. Here is how the participant felt about UGV:

That’s just footage that we can’t get any other way basically because it’s just physically impossible basically for us to get in there. Unless we get like a helicopter or something but I don’t think you can get a helicopter in gale-force winds. So, it is actually practically impossible.

(Participant 2)

### **Reliability of amateur contributors**

Participant 2 had some concerns about relying on amateurs getting the UGV footage through to the network in time for production and inclusion in the 6pm bulletin. The participant said it would be a “battle of the best shots” therefore, as a back-up, they searched for additional UGV on Facebook in case the first video did not arrive in time. Facebook newsfeed by a local shop owner, a local fireman and a reporter friend who worked in the area for another news organisation were scanned for useful UGV. When some suitable UGV was identified, the participant communicated with the source via Facebook's direct messaging platform to receive confirmation of ownership, and then permission for network use was given verbally and by email. The participant considered the process to be a straightforward negotiation that observed the network’s protocols relating to the acquisition and publication of UGV.

Participant 2 considered the UGV to be supplementary to the professional footage provided by the television journalist working remotely, which was how the UGV had been coded during the study. The participant added that UGV often provided something that was “out of the ordinary” and cited, as an example, UGV footage of three cows stranded on a tiny piece of land during an earthquake in Kaikoura in 2016 that had been broadcast across a number of networks, as shown in figure 5.15.



**Figure 5.16. UGV of cows stranded during an earthquake (Newshub, 2016)**

### **Technical delays**

The process for the production of the story was that the remote television journalist would draft and record a voiceover script that would be emailed to participant 2 who would use it to edit together the story from the footage received from the various professional and amateur sources. However, when the footage was received on the network's server there were technical issues found within the UGV that had a significant effect on the process. The footage was of poor quality because of the connectivity issues caused by a weak rural connection during inclement weather. So, Participant 2 re-contacted the footage supplier and asked him to resend it at a higher resolution. The Participant commented that different file types produced different results and although the UGV may have looked good on a smart phone, when broadcast, the quality frequently deteriorated. This was the sort of technical knowledge that was not often taken into account by amateur footage suppliers when sending videos to the network. The participant also said receiving footage from remote locations often affected the sharpness of the image and the synchronisation between video and audio, and this led to the need for specialist technicians to address these issues at the point of retrieval.

Participant 2 was anxious to be relying on receiving re-sent footage from an amateur videographer whose technical knowledge and expertise was unknown, and within less than two hours of the bulletin going to air, re-contacted the supplier and was told the upload would

take eight more hours, which meant the story would not make the 6 pm deadline. Again, this is an example of a professional attempting to work with an amateur who did not understand the constraints of television news production and the news cycle in relation to a primetime news bulletin.

Therefore, participant 2 invoked his back-up plan that was to use a second set of UGV footage that had been sourced earlier in the day despite the fact the content was not as visually strong. The participant used Google Earth to verify the location of the footage, and agreed to give the operator an onscreen credit in lieu of a payment to use it. This suggests that the practicalities of the news production process and getting to air on time were more important than the specific shots being sought, and that the editorial decision-making process was compromised. However, it is common knowledge that the process of television production can often be one of compromise because of pressures of timeliness and the lack of availability of resources. This is discussed further in the next section.

### **Compromises when editing UGV**

When the story was edited by the participant who was working with a video-editor, there were a number of compromises made that reflected the challenges professionals faced when working with amateur footage. These included editorial decisions relating to the following:

- i. Was the content quality more valuable than the aesthetic technical quality? (Niekamp, 2012, p. 117). The UGV drone footage was found to create a powerful visual beginning to the story but the camerawork was unstable and therefore considered by the participant and the video editor to undermine the network's professional standards, particularly as the opening shot is typically regarded as the most important shot in the story. Participant 2 and the video editor deliberated on whether the shot should be replaced, and played it over and over several times. Finally, and collectively, they decided to retain the best part of the footage and edit out the worst part, and shortened the pre-recorded voiceover to match it. Other UGV footage affected by a loss of bandwidth during transfer that resulted in images exerting a strobing or flashing effect was discarded.

- ii. Vertical video. Vertically orientated UGV featured a four-wheel-drive car driving past a river, that was considered to be a useful piece of footage because of the “realism” it offered a viewing audience. The visual narrative was compromised in order to minimise the jarring effect, by inserting the vertical video in between two neutral shots of professional landscape orientated footage that were general enough to remain in context with the pre-recorded script. This meant the piece of UGV could be used despite being of a lower visual quality.
- iii. Avoidance of jump cuts. The narration of the voiceover script required two UGV shots to be edited adjacent to each other. However, as there was little variation in the framing size of the shots the edit would have created a “jump cut” (Drew & Cadwell, 1985, p. 828) where an object in the frame appears to ‘jump’ between shots. Therefore, a decision was made to manipulate the footage at reverse speed in order to eliminate the ‘jump’, while continuing to reflect the voiceover script.
- iv. Bad audio. Some of the UGV footage was mute or did not have any sound attached, which the participant said either may have been provided that way or occurred as a result of the Internet-based delivery process. To overcome the issue, the video editor found a generalised audio excerpt from the professionally produced footage and inserted non-synchronised audio to match the UGV pictures and cover the sound gaps.

Participant 2 concluded with the following comment:

People have lower expectations of UGC [UGV] than they do of stuff we would have filmed professionally. But, you know, use it sparingly, just to sort of make a point. But I guess the advantage of it is, that it’s stuff that you just wouldn’t be able to do yourself.

(Participant 2)

In the comment above, the participant suggested that it was not necessarily the footage that proved a fact or anchored a news text in reality, but it was the ‘eye-candy’ role of UGV that brought a degree of authenticity to a story in the eyes of the audience.

The analysis of the video ethnographic-style field work also demonstrated an example where amateurs did not share the ethical boundaries of professional journalism. In the abovementioned story, one of the amateur drone operators provided footage of a marae surrounded by rising flood waters. However, after the bulletin had gone to air, the participant became aware that the building featured in the UGV belonged to the drone operator's own tribe and therefore it may have been at risk of not being a fair representation of the flooding. This an area of vulnerability when amateurs are relied upon as they may not bring balance to their work, a pillar of journalism.

Balance also comes into question during the analysis of the next story that featured UGV from eyewitness accounts of a fatal shooting in the United States.

#### **5.2.4. Rampage**

The Rampage story featured UGV of a fatal shooting recorded as the attack unfolded, and the amateur footage made up more than a quarter or 29 percent of the total story.

The story satisfied the communicative frame of *reportage* with a *conflictual – dominant* subtheme as it was slightly longer than average report and featured one unopposed external source of information, the police, that was unchallenged. It was categorised as *law, order and crime* and coded as *international* as it had been purchased from an international affiliate network, although unlike the earlier Whale stories, this story had not been re-edited locally. The UGV footage in the story was dramatic and therefore had a *principal influence* on the decision for the story to be featured in the bulletin. A transcription is provided in figures 5.17, 5.18 and 5.19.

RT	Vision	Audio	Temporalities
0.04	MS News reader + BG still image: CU Jarrod Ramos	(News reader): To the US now where Police are <u>now calling</u> the shooting at a <u>Maryland</u> newsroom quote “a <u>targeted attack</u> ”. New <u>videos emerged</u> showing the alleged gunman Jarrod Ramos being led out by police in hand cuffs. He’s been charged with five counts of first-degree murder. ABC correspondent Gio Benitez reports.	Present continuous  Present perfect
0.23	(video starts) <b>LS police in hallway</b> (caption) <b>Marjorie Rock</b>	(audio fx): <b>Come on, guys we gotta go!</b>	Simple present
0.25		(Reporter’s voiceover): <u>Tonight a new look</u>	
0.26	<b>HA view down onto police in street</b>	<u>at first responders racing</u> to get survivors	Present continuous
0.29	<b>LS chaos as people run down hallway and into an elevator</b>	out of the Capital Gazette building where five people <u>were killed in cold blood.</u>	Simple past
0.35	MCU people crammed in elevator	Inside the elevator, chaos and <u>confusion.</u> (audio fx) <b>Somebody <u>was shot.</u></b>	
0.37	WS exterior of Capital Gazette (caption) Several shots have been fired um possible shotgun. At least ten shots heard. (caption credit: Anne Arundel County Police, Fire and EMS)	(Police radio): Several shots <u>have been fired</u> um possible shotgun. At least 10 shots heard.	Present perfect
0.43	<b>HA view down onto police in street leading Ramos</b>	(Reporter’s voiceover cont.): Marjorie Rock, a nurse that had a dental appointment, upstairs <u>shooting</u> this cellphone video <u>showing</u> police <u>leading</u> suspect Jarrod Ramos away in hand cuffs.	Present continuous

Figure 5.17. Annotated transcription of Rampage page one of three.



RT	Vision	Audio	Temporalities
0.52		( <i>Marjorie Rock</i> ): <u>There were</u>	Simple past
0.54	MS Marjorie Rock with reporter ( <i>caption</i> ): MARJORIE ROCK, WITNESS	about seven large officers heavily armed, heavily armoured,	
0.59	<b>Tracking shot through glass door to police handling people on street</b>	( <i>fx under</i> ) <u>screaming</u> at us, “Get your hands up, get your hands up, get your hands up.”	Past continuous
1.02	Still image Jarrod Ramos ( <i>caption</i> ): Anne Arundel County Police Dept.	Ramos <u>appeared</u> in court today where a judge ordered that he be held without bond. He <u>tells</u> the judge, “I will not co-operate”.	Simple past
1.09	Aerial zoom in to intersection and parking lot	Prosecutors say Ramos <u>planned</u> <u>his attack and hunted his victims,</u>	Simple past
1.14	Aerial shot of car park	<u>barricading</u> the back door to the newsroom so they couldn’t escape.	Past continuous
1.17	MS Wes Adams ( <i>caption</i> ): WES ADAMS, STATE ATTORNEY	( <i>I/v Wes Adams</i> ): <u>There was one</u> <u>victim that had attempted to</u> <u>escape through the back door and</u> <u>was shot at that point.</u>	Simple past
1.24	Aerial zoom in to WS Capital Gazette building	( <i>Reporter’s voiceover cont.</i> ): An intern from the Capital Gazette <u>watching in horror</u> from the newsroom, <u>feet away from the</u> <u>gunman.</u>	Present continuous
1.29		( <i>I/v intern</i> ): <u>I called</u> the police	Simple past
1.30	Still images armed police officer with picture in picture of CU intern ( <i>graphic branding Today.com</i> )	as soon as we got out from under the desk and I was not able to talk to them. <u>I didn’t feel that I could</u> <u>do it in a manner that wouldn’t tip</u> <u>off my, our position to the shooter.</u>	
1.39	WS armed police walking among cars behind taped cordon	( <i>Reporter’s voiceover cont.</i> ): Crime reporter Phil Davis also <u>hiding</u> under a desk. He <u>could</u> <u>hear the gunman reloading his</u> <u>weapon.</u>	Present continuous

Figure 5.18. Annotated transcription of Rampage page two of three.

RT	Vision	Audio	Temporalities
1.45	Still image Phil Davis (caption): It makes you feel powerless. It makes you feel helpless. It moves all control from every facet of your life within only a few seconds once you understand what's happening. (source) PHIL DAVIS, Reporter, Capital Gazette, Audio: Anderson Cooper 360/CNN	(I/v Phil Davis): <u>It makes you feel powerless. It makes you feel helpless. It, it removes all control from every facet of your life within only a few seconds once you understand what's happening.</u>	Simple present
1.55	MS Policeman in riot gear	(Reporter's voiceover cont.): Police say Ramos <u>had smoke bombs and his weapon was a 12-gauge shotgun.</u>	
2.00	MCU Police media conference	(Police): <u>It was legally purchased a year or so ago.</u>	
2.03	<b>POV shot from inside car, quick pan R</b> (caption): Cheryl Connor Costello	(Reporter's voiceover cont.): Ramos had a <u>long-held grudge</u> against the paper, <u>harassing them</u> on social media for years	Past continuous
2.08	WS car drives past	after the <u>paper wrote</u> an article about him a defendant in a <u>stalking case</u> . He pleaded guilty.	Simple past
2.10	WS police talking to people in parked cars		
2.11	WS truck drives past with Fire and Explosives branding on it		
2.14	MCU Police media conference	(Police): This was a <u>targeted attack.</u>	Present continuous
2.15	<b>POV public walk onto street with hands in the air</b>	(Reporter's voiceover cont.): President Trump <u>today pressing condolences.</u>	
2.19	MCU Trump media conference (caption): Donald Trump, US President	(Trump): Journalists like all Americans <u>should be free from the fear of being violently</u>	Simple present
2.24	Still image WS blockade	<u>attacked while</u>	
2.26	LS policeman walking dog	<u>doing their job.</u>	

Figure 5.19. Annotated transcription of Rampage page three of three.

#### 5.2.4.1. Compressions

The UGV featured in the story was recorded and posted by eye-witnesses to an armed attack and provided a strong visual narrative of the events as they unfolded. The television journalist used compression techniques in order to keep the voiceover script to a minimum and allow the UGV footage the space to speak for itself rather than dominating it (Alysen, 2012).

In the intro, the location of the event was omitted and the abbreviation to the US in the first instance, then the state, Maryland was used. The city location of Annapolis was not mentioned in the script, but could be seen on branded emergency vehicles in the footage. Adjacent to the UGV footage, the script featured three phrases that represented a collection of multiple nouns: at 0.26, where the first responders referred to the police, fire service and other responding agencies; at 0.35, where chaos and confusion was used to describe the melee when the gunman struck; and at 2.03, the ongoing deterioration of the relationship between the gunman and the newspaper was described as a long held grudge. A compression of verbs was used at 2.15, where pressing condolences was used as an introduction to then President Donald Trump offering his support to the victims of the crime.

At 0.35, the script took on a caption-like lexical structure (Alikhani & Stone, 2017) featuring the phrase “Inside the elevator, chaos and confusion” as the UGV footage showed victims crammed into the tight space. This lexical structure was also identified earlier in story 2, Storm as discussed in section 5.2.3.1.

#### 5.2.4.2. Temporality

The television journalist who produced the story had access to a wide variety of shots, and therefore was able to create a sophisticated narrative structure that integrated the UGV with multiple interviewees. The UGV was incorporated throughout the story and the accompanying natural sound was also featured for emphasis. The temporalities applied alongside the UGV are outlined next.

The intro of the story featured a temporal indicator followed by a *present continuous* verb: the police were now calling the event a targeted attack. This framed the story as an update to an event that had occurred earlier, and therefore would have broken during the northern

hemisphere news cycle. Featuring temporal indicators in this way is a common principle of news writing, as it prioritises the outcome over the activity, enabling the story to be updated day after day or hour by hour (Bell, 1995) and therefore featuring the news value of recency. If there is a new outcome to lead with, the previous action can be dropped to further down the story (p. 312). Other temporalities in the intro included use of the *present perfect* tense, with “video’s emerged” and “He’s been charged” that resolved some of the key features of the story while leaving the audience wanting to know more, a technique commonly found in television news intros.

Within the story itself, the voiceover script featured the *simple present* tense to link live commentary with the UGV at 0.25, along with the temporal indicator, “Tonight a new look” as UGV footage showed the eyewitness’ view of the melee. This was reinforced in the words “new look” that were used as a hook to enable the television journalist to bring a fresh angle to a continuing story, again reinforcing the recency news value.

On three occasions, the *present continuous* tense was applied to provide an ‘as live’ commentary alongside the UGV at 0.26, with “first responders racing to get survivors”. At 0.43, the voiceover took on a caption-like or tenseless temporality with “Marjorie Rock ... shooting this cell phone video showing police leading suspect Jarrod Ramos away ...”. This technique was repeated twice alongside the professional footage, and in relation to the UGV again at 2.15, with “President Trump today pressing condolences” with the temporal indicator, “today”, wrapping up the action with a consoling quote from the country’s President. Again, this reflects a caption-like lexical structure (Alikhani & Stone, 2017) seen in the three of the broadcast news stories.

At 0.23, the UGV began with the natural sound effects as the police call the survivors to action with the catch cry, “Come on guys, we gotta go!” Drawing on this natural sound was a technique identified in Postman and Powers (2008), who likened it to a call to the “electronic tent” (p. 28). The same technique was applied at 0.35, where the natural sound as someone cries out, “Somebody was shot,” was featured.

#### **5.2.4.3. Repurposing of UGV**

There was no evidence of UGV repurposing identified within the story.

#### 5.2.4.4. Perspective

The story drew on the UGV to update a story that had occurred outside the New Zealand news cycle, using recently discovered eyewitness footage to provide a first-hand account of a crime witnessed when five people were shot dead at a community newsroom in a smaller American city.

The story's perspective was reinforced through indicators in the intro, such as the phrase "quote 'a targeted attack'". It is not common for the term "quote" to be used within a script, however, it was used here to quote the police and rather than being scripted by the television journalist. Phrases within the voiceover script that reinforced the perspective included at 0.29, "killed in cold blood" and at 0.59, where the ambient audio was present under an interviewee's quote, "screaming at us, 'Get your hands up, get your hands up, get your hands up'".

The story was ranked eighth and appeared in the first section of the bulletin. This reflected the *audio-visual* news value of the extraordinary eyewitness UGV, despite the fact that the proximity of the location that was not particularly relevant to a New Zealand audience.

#### 5.2.4.5. Sources

The intro to the story features the phrase, "New video's emerged ..." referring to the UGV and this gave the content prominence within the story. Treating UGV in this way is a departure from traditional work practices, where the source of non-professional footage is not often highlighted. Therefore, by highlighting the content as coming from social media, the study identifies that a value can be placed on the newsworthiness of UGV in the minds of the audience.

The UGV footage came from two sources who witnessed the shooting, one from inside the building and the other from a car outside. The most dramatic UGV was recorded from inside the building by a woman called Marjorie Rock and was used multiple times in the story. Ms Rock was identified as the source of the content in three ways: by an on-screen caption; she was named in the voiceover script; and she was also interviewed on camera. The second piece of UGV was provided by a woman called Cheryl Connor Costello, whose footage was used to provide context to the background information in the voiceover script.

The footage was captioned only, likely because the role her UGV played within the story was smaller than Rock's.

#### **5.2.4.6. Shareability**

The story was coded with a news value of *shareability*; a coding that is difficult to define (Harcup and O'Neill, 2017) but considered "likely to generate sharing and comments via Facebook, Twitter and other forms of social media" (p. 1482). Shareability has also been referred to as, "stuff that makes you laugh and stuff that makes you angry" (Newman, 2011, p. 24). There have been few restrictions on the nature of the video content being shared by amateurs, apart from those exercised by platforms like YouTube which has had a restricted viewing setting in place since 2010 (YouTube Help, n.d.). Television news organisations, increasingly drawing on UGV for content, are likely to face challenges when using UGV that crosses ethical boundaries. However, there has been a shift in practice since this story was broadcast. This shift is discussed in the comparison below between the Rampage story above and the coverage of a shooting incident that occurred in New Zealand just nine months later.

On March 15, 2019, an armed gunman broadcast 17 minutes of live video on Facebook as he killed 51 Muslims at prayer and injured 40 others during an attack on two mosques in Christchurch (*New Zealand Herald*, 2019). Rapidly, the footage was shared on social media, resulting in 1.5 million attempted uploads in the first 24 hours (Cheng, 2020). The New Zealand Police and local Muslim-advocacy groups responded by urging anyone who sighted it on social media to take the footage down or report it to the authorities. The New Zealand Office of Film and Literature Classification classified the footage as "objectionable" making it a criminal offence to distribute, copy, or display the video, that would result in 14 years' imprisonment or a fine of up to \$NZ100,000 (Webb-Liddall, 2019).

Among the New Zealand television news media, Sky News New Zealand broadcast "extensive excerpts" from the attacker's live stream broadcast, while TVNZ's One News featured a brief excerpt (Broadcasting Standards Authority, 2019). The Broadcasting Standards Authority received multiple complaints about the broadcasts from members of the public. It ruled that Sky Television New Zealand's coverage showed a higher level of harm than public interest in the detailed depictions of violence shown in the clips and the broadcaster was ordered to pay a fine of \$4,000 (Broadcasting Standards Authority, 2019). However, the complaints against TVNZ's One News coverage were not upheld, as the

Authority found that the broadcaster had played a critical role during a time of crisis (Broadcasting Standards Authority, 2019).

Once the gunman was charged, senior news editors representing New Zealand's major accredited news media companies of TVNZ, Stuff, Mediaworks including Newshub, NZME and RNZ came together and drew up guidelines for how the court trial would be covered. The editors stated they were aware of the public interest in the trial locally and internationally, but also mindful of their role as the "eyes and ears of the public" at a time when many of the victims' friends and families may not have been able to engage in the trial process directly (Alexander et al., 2019). They agreed to a set of rules on the future coverage of the story that minimised the gunman's notoriety and ability to create a platform for his extremist views.

The above discussion demonstrates the power and damage that shared social media can cause and marks a significant step forward undertaken by the New Zealand news media to address the imbalance in power between extremists and the public. The differences in the presentation of each of the two mass shooting stories is significant despite the nine-month time delay between the two, and while it is outside the scope of this study, an example that shows how each story was presented is provided in figure 5.20.

**June 2018**



**March 2019**



**Figure 5.20. A comparison of mass shooters depicted in video walls.**

The image on the left shows an intro to the Rampage story and the image on the right shows the intro to the Christchurch massacre story seven months later. On the left-hand-side, the image on the video wall behind the newsreader featured front-facing picture of the shooter in close up where his identity could be clearly seen. This is compared with the image on the video wall on the right-hand-side, that shows a wider shot of the shooter with his face obscured, dressed in prison clothing and flanked by police officers. It would be difficult to determine his identity.

Greensmith and Green (2015) claim that historic records have indicated that mass random shootings became more common after the introduction of television as a medium. What is more, in 1966, news organisations developed a standard coverage plan after the Texas University killings<sup>8</sup> resulted in the deaths of 17 people (Greensmith & Green, 2015). The plan supported a hypothesis that mass random killings were motivated by the infamy of the perpetrator and the news coverage the killer believed would follow (p. 8). However, in the Christchurch massacre case, the killer has created infamy by self-publishing on a social media platform and the television news organisation censored the content in order to deny him a further platform than he gained through his livestream.

Since the introduction of the Internet, there does not appear to be any literature to help analyse the extent to which any shift has occurred in the approach to reporting local tragedy when UGV is a factor. However, further investigation is outside the scope of this study.

The next story that was analysed was an example of a sport story, and highlights a genre where sources are using social media to circumnavigate gatekeeping within television news.

#### **5.2.5. Warriors (RVO)**

Warriors was a short RVO about rugby league team players whose delayed flight plans meant they were unable to compete in a critical sports tournament. The RVO was of short duration of 58 seconds, and featured an 11 second video selected from a player's Twitter video feed. The story demonstrates how a short burst of UGV can be used as an additional source within a story.

The RVO was identified within the *report* communicative frame, as it was short and up-to-date, and featured *conflictual – dominant* subthemes where a single external 'voice' was unchallenged. It was categorised as *sport* and coded as *international* as it was produced by an international network that had not been edited locally, and also it was a typical example where the UGV had a *supplementary influence* because the footage was not the central focus of the story.

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<sup>8</sup> On 1 August 1966, a lone gunman killed his mother and daughter before killing 15 and wounding 31 others during a mass shooting event at the University of Texas (Wallenfeldt, 2016).



It could be argued that the story features video used by the television journalist to strengthen the audio-visual properties of a generally weak news story. The UGV has also given the story a value of immediacy as it connects the audience with the action of one of the story's participants rather than showing him as a talking head complaining about his plight on camera.

Video-ethnographic style fieldwork and a semi-structured interview were gathered in relation to the use of UGV within television sports news, and these are discussed after the analysis sections.

A transcription of Warriors is presented in figure 5.21.

RT	Vision	Audio	Temporalities
0.00	WS News reader + BG: MCU rugby league player LS two league teams walk out onto stadium field	(News reader): <u>Fresh criticism is being leveled</u> at rugby league officials over the <u>late return</u> of the <u>NRL clubs</u> after <u>representing</u> the <u>Kiwis in the US.</u>	Present continuous
0.09	(video starts) MCU league player walks	(News reader's voiceover): Three days after the England <u>clash</u> in Denver, Warriors stars Issac Luke, Peta Heku and	Simple past
0.14	MCU another league player	Ken Maumalo <u>finally arrived back</u> in New Zealand. The Storm's	
0.17	MS league player walks into a line with team mates	Nelson Asofa Solomona was <u>also delayed</u>	
0.19		getting back to Australia after their plane <u>was stranded</u> by an electrical storm.	
0.24		(I/v Bellamy): <u>I don't know what the hell's going on to be honest.</u> It's not ideal	Simple present
0.27	MCU coach in media conference (caption) Craig Bellamy, Storm Coach	to have, you know, you know guys played, played over there so far away and then you hope, you immediately, be late back for, you know, a game.	Simple past
0.37	LA CU sound desk, picture-in-picture warriors coach still image (caption) Andrew McFadden, Warriors Assistant Coach, TAB RADIO	(I/v McFadden): <u>The whole way they went about it</u> , you know, you know, <u>any consultation with clubs</u> or, or the NRL <u>it was just</u> a, you know, <u>a cash grab</u> , you know in my eyes.	
0.45	(Twitter feed zooms in to reveal video showing model planes hanging from the ceiling of an airport)	(News reader's voiceover): <u>Incredibly</u> , Manly's Martin Taupau <u>still hasn't made it back</u> to Sydney. He <u>only departed</u> the US a few <u>hours ago</u> , <u>posting his frustrations</u> on social media just before he left.	
0.47	(caption): <b>I should book my flight with this airline to get home (emojis)</b> <b>#teamkapowairways</b>		Present perfect
			Simple past
			Past continuous

Figure 5.21. Annotated transcription of the Warriors RVO.

#### 5.2.5.1. Compression

Similar to Story 1, the RVO was a short piece of news with a voiceover script that was limited in detail and reflected the small amount of footage available. Therefore, there were few compressions applied, and only one related to the UGV. At 0.47, the phrase “still hasn’t made it back” was a verbal compression of the multiple actions required of one of the players alongside video from a player’s Twitter feed.

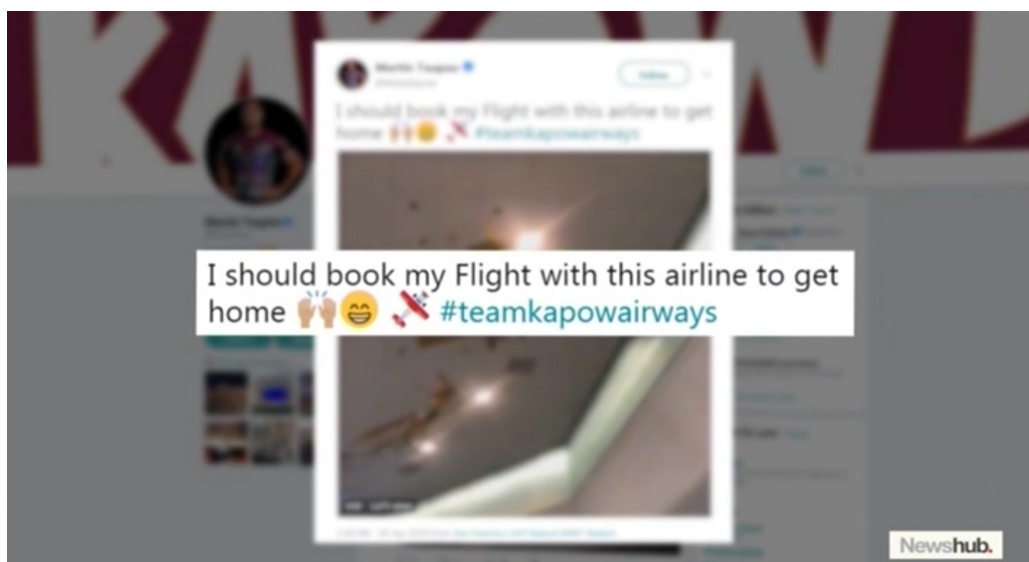
Missing from the story was information about where the rugby league players were travelling from and how long they had been delayed. This is likely to be because of assumptions made by the television journalist that, as a story that featured in the sports section of the news, enthusiasts would have been familiar with the sporting code, the players and the competition they had missed. Abbreviations applied, were “NRL”, National Rugby League, and “US” United States of America, and each of these were commonly applied acronyms that tend to be featured in sports reports.

#### 5.2.5.2. Temporality

The intro for the story was presented in the *present continuous* tense, as the story was still unfolding. There were two temporalities used during the UGV: at 0.47, the *present perfect* tense was used, “still hasn’t made it back” with the temporal indicator “still”; the simple past tense “he only departed” using the modifier “only” for emphasis and followed by the temporal indicator “a few hours ago”, and the *past continuous* tense “posting his frustrations on social media ...”. This created a connection between the timeliness of the social media post with the angle of the story.

#### 5.2.5.3. Repurposing of UGV

The UGV was incorporated into the end of story as evidence of the frustration of a player affected by the flight delay. Three special effects were applied to the presentation of the footage that formed a composite image as seen in figure 5.22.



**Figure 5.22. A composite image featuring elements of the UGV**

The figure above shows the first frame of the composite UGV used in the story. It features a wide shot which was used to identify the home page of the user's Twitter account. From there, the story zoomed inwards to the UGV footage showing model planes hanging from the ceiling of a departure lounge and a textual graphic repeating the user's Twitter comment, "I should book my flight with this airline to get home (emojis) #teamkapowairways".

The use of the UGV shown above had two functions: firstly, by selecting and superimposing the background featuring the user's Twitter page it reinforced the source of the UGV and this is discussed further in section 5.2.5.6. below; and secondly, by selecting and repeating the user's comment (as it appeared in the tweet) it drew the audience's attention to the message behind the tweet.

#### **5.2.5.4. Perspective**

The story has drawn on the UGV to provide a humorous perspective to the story by one of the frustrated rugby league players, Martin Taupau, who was affected by the flight delay. Taupau's video tweet suggested he should have more luck getting home if he booked a flight on a toy plane hanging from the ceiling of the departure lounge.

The voiceover script drew on the news value of *conflict* referring to controversy reinforced in the intro with Fresh criticism. The news values applied in the coding of the RVO included *celebrity* as the story was about well-known sports stars, and *entertainment* that is frequently

applied to lighter stories including sport and human-interest genres. At the point where the UGV was inserted into the story, the three perspective indicators of “Incredibly ... still ... only” were used to reinforce the extreme nature of the story while providing context to the circumstances under which the tweet had been posted.

#### **5.2.5.5. Sources**

The study found that drawing on celebrities’ personal social media posts to personalise a story was a technique frequently identified in sports stories. The source and the social media platform were referred to in the voiceover and also on screen with a wide shot of the source user’s Twitter home page that was used to visually emphasise where the tweeted video had come from. Not only did this technique lengthen the duration of the UGV segment, but it also provided verification of the source of the comment for the audience.

#### **5.2.5.6. Sports news and UGV**

Sports news stories feature in a self-contained segment within television news bulletins, and occasionally cross the threshold of newsworthiness and become part of the main news section also. In 1990, TV One sports news made up just over a quarter of the time given to news as a whole (Comrie, 1996). By 2003, sports news had jumped to 31 percent on TV One and more than 37 percent on TV3 (Comrie and Fountaine, 2005a, p. 34). However, in 2018, the data from this study revealed the sports news section had decreased to between 19 and 20 percent of the news hour on TVNZ and between 16 and 18 percent on TV3 Newshub. This is a new finding, however, an explanation for this decrease has not been explored as it is outside of the parameters of the study.

Video ethnographic-style field notes and a semi-structured interview were conducted to gain insight into the challenges and opportunities faced by television sports journalists when UGV was a factor. Two participants included a senior sports journalist referred to as participant 3, and a senior sports news editor referred to as participant 4.

Participant 3 said he often used UGV in sports stories as it enabled him to tell the story in a positive way rather than limiting it to the traditional approach that featured conflict and results of a competition. Video ethnography was recorded as the participant found what he considered to be an interesting piece of UGV on social media that was judged to be

newsworthy for broadcast. The footage featured an act of sportsmanship at an American baseball championship that was recorded by a member of the crowd who shared it on Facebook. The network's editorial team decided the story would be suitable as a heart warmer to end the bulletin with. The UGV footage had originally been posted on social media 24 hours earlier, so because of this time lag, the participant used Google to search whether any of the American television networks had updated it. He found one network had added footage of the two sportsmen when they were childhood friends that would bring added colour beyond the original social media posting. The network's foreign desk team arranged for the story to be cleared for use and made available for the participant to edit as a story.

However, the format of the American footage made it difficult to work with as it featured split screens and on-screen branding graphics. Networks prefer to use their own branding on stories, thereby tailoring it for a local audience. Figure 5.23 shows a computer screen during the editing of the UGV footage that featured the branding and graphics of an international supplier.



**Figure 5.23. On-screen graphics and effects that could not be removed through editing.**

In the figure above, using Premier Pro editing software, the video image on the left side shows the network's branding in blue featuring a caption, "Competitors and Friends" and the reporter's byline, "Jeff Wagner Reporting" that obscures part of the image of the

individual featured in the story. The video image on the right is a composite showing a split screen of a second individual next to a baseball, and again, features a caption in the network's blue branding. The participant commented that the split screen image was impossible to deconstruct for editing, especially when combined with the caption graphic. Therefore, the original UGV footage was re-sourced from the supplier instead.

The difference in time zones between New Zealand and America meant delays in the request being actioned, putting the participant under pressure to deliver a story in time for the bulletin deadline that was fast approaching. When it was finally received, one of the shots of the players was very short and therefore not long enough to be captioned. The participant had to alter his voiceover script to include the player's name, and delete other details to shorten the voiceover so that it would not exceed the duration of the footage available. Despite these challenges, the story was completed, checked and broadcast as an end of bulletin item as had been planned. The participant reflected on the challenges of working with UGV:

Most of the time I'd say, probably eight out of 10 times when we're doing social media content, it's just the raw footage. So, you know, it's clean footage and overlay and it's edited by itself so a lot easier to work with. Then, this instance you've just come along where it just happens to be, you know, where I am working on someone else's edited story so it's pretty difficult.

(Participant 3)

In the comment above, the participant highlighted the challenges when editing UGV footage that had been sourced from an affiliate network, that may have applied different editorial decisions towards the production of a story. This included issues such as the network's own on-screen branding, but may also include editing the story to a different news angle, duration, or incorporating it into additional footage. These factors highlight the challenges faced when television journalists incorporate UGV into internationally-source news stories.

Participant 4 said there were challenges in the production of sports stories, many of which the audience would not be aware of. The findings begin with an opening comment that solves an issue frequently faced by workers in television news:

With tv there is a big gap always between someone who is willing to talk to a print journalist and then the gap is getting that person to talk on camera, isn't it? That can be quite difficult at times. So, in some ways, you know, social media bridges that gap for tv people.

(Participant 4)

The comment above relates to a television journalist's reliance on UGV as an alternative when members of the public do not want to be interviewed. The participant explained that in a "sports mad" country like New Zealand, sports people often did not want to go on camera as they felt they would be scrutinised. He said television news' 15-second interview quotes were the aspect of a story that people remembered most, therefore interviewees often felt they would be judged widely for what they had said. He considered this conflicted with the fact that people were more willing to express themselves on social sites, where millions could see them.

The participant gave a recent example where a former New Zealand sportsperson had posted comments on social media, rather than speaking directly to the news team. The sportsperson had been speaking to a number of media about a contentious issue that would have significant impact on the local sports scene, but did not want to be quoted on the matter. Participant 4 felt a breakthrough had been made when the sportsperson agreed to be interviewed via Skype video-conferencing for the story. However, the sportsperson later declined to take part and posted their comments on the social media platform, Instagram. In participant 4's view, the example demonstrated how social media gave the individual the power to control their message and evade the professional practices of journalism. The participant said this was seen more and more frequently in television news work, "because you know, in sport, people have so much to lose" (Participant 4), adding:

Social media is, or some element of social media, is a part of almost every journalist's stories now ... because they are constantly monitoring you know, Instagram, Facebook, and whether some of that content ends up in the story it provides background or a bit of context, it's just part of everything now.

(Participant 4)

In the statement above, participant 4 suggested that sports people preferred to comment on their own social media platforms rather than as a participant of a story mediated and produced



by a television journalist. Rather than being a professional-amateur issue, this is an act of professional sportspeople mediating themselves and finding a way to control their own messages.

Participant 4 also said that, nowadays, sports organisations had their own media teams who had become accustomed to recording their own video footage and supplying it to the television networks. However, a difficulty with relying on others to deliver content was that the hard questions still needed to be asked, as that was part of the point of journalism.

The next story to be analysed provides an example of how UGV is used by people in positions of power.

#### **5.2.6. Ardern**

The next story, Ardern, featured UGV of New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern announcing a family support policy on camera on the social media platform Instagram while holding her newborn baby. It demonstrated a common tactic by Ardern to circumnavigate traditional methods and make public announcements via social media rather than through media conferences and interviews with journalists. However, this was the first time she had used a social media platform to announce the implementation of a new funding policy.

The story featured the *reportage* communicative frame as it provided a greater breadth of information than was typical of a report, and it featured a *conflictual – contest* subtheme where two opposing views were structured adversarially. It was categorised as *health and welfare*.

A transcription of the story is presented in figures 5.24, 5.25 and 5.26.

RT	Vision	Audio	Temporalities
0.00	<i>Opening titles</i> (MCU 2 Newsreaders with newsroom in background)	(News reader 1): Kia Ora, good evening. The government five-billion dollar families' package <u>kicks in from today, and new mum Jacinda Ardern is among those celebrating.</u>	Simple present
0.09		(News reader 2): It's part of the government's overall goal <u>to lift 64-thousand children out of poverty by 2020.</u> Lisette Reymer reports.	
0.19	(video starts) (split screen) LOF CU Rebecca Shrubshall <b>ROF CU Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern</b>	(Reporter's voiceover): <u>These two mums are celebrating today.</u>	Present continuous
0.26		(I/v Shrubshall): I'm absolutely <u>thrilled.</u>	Simple present
0.29		(Ardern): <u>I'm really proud of it.</u>	
0.30		(Reporter's voiceover cont.): Jacinda Ardern <u>taking leave</u> of maternity leave	Present continuous
0.31		to launch the <u>families package</u> , <u>from her couch with her own family close by.</u>	
0.34		(Ardern): <u>I'm going to sit here with my human hot-water bottle.</u>	Future continuous
0.43		(Reporter's voiceover): While across the city, single mother of two, Rebecca Shrubshall <u>also has her mind on keeping warm.</u>	Present continuous
0.46	BCU Shrubshall side view	And finally, <u>being</u> able to afford it.	

Figure 5.24. Annotated transcription of Ardern page one of three.

RT	Vision	Audio	Temporalities
0.49	CU Shrubshall ROF	(I/v Shrubshall): Putting on the heater when it's really, really cold in the mornings and when it's cold at nights <u>I can actually warm the room without worrying about what that's going to do to our bill.</u>	Simple present
0.52	CU Shrubshall		
0.53	(caption) Rebecca Shrubshall, Eligible Mother		
1.01	WS interior of community centre with parents and babies	(Reporter's voiceover): She's one of 3-hundred-and-84 thousand families who, by the time the government's package <u>is fully rolled out</u>	Simple future
1.06	MS Rebecca Shrubshall and kids	<u>will be</u> on average	
1.09	MCU daughter tilts up to mother (caption) \$75	<u>75 dollars better off each week.</u>	
1.12	CU Shrubshall	(I/v Shrubshall): I make ends meet but it does mean a lot of juggling.	Simple present
1.15	CU boy child from side, pans R to young girl	so <u>this will ease the pressure.</u>	Simple future
1.17	CU condensation on window	(Reporter's voiceover): <u>There's</u> also a	Simple present
1.19	(caption): Winter Energy Payment, \$20.46 pw for singles Families Package	winter energy payment for beneficiaries and superannuation recipients. Twenty dollars a week for singles, or	Simple future
1.25	\$31.82pw for couples and parents	30 dollars for couples and people with children. Then there's	
1.28	MS parent with baby (caption): Best Start, \$60pw for 1-3 years	Best Start, babies born from today in any family <u>will land</u> a 60-dollar per week bonus for at least a year, and in some cases, up to three. Plus paid parental leave <u>is also being bumped up</u> from 18 to 22 weeks.	
			Present continuous

**Figure 5.25. Annotated transcription of Ardern page two of three.**

RT	Vision	Audio	Temporalities
1.39	CU parent hugs child (caption): Paid Parental Leave, 18, up 4, 22, 26 weeks by 2020	(Reporter's PTC): But National Party leader Simon Bridges <u>has</u> <u>slammed it all as a "spray and</u> <u>walk away" policy.</u> And he says	Present perfect
1.44	MCU Reporter	<u>we need to be targeting those who</u> need it most.	
1.55	MCU National Leader (graphic) Simon Bridges, National Leader	(I/v Bridges): <u>If you did that you</u> <u>can do much more to alleviate</u> <u>poverty</u> and issues that lower income earning New Zealanders have, particularly when there are so many costs being piled on them at the moment.	Simple present
2.06	CU Minister (graphic) Carmel Sepuloni, Social Development Minister	(I/v Sepuloni): <u>I find that really</u> <u>difficult to swallow given that they</u> <u>were planning on blanket tax cuts,</u> with 400-million dollars going to the top 10 percent of income earners in New Zealand. <u>That's not targeted at all, and that</u> <u>wasn't the way that we wanted to</u> <u>spend money.</u>	
2.22	MCU daughter and mother, pans L to son	(Reporter's voiceover): How they <u>did spend</u> the money, welcomed by this Kiwi family at home and	Simple past
2.27	<b>CU Prime Minister and baby</b>	this one on Facebook <u>today.</u>	
2.29		<b><u>(Prime Minister): That was all I</u></b> <b><u>really wanted to, to say.</u></b>	Simple past
2.31		(Reporter's voiceover): Lisette Reymer, Newshub.	

Figure 5.26. Annotated transcription of Ardern page three of three.

### 5.2.6.1. Compressions

The story consisted of short bursts of UGV accompanied by natural sound, and these were used sparingly along with graphics to deliver numeric information. Two verbal compressions were used in the story. The first, appeared in the intro where the colloquialism “kicks in” was a compression used to describe the implementation of a new government policy. The

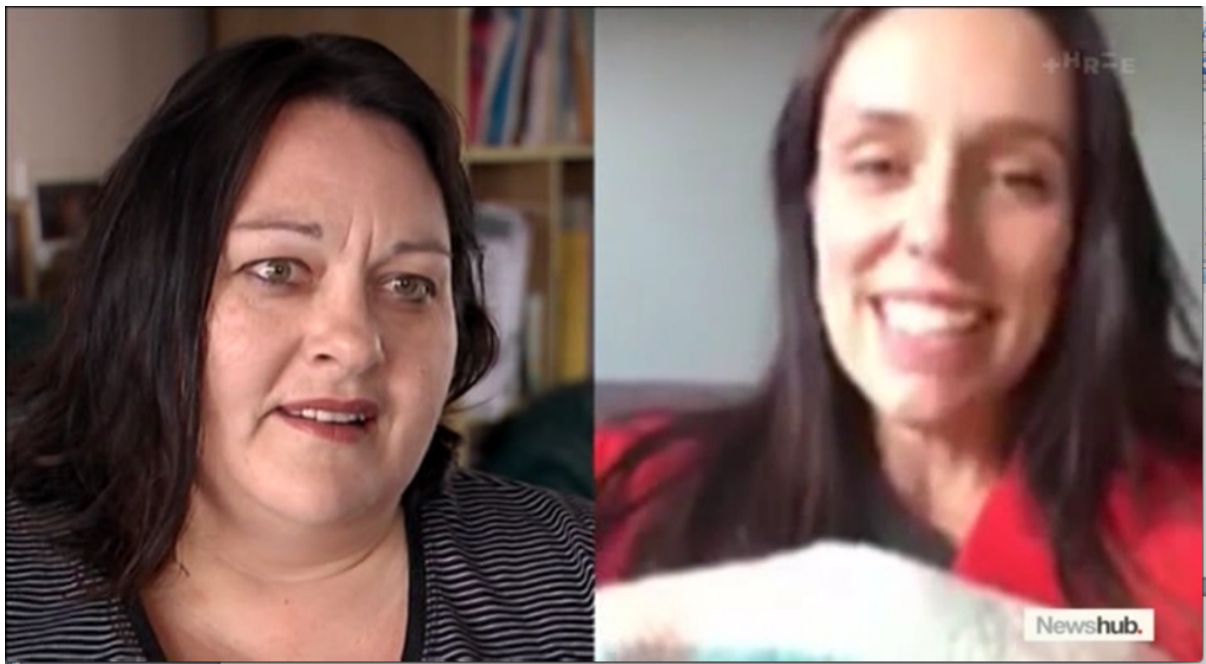
second related to the UGV at 0.19 and described how “two mums are celebrating” and combined the two split-screen elements of Rebecca Shrubshall on the left, and Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, under one act. Both of these compressions also were the subjects of temporal moves discussed in the next section.

#### **5.2.6.2. Temporality**

The *simple present* tense was the predominant temporality within this story, starting with the intro reporting that, “The government five-billion-dollar families’ package kicks in ...” and applying a temporal marker, “... from today”. The video started with UGV of the Prime Minister at 0.19, accompanied by a voiceover in the *present continuous* tense with “These two mums are celebrating today”. This led into two quotes, including UGV at 0.29 of Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern exclaiming, “I’m really proud of it” in relation to the policy. The *present continuous* tense was used to set up a second burst of UGV at 0.34, with “Jacinda Ardern taking leave of maternity leave to launch the families’ package”. The final piece of UGV footage was introduced at 2.27, where the voiceover links the story back to the footage of Ardern using the *simple past* tense “How they did spend the money, welcomed by this Kiwi family at home” then a shift to the *simple present* “and this one on Facebook today” using the temporal indicator “today”. By using the present tense, rather than reporting on the Facebook video in the past tense, presents the clip as if was happening at that moment. In this way, the television journalist has eluded the time gap between the posting of the UGV clip and the broadcast of the ensuing story.

#### **5.2.6.3. Repurposing of UGV**

In order to juxtapose the UGV of Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern as a mother alongside the professional footage of a mother who was a member of the general public, a split screen was applied at 0.19. In their most common form, a split screen consists of two heads each occupying one half of the screen and look slightly inward towards each other, and they should be matched in size, style and picture quality (Yorke, 2013). However, the UGV was of a lower quality than the professional footage, but its news value was high as it was one of the first times the Prime Minister’s baby had featured on television. For that reason, the content of the video has over-ridden any quality concerns the television journalist may have had. The treatment is shown in figure 5.26. below.



**Figure 5.27. A split screen shows professional footage and UGV in the same frame.**

The figure above shows how the story presented two comments on the same subject. The mother on the left-hand-side first exclaimed she was “absolutely thrilled” and the Prime Minister on the right-hand-side appeared to respond to her with “I’m really proud of it.” This provided a strong start to the story, framed in the voiceover, as “These two mums are celebrating today.” The use of the split screen demonstrated a form of visual compression that enabled two interviewees to be presented within a time frame that was shorter than the normal time it would have taken to transition from one shot to the next.

#### **5.2.6.4. Perspective**

The story was an issue-based example, one that covers topics such as movements in the economy or in health and welfare, and requires reporting teams to work harder to find pictures with which to illustrate them (Alysen, 2012, p. 173). In this case, the television journalist has used personalisation as a depoliticising tool to incorporate, not only the Prime Minister as a mother, but also Rebecca Shrubshall as an affected member of the general public in order to make a statement about a much wider group of people. This framing has made it difficult for opposing political views to be heard at 1.55 from Leader of the National Party Simon Bridges, and from Social Development Minister Carmel Sepuloni at 2.06.

The UGV made up 18 percent of the total story. The use of the Prime Minister’s viewpoint was emphasised in the intro with the newsreader’s line, “new mum Jacinda Ardern is among those celebrating.” It continued at 0.34 with Ardern’s quote, “here with my human hot water bottle” which established a theme of ‘keeping warm’ that can be associated with affordability and was reinforced directly afterwards in the voiceover description of Rebecca Shrubshall as having “her mind on keeping warm”.

UGV was also incorporated at the end of the story, where a closing quote from Ardern at 2.29, “That is all I really wanted to, to say”. It did not contribute to the perspective of the story, but demonstrated the control Ardern had over the treatment of the story through the use of her own UGV. This is discussed further in section 5.2.6.5.

The story was coded with three news values: *magnitude*, as the story, which was about a funding package for families, would have an impact on a significant number of people; *follow up* as the policy had been announced previously, and the story marked the day the policy was implemented; and the UGV featuring the Prime Minister and her baby gave the story a news value of *power elite*.

The UGV increased the newsworthiness of the story, as it had been recorded within days of the Prime Minister giving birth to her first child. The Prime Minister was only the second elected head of a country to give birth in office, after Pakistan’s late Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. Accordingly, news of the birth had gained significant attention in media outlets around the world, leaving audiences keen to see images of the new baby at the time the Ardern story went to air. However, from an editorial judgement perspective, it was easy to understand how the appeal of the UGV of a newborn and her Prime Minister mother would have been exploited by the network that produced the story, particularly because of the timeliness being so soon after the baby was born. The story was one of only eight UGV stories out of a data set of 133 that were ranked at the top of the news bulletin and it also appeared in a top story highlights package that appeared midway through the news bulletin. A transcription of the highlights package is presented in figure 5.28.

RT	Vision	Audio	
2.36	<i>(MCU 2 Newsreaders with newsroom in background, network watermark bottom R throughout)</i>	<i>(Newsreader 1):</i> Here's a recap of our top stories tonight.	
2.39	<i>(graphic)</i> Headlines		
2.40	CU PM's baby <i>(caption)</i> Newshub. Headlines  <b>CU Jacinda Ardern holds baby</b>	The government's five-billion dollar families package kicks in from today and <u>new mum Jacinda Ardern is among those celebrating.</u> As	Top story
2.48	WS parents and babies in community centre, pan L across the room	part of the <u>government's overall goal to lift 64-thousand children out of</u>	
2.52	MS mother and two kids	<u>poverty by 2020.</u> And when it's fully rolled out,	
2.55	CU daughter, tilt up to mother	384- thousand families will be,	
2.58	MCU mother and daughter side on, pan L to show son also	on average, 75 dollars better off each week.	
3.02	<i>(wipe)</i> BCU petrol pump	<i>(Newsreader 2):</i> Auckland motorists filling up today will have noticed a	
3.03	MS motorist pumps petrol, tilt up	bigger hole in their pocket than usual. The new regional	
3.06	CU queue of cars parked by petrol station	fuel tax kicked in and it's worrying	
3.08	MS rear of small car	families already struggling to get by.	

**Figure 5.28. A transcription of the mid-bulletin highlights package.**

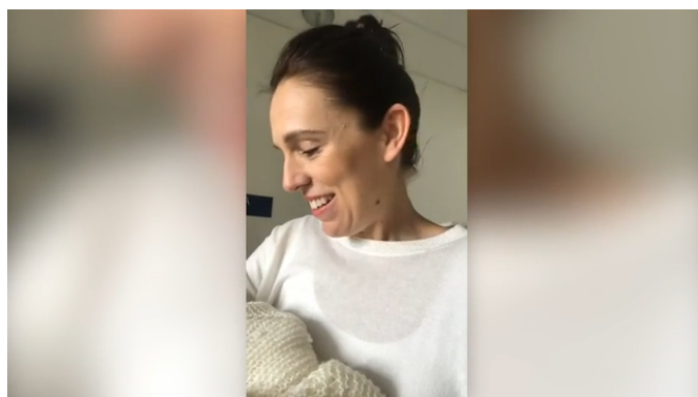
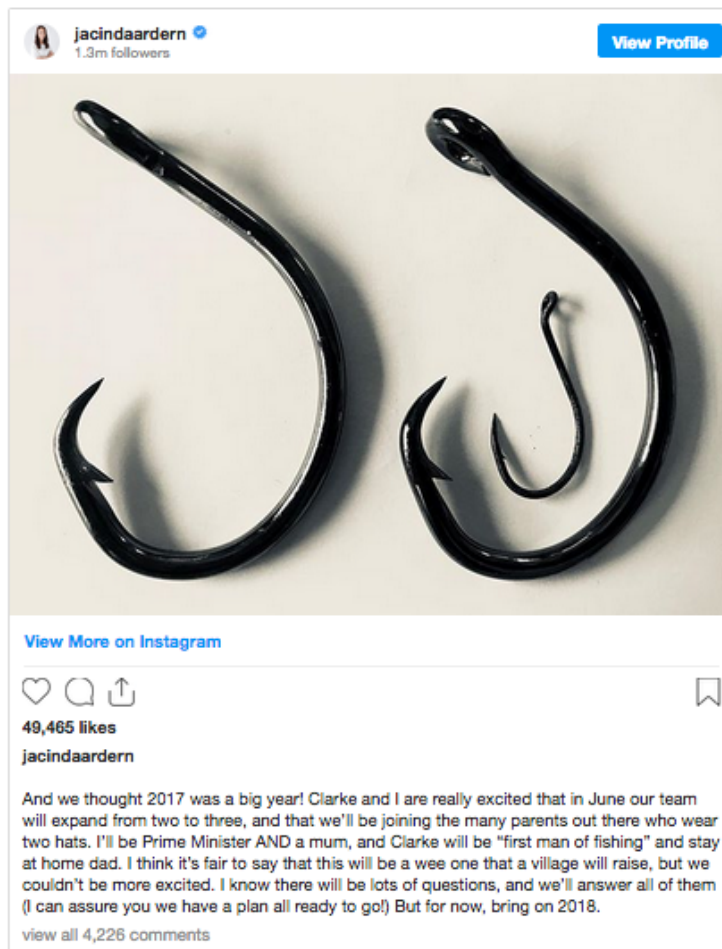
In figure 5.28, the UGV appeared at the start of the mid-bulletin highlights package and was framed in the voiceover at 2.40, with “new mum Jacinda Ardern is among those celebrating”.



The aim of placing the Prime Minister's baby footage at the start of the highlights package would have been to capture the audience's interest rather than emphasise the news of the government's initiative. The second story in the highlight's package was about a tax hike that had caused a rise in the cost of petrol, that provided a balance to the Ardern story. Both stories featured the news value of *magnitude* as each would have had a significant impact on the livelihoods of a large number of New Zealand individuals and their families.

#### **5.2.6.5. Sources**

The source of the UGV, New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, was not acknowledged by an on-screen caption, and the voiceover only referred to her by name and not by her title. This reinforced the fact that the news production team judged that New Zealand audiences would immediately recognise their Prime Minister. In addition, this was not the first time Ardern had used the social media platform to address the public. The announcement of her pregnancy and the birth of her baby while in office were also announced on social media, as shown in figure 5.29.



June 2018: Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has taken to social media from her Auckland Hospital bed to personally thank New Zealand for the support and kindness during her pregnancy. Source - Facebook/Jacinda Ardern

NZ Herald

**Figure 5.29. Two of the Prime Minister's announcements using social media.**

The first image shows an Instagram post by Ardern featuring three fish hooks that and the heima matau symbolises good health and happy future in te ao Māori. The second figure features a frame from a video posted on Facebook by the Prime Minister to announce the birth of her baby daughter.

The analysis of Ardern has shown Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern was able to launch a nationwide initiative on Instagram, knowing the audience it would reach would be amplified when it was broadcast by television news. The traditional professional boundaries of journalism were undermined and the message was controlled by the Prime Minister, reinforced by her final comment in the story, at 2.29, which was “That was all I really wanted to, to say”. By featuring herself and her baby at the centre of the launch, the Prime Minister demonstrated ownership of a policy, while aligning herself with New Zealanders who would benefit from it. In this way, she was able to control her message and share it among her followers who numbered 924,000 at the time of the broadcast.

The study found other examples within the data where UGV had been used in this way, including a story that featured Australian politician Barnaby Joyce who used a social media post to justify his actions after being caught on camera bullying a photographer during a street confrontation. Social media posts such as these serve as direct linkage between the general public and the elite, and allows the circumventing of journalistic gatekeepers along with the freedom to articulate ideology without contest (Engesser et al., 2017).

The next story to be analysed demonstrated how visually sensational UGV was used out-of-context to attract audiences to a story.

#### **5.2.7. Tourist Tax**

The Tourist tax story featured two short bursts of UGV, and these made up just 13% of the total footage. The story satisfied the communicative frame of *reportage* as it was 28 seconds longer than a standard report of one minute 30, and went beyond the basic facts to include detailed background information. A subtheme of *consensual – community* was applied as the report had the purpose of informing the community. It was categorised as *economics* as it related primarily to the business aspect of tourism, and it was locally produced. The UGV was featured only in the first few seconds of the story and is shown on the first page of the three-page transcription provided. However, a full transcript of the story is provided for context. See figures 5.30, 5.31 and 5.32.

RT	Vision	Audio	Temporalities
0.00	WS News presenter + BG still image:	(News reader intro): Kia Ora, good evening. <u>A tourist tax is coming.</u> The government is proposing to charge visitors up to	Present continuous
0.01	MS plane in flight (caption) TOURIST TAX		
0.05	(zoom) Video-wall still image: CU hand holds passport (caption) \$25-35	thirty-five dollars to come here from late next year. On top of that <u>there'd be a</u>	Simple future
0.10	Video-wall still image: Mountain scene (caption) + \$9	nine-dollar fee so the government can screen travellers before they arrive at the border.	
0.15	Video-wall still image: OS tourist looks at horizon (caption) Raise: \$57-80m	<u>It's expected</u> to raise between fifty-seven and eighty million dollars to go towards tourism and conservation infrastructure.	Simple present
0.25	Video-wall still image: OS tourist road to horizon (caption) Australian, Pacific Island Visitors Exempt	But not everyone <u>will have to</u> pay. Australian and Pacific Island visitors <u>are exempt</u> . Political editor Tova O'Brien reports.	
0.31	(video starts) <b>MS man defecating in open bush, (face has been blurred out)</b>	(fx) <b>"This guy here is going for a (beep) right on our beach and here in New Zealand."</b>	Simple past
0.41	<b>LS tourist defecating behind camper van (tourist highlighted)</b>	(Reporter's voiceover) When Newshub <u>was given</u> a video of <u>tourists defecating at Kaikoura,</u>	
0.44	Tourism minister speaking in Parliament	<u>we knew the country had hit peak freedom camper.</u>	Simple present
0.47	MCU tourists with back packs on huddle together	(Tourism Minister, Kelvin Davis): <u>Doing nothing is not an option.</u>	
0.49	WS tourists queueing outside public toilets in native area	(Reporter's voiceover): And the "something" is a tourist tax.	Simple future
0.50	MS tourists tramping along walking track	The government <u>hasn't worked</u> out how the money <u>will be split,</u>	
0.53	LA plants in f/g and trampers b/g	but expect <u>better facilities</u> for	Simple present
0.56	MCU trampers	tourists paid for by tourists.	
0.57	LS tourists outside tourist bus		

Figure 5.30. Annotated transcription of Tourist Tax page one of three.

RT	Vision	Audio	Temporalities
0.59	MCU Conservation Minister in Parliament (caption) Eugenie Sage, Conservation Minister	(Minister Sage): The infrastructure, the tourism facilities, the walks, the huts, the campsites, ah the visitor centres and the infrastructure being nature.	Simple present
1.07	LA generic shot of travellers walking and pushing luggage trolley	(Reporter's voiceover): Visitors <u>won't be paying anything</u>	Future continuous
1.09	WS international arrivals gate	until mid-next year and their views are mixed.	Simple present
1.11	LA tourist generic bodies	(I/v Tourist): <u>It's already</u> very expensive in here so why, no	
1.12	CU tourist at airport wearing glasses	(laughs)	
1.16	CU tourist with studs	(I/v Tourist B): <u>It's not going to</u> hinder me from coming of course, but it <u>will</u> put me off	Present continuous
			Simple future
1.20	CU tourist with backpack on	(I/v Tourist C): I think most places have that, so <u>is not</u> the worst, it's not an awful lot of money.	Simple present
1.24	MS National Party leader walks through agricultural trade show stands	(Reporter's voiceover): National believes it <u>will put people off coming here</u>	Simple future
1.27	MCU National Party leader surrounded by four 'minders' (caption) Simon Bridges, National Leader	(I/v Bridges): Yes, I think it does you know. I think <u>we've got to</u> look and be mindful of what we do in this are because tourism is the <u>golden goose</u> .	Present perfect
1.28	LA generic shot of tourist standing by luggage	(Reporter's voiceover): But the tourism minister says that the likelihood of visitor	Simple present
1.34	LA generic shot of tourists wheeling luggage	numbers dropping is <u>minimal</u> .	
1.37 1.39	WS travellers at international airport	Though he isn't sure exactly what that minimal means.	

Figure 5.31. Annotated transcription of Tourist Tax page two of three.

RT	Vision	Audio	Temporalities
1.41	CU Tourism Minister (caption) Kelvin Davis, Tourism Minister	(I/v Davis): Well um, if you say five-point-one-million visitors instead <u>there's</u> five-million visitors or five ( <u>reporter: is that what it is?</u> ) Nuh, no, I'm just saying, you know, what's minimal?	Simple present
1.52	WS plane comes in to land	(Reporter's voiceover): Here's how <u>it will</u> work. People either <u>pay</u> when they apply for a visa	Simple future
1.56	(graphic) desk top computer shows "visit New Zealand" (caption) Electronic Travel Authority	or through a new electronic travel authority. They log onto a website, fill out a form and pay nine-bucks for the pleasure.	Simple present
2.01	(caption) ETA \$9 Tourist Levy: \$25-35	The tourist tax gets paid <u>at this point</u> too.	
2.06	CU tourism industry expert (caption) Chris Roberts, Tourism Industry Aotearoa	(I/v Roberts): Hopefully it's that easy and painless as possible. But it is a new step for most of our visitors. They can't just jump on a plane and come to New Zealand, they've gotta <u>get permission first</u> .	
2.17	OS woman looks at ESTA on computer screen	(Reporter's voiceover): Australia <u>has</u> a similar system and the United States has the ESTA visa, a time-consuming cumbersome version.	
2.19	CU ESTA website page, scrolling down to questionnaire		
2.24	CU government business expert (caption) Paul Stocks, Business, Innovation & Employment Ministry	(Paul Stocks): I think <u>it'll</u> be a rather <u>lighter touch version</u> than the ESTA.	Simple future
2.29	MCU reporter PTC outside Parliament	(Reporter PTC): The government says this tax <u>will cost next to nothing</u> to collect, couple that with exemptions for our nearest neighbours and critics will find this policy hard to fault. National's <u>beating</u> the drum over the government imposing too many taxes. But because tourists pay this one, kiwis won't be too fussed. Tova O'Brien, Newshub.	Present continuous Simple future

**Figure 5.32. Annotated transcription of Tourist Tax page three of three.**

### 5.2.7.1. Compressions

The UGV footage appeared at the start of the story and was 14 seconds long, and it was accompanied by natural sound for the first 10 seconds and a four-second voiceover. There were compression techniques used in the voiceover script.

### 5.2.7.2. Temporalities

The Tourist Tax story was an example of the use of file UGV or footage held by the network that was not restricted by timeliness, and used by the television journalist as evidence to make sense of a news announcement rather than reporting on a newsworthy event that has just occurred.

There were four temporal shifts in the intro, however, none of these were related to the UGV. However, the temporalities are discussed as they provide an example of scripting to on-screen graphics and this provided background information to the study that may be helpful in future research. Numbers do not translate easily into video stories, and it is understood in the industry that audiences cannot digest more than one number at a time. Therefore, television journalists frequently use onscreen graphics to present numbers, similar in a way to how numbers are used in a PowerPoint presentation. The intro to the story began in the *present continuous* tense, with “A tourist tax is coming,” in order to bring a degree of timeliness to the report as the legislation relating to the new tax initiative had not yet been ratified. The tense shifted to *simple future* at 0.05, when graphics accompanied by voiceover were used to explain the proposal, with, “On top of that there’d be a nine-dollar fee ...”. The script moved to the *simple present* tense at 0.10 “the government can screen travellers”. The pattern of shifts between the *simple future* and the *simple present* tenses was repeated while the graphics continued.

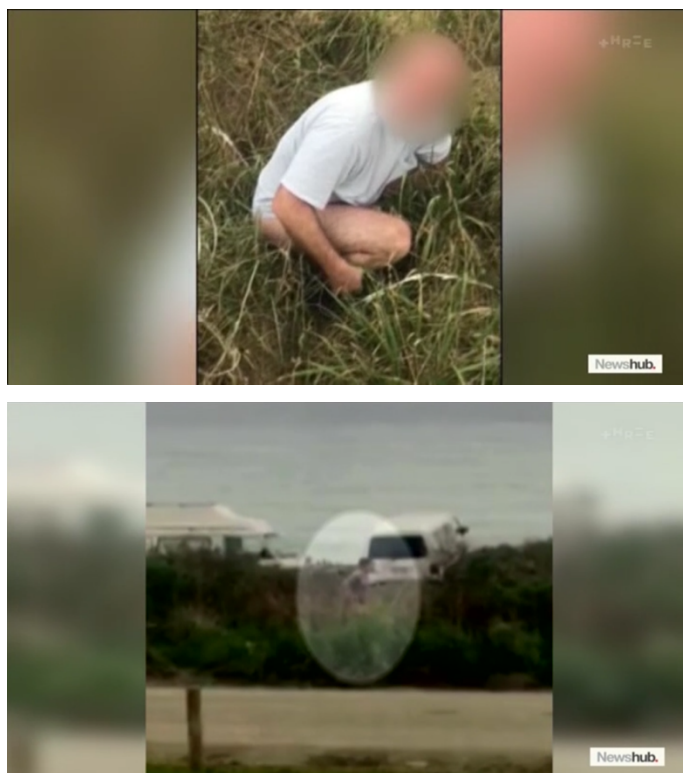
The UGV footage began at 0.31 and featured the voice of the smartphone camera user speaking in the *present continuous* tense as he recorded the footage. He said, “this guy here is going for a (*beep*) right on our beach and here in New Zealand”. This provided a live commentary of what was being shown in the UGV, a technique that has been identified frequently in this analysis chapter. A shot change to a second piece of UGV occurred at 0.41, accompanied by the television journalist’s voiceover written in the *simple past* tense with, “When Newshub was given video ...”. By drawing on the past tense, the television journalist

was able to retrospectively explain how the UGV had been sourced, while the verb “given” suggests that the footage had been an offering rather than specifically sought out. The *past perfect* tense was applied, with “we knew the country had hit peak freedom camper”, a phrase that was used to convey the degree of saturation that the public had reached in relation to the number of freedom camping travellers visiting New Zealand.

Throughout the professional footage that made up the majority of the story, the temporal shifts were consistent with other stories of similar duration where the introduction of new themes and interviewees were common triggers for changes in temporality, primarily between the *simple future* and *simple present* tenses.

### 5.2.7.3. Repurposing of UGV

Because of its graphic nature, a filter was applied to obscure the act of individuals defecating in public in each piece of UGV in order to anonymise the participants and censor the content that screened during early evening viewing, a time when younger viewers and their families are likely to be watching while eating their dinner. These filters are demonstrated in figure 5.33. below.



**Figure 5.33.** Filters have been applied to two pieces of UGV.



In the figure above, the first image shows that a filter was used to obscure the face of the freedom camper who had been recorded in a mid-shot. The second image shows the UGV footage was recorded from a distance and, therefore, the individual was difficult to identify. However, a halo filter was used to direct the audience towards the part of the shot that was relevant to the voiceover script.

Both techniques are commonly applied irrespective of whether footage is professional or amateur content in line with guidelines set out for broadcasters by the Broadcasting Standards Authority (Evans & Kuehn, 2017). Privacy is an area that the Broadcasting Standards Authority considers broadcasters need clear guidance on in order to overcome an assumption that content posted publicly on social media should be a “free-for-all” (p. 71). The point was addressed in the following paragraph:

Broadcasters should therefore be cautious about making too general a plea that the information is public. It is only a starting point, that is relatively easily offset by factors suggesting a person’s privacy interests are seriously (rather than more trivially) engaged – for instance that it reveals sensitive information about them, that it exposes them to ridicule or contempt, or that they are in a vulnerable situation.

(Evans & Kuehn, 2017, p. 71)

#### **5.2.7.4. Perspective**

The story reported on an initiative proposed by the government to introduce a tourist tax aimed at funding ongoing maintenance of tourism and conservation infrastructure. It was ranked at the top of the bulletin, because of the potential effect the new policy might have on the tourism industry, a \$40-billion revenue earner in New Zealand (Tourism New Zealand, 2020). It was coded with the news value of *magnitude* due to the perceived impact the story would have on large numbers of people, and *audio-visual* because of the sensationalised content of the UGV.

There was a conflict of perspectives between the story and the UGV. The story was used to explain proposed new tourism legislation, while the sensationalistic UGV was framed to present evidence the country had become saturated by freedom campers, who were known to have behaved badly when squatting for free in public spaces (*New Zealand Herald*, 2018).

This was reinforced in the voiceover at 0.41, with “When Newshub was given video of tourists defecating at Kaikoura, we knew the country had hit peak freedom camper.” Yet, freedom campers were not referred to elsewhere in the story, neither in the script nor in the footage. This suggests the UGV footage was used for entertainment purposes rather than as part of a report.

#### **5.2.7.5. Sources**

The story identified the sensationalistic footage as UGV but did not identify its sources. However, the means by which the content were received was outlined in the voiceover at 0.41, with “When Newshub was given video of tourists defecating at Kaikoura, we knew the country had hit peak freedom camper.” Both broadcast organisations that were analysed featured portals on their websites and their Facebook pages that invited amateurs to share their UGV with them. These portals can be found on the websites for each at <https://www.newshub.co.nz/home/contact-us.html> and <https://www.tvnz.co.nz/one-news/yourcam>.)

As discussed in section 5.2.7.2., the voiceover accompanying the UGV suggested the news organisations received the footage as an indication of the country’s lack of tolerance towards freedom camping. This perspective was reinforced by the selection and use of a quote from the Tourism Minister at 0.47 where he said, “Doing nothing is not an option.” Accordingly, the television journalist framed the story in a way that challenged the expectations of objectivity and impartiality in journalism, as it clearly presented an inference by the television journalist who crafted the story.

#### **5.2.7.6. Broadcasting standards**

The story presented an example of how UGV judged for its audio-visual news value was used to enhance a story with visual shortcomings in order to attract and entertain audiences. Screening the sensationalistic UGV may well have breached Broadcasting Standards Authority standard 1, “Current norms of good taste and decency should be maintained, consistent with the context of the programme and the wider context of the broadcast” (Broadcasting Standards Authority, 2020). However, there was no evidence of a complaint about the story found in the authority’s web archives. But the example is not unique.

Three years ago, the Broadcasting Standards Authority noticed an increasing number of complaints raising issues about how social media content had been used by mainstream broadcasters. The authority conducted a survey among New Zealand audiences and found that consumers had a higher level of expectation of broadcasters than they applied to themselves (Evans & Kuehn, 2017). The findings of the survey were that,

Despite a strong sharing culture by members of the public, New Zealanders hold broadcasters to a higher standard than they apply to themselves regarding use of social media content. In particular, the research highlights that the public do not consider that broadcasters can take any social media content and use it in the broadcasting context. The public share information on social media expecting that it will remain in the context in which they published it. They do however also acknowledge that in some cases public interest will justify the republication of social media content, for example for the purpose of disseminating information in emergency situations.

(Evans & Kuehn, 2017, p. 5)

The authority acknowledged a threshold of newsworthiness was applied as a filter to broadcast news and this was balanced by the need to protect privacy (p. 5). A set of guidelines was established in 2017 by the Broadcasting Standards Authority to encourage broadcasters to consider the context and intended audiences when UGV is used, as the content could have a significant effect on a person's privacy. See appendix 8.4. for the full Broadcasting Standards Authority statement. TVNZ Editor of Newsgathering Phil O'Sullivan responded to the introduction of the code:

Last year (2017) when this forum came up it was a suggestion that a study from 48 people was representative of the whole country, well we took issue with that. We, to a certain extent, didn't believe that there was a problem there that really needed solving as far as the BSA was concerned.

We take an enormous amount of care on a daily basis trying to make sure we don't breach people's good taste and decency, fairness, all the structures that we operate under as far as the BSA is concerned. There is nothing in it for us to be breaching any of those codes.

(Personal communication, P. O'Sullivan, July, 2018)

In the statement above, Mr O’Sullivan is arguing that the sample size of 48 people surveyed who had found issue with the use of user-generated content by broadcasters was not representative of the wider population of New Zealand. Furthermore, he found that broadcasters such as TVNZ were self-regulating and did not require legislative codes to control the treatment of amateur content. Accordingly, the next part of this chapter discusses how television news requires a team of workers to become directly connected with a story, each of whom contributes to the decision-making and production processes in multiple ways.

### **5.3. Newsroom sociology**

In television news, decisions and practices arise out of systems and roles and routines, collective ways of seeing, tensions between organisational and professional goals, leadership and the contest for status and social capital on the field of practice. McNair (1998) found the sociology of journalism had two broad strands: the first is understanding the impact of journalistic media on the workings of contemporary capitalist societies; and the second is the social determinants of journalistic output and the features of social life and organisation that shape, influence and constrain its form and content (p. 3). This section focuses on the second strand in relation to television news, where the workers include a television journalist who is frequently supported by a story producer, the daily news editor and bulletin editorial team, the video crew and the video editor, and possibly other specialists such as graphic artists, content management co-ordinators and technicians. This does not take into account the on-air workers that include the studio crew including newsreader(s) and the control room director and on-air crew. Drawing on further evidence from the semi-structured interviews and the video-ethnographic style field work, the study drew on comments made by the participants in relation to some of the social determinants present when UGV is a factor in the process of production of television news. The findings provide a contemporary update to ethnographic studies such as Tuchman (1973, 1975, 1976), Schudson (1989) and Schlesinger (1977) and also updates Erjavec and others in the new wave of newsroom studies in the early 2000s.

#### **5.3.1. The role of UGV in television news work**

“Spot news ” (Tuchman, 1973, p.114) is an effective outlet for UGV in the reporting of events that are simple to cover, when an event has been captured by an eyewitness or eyewitnesses on their smartphones. Participant 10 said that UGV gave the audience a sense of immediacy, rather like doubling the reach of your camera crew. He said that one in three to one in four

of the stories he produced drew on UGV, and that drawing on the content had become a significant part of his job. He described how he felt about the use of UGV in spot news reporting:

I think user-generated content is a big part of this newsroom and all newsrooms, and when you're dealing with online, you know it's all about pace [*clicks fingers*] get it out there, I mean any new footage is good footage and every news agency in New Zealand will get it online asap.

(Participant 10)

In the comment above, the participant emphasised the timeliness of news and how the effort of travelling with a video crew to a location in order to gather footage can be eased by using UGV. Journalists often treat spot news as paradigmatic, as participant 10 is demonstrating, as it is unproblematically about real occurrences that can now be accessed via smart phone technology by amateurs. Accordingly, spot news satisfies the cardinal news values of *immediacy* and *drama*. The participant said in exceptional circumstances a story could be completely produced from the amateur content. An example was provided where a report drew on UGV by the eyewitnesses to a police car chase that travelled in the wrong direction on a motorway. In the example, the participant said the news workers tracked the activity on a UHF emergency services scanner and contacted the police, but were unable to send a camera crew to cover the event as the motorway became congested while a car chase unfolded. However, two motorists had posted dash-mounted camera footage from two different perspectives on social media, and their footage was used to provide multi-camera coverage of the incident along with a graphic from Google maps to identify the location and still photos that a woman who lived nearby took from her iPhone. The story led the evening's bulletin.

The participant added that UGV provided an alternative library of pictures that a news library didn't have, and described it as "an instant library taken by the public". For example, during a breaking story the participant would ring the owners of a nearby dairy and ask them if they could you go outside and shoot something on their phone. "We just say, 'Hold your phone this way and whatever you can send us will be much appreciated'."

Some of the changes that contributed to the inclusion of UGV in television news related to the organisational processes rather than the technological advancements by amateur smartphone users. This supports the view of Lahav and Reich (2011) that change is too often

seen in relation to new digital technologies as the chief variable, overlooking the professional, organisational and cultural issues that should also be considered (p. 625). The participant claimed that news organisations tended to use UGV more frequently on weekends than during the week because of lower staffing levels. He added that this was a time when stories were more likely to break outside the main centres therefore social media content became relied upon more frequently. The participant gave an example, where heavy flooding in a rural area earlier in the year had resulted in a teenage double drowning at a popular swimming hole. Because of the time it would have taken a news crew to battle through bad weather to get to the location, much of the footage for the story had been sourced via Facebook from local residents who took video footage out the back windows of their homes as their backyards became flooded. Participant 10 added that contacting the families of people when people were missing or hurt was another effective way of getting footage.

The participant also noticed that, increasingly, amateurs were offering the network their footage unsolicited, “and it’s just a matter of time before they’re shooting it in landscape,” he laughed. Using UGV in this way reflects McLuhan’s (2001) observation that technology is an extension of the human, letting us go further and see clearer. Accordingly, this study has found that UGV enables television journalists to tell stories that, otherwise, would not have been told or the design of a news story would have been different.

### **5.3.2. How UGV affects the design of a news story**

The design of television news stories has historically evolved through news routines from analogue to digital editing, and in doing so, contributed towards the globalisation of television news (Silcock, 2007). Over the past 20 years, the study observed that there has been a move from the television journalist interacting directly with the line-up producer, to the current practice of working with a designated story producer who supports two to three reporters as their stories are developed from inception to bulletin line-up. However, the incorporation of UGV has meant an even greater number of professional workers are contributing to the design of a news story. The study found story producers helped the reporters find social media video content on YouTube, Snapchat, Facebook or Instagram, although much of the initial search fell to the junior staff, who monitored the social media aggregator site Tweet Deck<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Tweet Deck is a multi-track platform that tracks multiple feeds through a search for key words, and therefore display multiple social media posts on any given topic. Results were filtered by text ‘type’ such as video or

throughout the day. The practice of junior staff searching for content was an important factor in the example of the “Competitors and Friends” story discussed in section 5.2.5.6. In the example, the study found that the identification of desirable UGV led to news decision-making, and created a new step in the newsgathering process whereby juniors or ‘digital natives’ (Bennett et al., 2008) have the right skill set to be more successful at finding relevant social media than senior journalists. However, the comments by the participants suggested that verification of UGV was an area that required more consistent attention at all levels of newsroom practice. It also suggests that television news workers would benefit from further training in simple and expedient practical strategies when checking the accuracy and validity of footage that is not their own.

### 5.3.3. Verification

The discipline of verification is one of the pillars of journalism. Hermida (2015) claimed it was a core normative practice in journalism, that defined acceptable professional behaviour and served as a fundamental boundary to differentiate the occupational turf of journalism from other forms of public communication. Both television networks were found to provide no formalised instructions for their staff on how user-generated content should be verified (S. Bristow, personal communication, June 20, 2022; M. Lee, personal communication, July 13, 2022). According to Lee, news and current affairs teams use the same editorial and legal approach applied to all forms of newsgathering. This includes addressing the following questions:

- Where has the content been sourced from?
- Can we identify who filmed the content, features in it or it’s about? Have we made contact with them?
- What details have we been able to confirm?
- What do we see? What don’t we see? What’s the context to the content?
- What are our editorial considerations for potential use of the content?

(M. Lee, personal communication, July 13, 2022)

During the observational field work, the UGV content was ingested into the newsroom’s content management system, the metadata of a clip described the social media source, and the consenting process traced through emails between the source and the television journalist

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still images, and then the Twitter interface was used to interact with the source through a ‘tweet’ to gain the approval for the network to use the content for broadcast.

to the wider newsroom group. In this way, verification practices were captured and the details became electronically attached to the footage when it was loaded into the news library. However, the participants each shared their own perspectives on the way they applied verification to their work as described next.

Participant 10 said the verification of UGV was an area a television journalist had to be particularly diligent about. The participant recalled a producing a story that featured UGV footage of an earthquake that had been checked by a number of colleagues and later discovered to have been from an earthquake that had occurred in a different country three or four months earlier.

Participant 6 relied on a “gut feeling” about the accuracy of the footage. However, this could become complicated by tight deadlines as a television journalist who got “too forensic” could miss an opportunity to publish something ahead of the competition. The participant proposed that an alternative to verification was to describe UGV footage with a caveat, such as “this video it’s claimed was posted from ...” So, when this occurred, it was more about covering the organisation than providing additional information of interest for the viewer.

Participant 6 preferred to use their own video content because it provided complete control of verification and the origin of the content. The participant said that in an increasingly connected world there were many more people capturing and sharing content on their smart phones, and news organisations did not have the spread of cameras or reporters that there used to be. Therefore, UGV was considered the next line of storytelling. These comments mark a shift in thinking by the heads of news organisations who would have spurned the idea of drawing on social media for content in the early days of the introduction of Web 2.0.. This point was expanded by another participant, who remarked on the irony:

It’s funny, you know, I remember ... the news bosses would say, ‘Oh well, you can’t just put things up on Twitter’. You know, you had to go and make sure it’s true and so ... and we kind of went back and we said, so somebody sends a press release to you emailed with the words press release written on it, you take that and write up on it without questioning it, so why is it different from someone who tweets out stuff about their clients?

(Participant 5)



In the quote above, Participant 5 was commenting on the treatment of two different sources of non-journalistic content. The participant recalled with irony that news managers were more skeptical about the validity of a Twitter post than a media release, yet both featured a subjective viewpoint – either of a member of the public or public relations writing on behalf of a business client – both of which required substantiating. This suggests that, in the past 20 years, news practice has evolved to a point that user-generated material has become embedded in news practice to a point that it is no longer considered outside normal information sourcing.

Other participants in the study provided a broader perspective on the verification of UGV that went beyond the New Zealand nexus, such as participant 6 who had worked internationally and during the Arab Spring uprisings. The participant said New Zealand television journalists were inclined to be more trusting as they were not exposed to the volume and deceptions associated with UGV that international journalists were. Most of the people who posted on social media were not setting out to mislead but there was a real danger that they could do so, and local journalists needed more awareness of the potential for this to happen. This point is particularly relevant when considering the trust placed by television journalists on UGV already filtered by official sources as discussed in section 5.2.3.6. where the participants were found to rely heavily on organisations' Facebook pages.

#### **5.3.4. Preferred social media sites**

News organisations' Facebook accounts received comments, likes and postings of video content throughout the day. Participant 5 commented, "That's user-generated content on a platter, you know, somebody sending it into us and it's video ready to go." The participant said the whole newsroom felt connected through the organisation's Facebook page, where notifications of any activity were received by all. Furthermore, it was considered by the news workers as a new way for the public to send a press release. By monitoring the newsroom's Facebook feed, they could also keep tabs on audiences' posted feedback and statistics when their stories had been posted there.

Other sites favoured included the popular temporary messaging application of Snapchat, that was often sought for its geolocation function when there was a breaking news event. Participant 6 used the platform to locate nearby postings from eye witnesses. It meant a

television journalist did not have to rely on the content being labelled appropriately with an intuitive hash-tag that was often used to locate content by similar terms applied. The participant added the social media platform could also be used as a verification tool, as it was possible to accurately identify where the posting had come from. However, it was not able to provide a time reference therefore the timing of the recording needed verification:

You can see where people are posting something its essentially a heat map on who is posting where so what you can do if you know that there has been, say, a lot of flooding in the Hutt, you can see that people are posting on Snapchat from the Hutt and you click on that and see these videos that have been posted almost three hours ago from Silverstream and its nothing to do with flooding. So, move onto your next one.

(Participant 6)

### **5.3.5. Challenges and opportunities**

The introduction of the Internet has been credited by many academics with enabling an unsurpassed level of communication and content creation as identified in the study's literature review. However, the senior television journalists taking part in the study found that UGV presented a number of challenges and opportunities and these are told by the participants through their personal experiences and anecdotes.

#### **5.3.5.1. The challenges of working with UGV**

There are a number of challenges television journalists faced when working with UGV as it did not exhibit the technical rigour of professionally recorded news footage. This creates issues at the point of story editing as outlined below.

- i. Audio – Participant 8 said that television journalists liked to use UGV at the start of their stories with UGV. But the natural sound on UGV was frequently poor because amateurs tended to hold their phones too far away from the source of the audio and it made the product look unprofessional. However, the participant would compromise on the poor-quality audio if that was all there was to work with.
- ii. Visuals – The participants said blending professional with amateur footage caused a disruption in quality between the two sources of content. Therefore, an editing practice

had emerged that minimised the jarring effect where an interview clip became a buffer between the professional quality footage and the UGV. However, this affected the story as the voiceover and other production elements had to be altered to fit the new narrative structure. Another challenge was that UGV framing and composition of shots were often too wide, making it difficult for an audience to focus on a distant subject, or they were too tight so that the subject was either cut off or badly framed. This could be rectified by tightening a wide shot in editing, but it was not possible to widen a tight shot.

- iii. Working with amateurs – The participants found an amateur’s lack of understanding of the television production process raised challenges, as they were not aware of the technological requirements nor the need to work to news deadlines. Participant 8 said an untimely delivery of UGV content brought time pressures that resulted in a late rewrite of the story especially when the UGV was not of the quality or content expected. “The big thing is that you never know exactly what you’ve got.”

#### **5.3.5.2. Coping strategies**

The participants developed their own strategies to compensate and keep the production process on track, particularly around the management of video content. This suggests that as new technology becomes introduced, television journalists increasingly need to be resourceful and develop the ability to problem-solve when technology becomes a barrier to the newsgathering of UGV. Randall (2016) found that journalism was characterised by resourcefulness, where to “be resourceful” is one of the top attributes required to perform the role successfully. The study found the skill of resourcefulness became extended in the television journalists’ interactions with the public over the use of UGV.

#### **5.3.5.3. Sources empowered through the use of UGV**

The participants felt that members of the public had become empowered through the use of social media. Participant 5 said sometimes the public preferred posting their comments on social media instead of being part of a broadcast news story. The participant provided an example of a local personality, known for posting tweets on daily issues, who refused to be interviewed for television. The participant explained to the personality that the network would not be reporting anything more than he had already posted on Twitter, but he just needed him to say it on camera for television news. But still he refused to be interviewed.

When images of the man's tweets appeared in graphic form in the resultant television news story, the man complained to the network that his privacy had been invaded. His complaint was not upheld by the network. This example demonstrates a perception by the public that broadcast news has a greater impact on one's character than social media posting does. This is an interesting anomaly when comparing the potential reach of a television audience in relation to the online and global reach of social media. According to Nielsen Media Research, in New Zealand an average of 9.8 percent of the potential viewing audience or 235,200 viewers aged between 18-54 watched the top-rating primetime television news bulletin in 2020 (ThinkTV, 2020). However, a social media post can potentially be seen and shared by millions of people online.

Participant 6 said most of the time people were, "a bit flattered that their little humble recording was newsworthy". But, sometimes gaining consent from the source proved difficult within the time constraints of news production. The participant felt that, as long as the material was attributed to the person, they were being acknowledged as the copyright owner. However, more clarity was needed among news workers of the rules relating to copyright and the ownership of social media, as there was a perception that a public posting of UGV was freely able to be broadcast on television news. Participant 6 also commented that there was confusion over a perception of "fair use" for content that was newsworthy. The participant said it came down to a journalist's integrity, "trust me, trust my sources".

In relation to the participant's comments, a study conducted by Evans and Kuehn found, as noted above, that New Zealanders held broadcasters to a higher standard than they applied to themselves regarding use of social media content (Evans & Kuehn, 2017). The study claimed some among the public did not consider that broadcasters could take social media content and use it, as it was intended to remain in the context in which it had been posted. However, they acknowledged that the practice was justified in the cases of public interest (p. 3). The topic was also discussed in section 5.2.7.6. above.

#### **5.3.5.4. Television journalists' acceptance of UGV**

The study found there had been a change in the acceptance of technical standards along with the adoption of UGV in television news. Participant 10 said there had been a change from the days when non-professional footage was considered not to be of good enough technical

quality to be broadcast on television. Instead, he considered that UGV added to the audience experience and therefore contributed to the visual storytelling of news despite its technical weaknesses. He said there was an acceptance within the newsroom that if the news value of UGV was strong enough, it would override the preference for professional footage. Low quality visuals would feature an attribution of “caught on a neighbour’s phone” to explain where the footage had come. The participant said he had noticed the shift in practice from 10-15 years ago. If it was a breaking story he now always asks if someone got the footage. He said it would be his second question after, “Did you see it?”. “Did you have it on camera, did you get a photograph, did you get anything else?”

This view was shared by other participants too. Participant 8 said, if something happened, it was expected that *someone* had filmed it somewhere and it was just a case of trying to find it. They would ask, “Who’s got any vision?” or “Did anybody record this?” and sometimes you didn’t even need to ask, as people would offer it. This finding suggests that the use of UGV has become a routinised practice, where organisations impose routines to control the flow of work (Tuchman, 1973). Integrating UGV into television news appears to have become a routine accomplishment and this is supported by the findings of the content analysis of the broadcast story data.

Additionally, participant 10 said UGV gave television journalists access to eyewitness testimony that used to be gathered through interviews, but was now achieved by way of getting pictures. The participant felt that it was a strange thing that people were willing to accept flawed or biased eyewitness UGV as a testimony as it was perceived as being more accurate than a professionally produced interview.

Participant 8 said where the amateur was an eyewitness to a rapidly unfolding event, and felt audiences would understand if the footage was a bit wobbly or the framing was not great, commenting:

The fact that it’s not perfect, and that’s a big thing for the future of the industry, is whether people are willing to accept slightly less quality and that’s the big fear for news and for, well, everything really.

(Participant 8)

In the comment above, participant 8 is reflecting on the possible long-term effects of audiences' willingness to accept lower quality UGV over professionally crafted television news, and the potential threat that may present to the profession. The participant said, most of the time, the UGV was being used because it "made your story better" which reinforces a point identified in Wahl-Jorgensen et al. (2010) that audiences preferred authentic content because it gave an insight into the reality of people's lives. Participant 4 added that a desire for authentic UGV was particularly evident in sports stories. However, a conflict was that sports interviews had become increasingly more controlled by sports management organisations, who dictated where and when a sports interview would occur, and the time for access to the competitors was limited. Therefore, drawing on a sportsperson's social media posts brought a degree of visual depth to a story that was becoming increasingly difficult to obtain otherwise, especially if it was something other news organisations did not have, the participant said. The sourcing of UGV for sports stories was discussed further in section 5.2.5.7.

The study found that a fundamental factor in television news is the way it is presented, and not the news topic itself, an increase in the imbalance between the audio-visual power of a story text and the newsworthiness of the facts has evolved since UGV became incorporated into television news. Participant 8 suggested there was no sense of sharing news production or selection with audiences, where a story featuring another person's UGV was still considered as "your story". Since beginning to work with UGV, participant 8 had developed a new skill of balancing the scripting and telling a story with letting what had happened unfold naturally without over-scripting it. The participant said using live footage of an unfolding event within a news story was something that would not have been practiced prior to UGV, and that changed how a script could be written and a story could be compiled. This is consistent with findings in the data that showed how some stories were scripted as if the UGV was being played 'live'. In particular, the identification of a 'caption-like' scripting style (Alikhani & Stone, 2017) that was discussed in sections 5.2.3.1. and 5.2.4.3.

Overall, the participants had a generally positive view of working with UGV. Participant 10 said the challenges of working with UGV were outweighed by the benefits. Writing to

pictures, if you had them, was easy to do but if the pictures were not of good-quality then the television journalist's job was to explain them. The participant recalled working during bombings in London in 2005, where people inside the bombed underground trains couldn't see what they were filming, and instead turning on their phones and running out through the smoke as they screamed in horror. The low-quality visuals were explained to the audience as being "ugly" because people were panicking and this reflected the mayhem that was central to the story. This suggests that in some circumstances the UGV takes on a personality of its own, and characterises the news event that has been represented in the footage.

UGV that provided a variety of camera angles was favoured as it visually enhanced the facts of a story beyond that achieved within the constraints of time and resources of professional news crews. For example, despite being of a lower quality, UGV drone footage of flooding was favoured as it provided a variety of camera angles and shots that visually enhanced the facts of a story beyond terrestrial footage as discussed in section 5.2.3.6. Other forms of footage favoured – although not strictly UGV – were the use of security camera and body-cam footage. Participant 8 said security footage was difficult to get hold of because of privacy issues, but when it was released it became another form of content that previously had not been used. Additionally, American television news stories frequently drew on body-cam footage for spot news stories. While police in New Zealand did not use body-cameras, the participant felt it was only a matter of time before they did. This would create opportunities for access to the footage if legislation allowed. As the current study focuses on UGV, security or police body-cam footage is outside the scope but it is acknowledged that the topic presents an opportunity for further research at a later date.

#### **5.4. Summary**

This section has summarised the results of the analysis of seven ideal types (Weber, 1942) of broadcast news stories containing UGV that were drawn from the data. These were selected by applying a thematic analysis framework (Braun & Clarke, 2012) that adopted a prior-research-driven perspective (Boyatzis, 1998), and drew on the communicative frames of an up-to-date short report, and a slightly longer piece of reportage that featured background information (Cottle and Rai, 2009). Within these frames two polemic sub-frames were applied that featured a range of 'voices' including conflictual sub-frames that communicated conflict in a propositional form and also invited public deliberation, and consensual

subframes that were culturally expressive and did not highlight any issues or contending perspectives.

A critical discourse framework (Fairclough, 1995) was used to analyse the seven stories as written, audio and visual texts. The written texts featured the newsreader's introductions and the story scripts; the audio texts that included the reporter's voiceovers and use of ambient sound; and the visual texts featured UGV, along with the professionally produced footage, interviews, graphics and other visual material as described in section 5.1.1.2. The findings were triangulated with data gathered in semi-structured interviews conducted with 10 senior television news journalists present in a working television newsroom, some of whom also participated in video-ethnographic style field work as they worked.

The researcher came from a practice-based perspective, drawing on more than 20 years' work in television news and production in order to understand and rationalise the significance of the findings in relation to the normative practices of the television journalist.

#### **5.4.1. Compression**

The analysis of each of the stories began with an investigation into the compression techniques common to journalism. This was addressed by looking at the voiceover scripts where, similar to other news platforms, the deletion of information, the application of collective nouns and verbs were used to compress the language used without affecting meaning (van Dijk, 1988). The study found that the voiceover scripts showed the compression of multiple nouns was applied more frequently than multiple verbs. This reflects the nature of a television news report that answers the "what" question rather than the "how", delivering, at best, thin accounts of events, often presented as occurrences without context, background or competing definitions and accounts (Cottle and Rai, 2009, p. 51) as discussed in section 3.2.3.2. There was consistency between the use of compressions featured in the voiceover scripts referring to the UGV and those that referred to the professional footage. However, the compressions most commonly identified when referring to the UGV are listed below:

- i. Stories featuring UGV that were sourced from international affiliate networks typically featured in-house branding superimposed across the story, including across the UGV.



The local networks edited the stories in order to remove and replace the branding with their own in-house graphics, but sometimes this could only be achieved by deleting shots entirely which shortened the length of the story. Therefore, the television journalist would compress terms or delete facts so the voiceover script could be shortened to match.

- ii. The amount of UGV footage that could be used in the story was often limited as an amateur videographer typically records just one ‘take’ when recording on their personal smart phone<sup>10</sup>. Furthermore, UGV footage often featured sloppy imagery and poor sound quality as described in section 3.1.3.3., and this could be compounded by a drop in visual quality when the footage was transferred via the Internet to the news organisations network drives. These factors brought about compromises that the television journalists made to the story design, by either compressing the voiceover script or modifying the narrative structure of the story to match the duration of good quality footage available. However, where the content of the UGV was judged to be of greater news value than its quality, the television journalists would include it.

Other compression techniques identified within the study are described next.

#### **5.4.1.1. Use of lexical tools to compress facts**

Lexical tools were used to compress facts within the voiceovers. These included:

- i) Anthropomorphism – using human characteristics to describe animals and objects enabled multiple actions to be compressed within voiceover scripts, a technique explored within the documentary genre to connect audiences with scientific concepts, particularly within natural history (Elliot, 2001).
- ii) Synecdoche – using one term to represent a greater whole (Allen, 2017), such when a subject such as the “marae” was used to represent the whole “marae community” .

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<sup>10</sup> In comparison, a professional camera person records multiple ‘takes’ at a ratio of up to 5:1 that includes different shot sizes and angles to provide the video-editor with multiple options to select from when editing a story. Also, each shot is recorded at a greater length than the action it covers, so it can be trimmed to a size that the editor requires.

- iii) Synthetic personalisation – speaking to an audience member in a person’s own voice (Fairclough, 2015) was used in a structural element of a news bulletin that provided a catch cry or call to action, indirectly compressing the need to explain the visuals by putting the onus on the audience instead.

The application of lexis of this nature suggest a softening in the reporting of news as hard facts, and while they are not unique to the treatment of UGV, they do not appear to have been connected with television news scriptwriting prior to this study.

#### **5.4.2. Temporality**

The use of temporal modes did not increase in number nor complexity when UGV was present when compared to the professional footage, therefore the following findings are indicative only, and would benefit from further research. As the story narrative moved between actuality, interviews and other forms of visual content, some tenses were more commonly applied to UGV than professional footage as demonstrated in the table on the next page. The table shows a “U” where the tense has been applied to the UGV or a “P” where the tense has been applied to professional footage.

**Table 5.1. A summary of the temporalities applied to the stories analysed.**

	Whale 1	Whale 2	Storm	Rampage	Warriors	Ardern	Tourist Tax
Tenseless		<b>U</b>	<b>UU</b>	<b>UU</b> <b>PP</b>			
Simple Present	<b>U</b>	<b>PP</b>	<b>U</b> <b>PPPP</b>	<b>U</b> <b>PPP</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>UU</b> <b>PPPPP</b>	<b>U</b> <b>PPPPP</b> <b>P</b>
Present Perfect		<b>U</b>	<b>PP</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>P</b>
Present Cont.	<b>U</b>	<b>U</b> <b>P</b>	<b>PP</b>	<b>UUU</b> <b>PP</b>		<b>UU</b> <b>PPP</b>	<b>PP</b>
Simple Past		<b>UUU</b> <b>PP</b>	<b>PPPP</b> <b>P</b>	<b>U</b> <b>PPPP</b> <b>PPP</b>	<b>U</b> <b>PP</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>U</b>
Past Perfect							
Past Cont.		<b>P</b>		<b>UU</b> <b>P</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>P</b>	
Past Perfect Cont.	<b>U</b>	<b>P</b>					
Simple Future						<b>PPP</b>	<b>PPPPP</b> <b>P</b>
Future Cont.			<b>P</b>			<b>U</b>	<b>P</b>
Total temporal shifts	3	13	17	25	6	19	18
Total temporal shifts in UGV	3	6	3	9	3	5	2

**U** = UGV segments, **P** = professional segments

In the table above, each letter refers to a temporal shift in the seven stories analysed. It is marked by a “**U**” where it relates to the UGV footage, and for context the temporal shifts in the professional footage have been marked by a “**P**”. The tenses relating to the UGV are summarised below:

- i. The *simple present* tense was used in five stories: Whale 1, Storm, Rampage, Ardern (twice) and Tourist Tax.
- ii. The *present continuous* tense was used in four stories: Whale 1, Whale 2, Rampage (three times) and Ardern (twice).

- iii. The *simple past* tense also was used in four stories: Whale 2 (three times), Rampage Warriors and Tourist Tax.
- iv. A *tenseless* temporality was used in three stories: Whale 2, Storm (twice) and Rampage (twice).
- v. The *past continuous* was used in two stories: Rampage (twice) and Warriors.
- vi. The *present perfect* tense was used in two stories: Whale 2 and Warriors.
- vii. The remaining tenses were used in one story: *past perfect continuous* was used in Whale 1, the *future continuous* tense was used in Ardern.
- viii. Tenses that were not present in the scripts – irrespective of the presence of UGV included *present perfect continuous*, *future perfect* and *future perfect continuous*. These tenses do not reflect timeliness, which is a key factor in news as it aims to present facts relating to an event that has occurred rather than one that may not happen, as these tenses suggest.

The findings show the *simple present* was the most commonly applied tense when UGV was present in five of the seven voiceover scripts, where it was used to provide a real-time account of the action as if it was happening live. This suggests that UGV is presented in television news as immediate and to be seen in the ‘here and now’, and the voiceover aims to draw the audience’s attention to the nowness or state of occurring in the present time. In doing so, the audio-visual merit of the UGV becomes exploited in favour of reporting on the event itself, a finding reinforced by the comments of participant 1 who aimed to “get the most out of” the UGV footage of the breaching in the Whale 1 story.

The tense of “nowness” provides evidence that television news is adapting to accommodate UGV’s distinctiveness, as a visual form that presents eyewitness proof of a newsworthy event rather than a report on something that had previously happened. By narrating in the present tense, the television journalist gives the UGV a news value of timeliness that would be lost if the footage was referenced in the past tense.

The *simple present* voiceover script was also found to be supported by natural sound from the UGV. For example, in the Tourist Tax story, the amateur camera operator could be heard providing a commentary from behind the camera exclaiming, “This guy here is going for a

(beep) right on our beach and here in New Zealand!” The audio brought a level of authenticity to the UGV that could not have been provided by a professional.

#### **5.4.2.1. Tenselessness**

A finding of particular interest was the identification of a *tenseless* scripting style that reflected a caption-like lexical structure that did not feature a specific temporality. This characteristic was applied within three of the stories analysed and demonstrated the power of the immediacy of UGV footage, a characteristic unable to be achieved through the use of professional footage. The finding provided another example to support the view that television news is softening in the reporting of news as hard facts as suggested in section 5.4.1.1.

#### **5.4.3. Narrative structure**

UGV footage is not equal in technical quality to the quality of professionally recorded video footage but audiences are willing to accept lower quality content as it provides insight into the reality of people’s lives (Wahl-Jorgensen et al., 2010). Television journalists found ways to successfully package UGV alongside professional footage, and were prepared to compromise on the story design and the narrated facts in order to do so. As the analysis has confirmed, the voiceover narrative can be altered through compression of facts, nouns and verbs in a way that is no different from the compressions applied in the typical editing of television news (van Dijk, 1988). However, because of the ‘one-take’ approach by amateurs, UGV footage comes with limited editing options as described in section 5.4.1. This can affect story design and the narrative structure to an extent where the story becomes a form of entertainment rather than a traditional report. By drawing upon Bell’s criteria of storytelling (1995) as discussed in section 3.2.4.2., the universal news characteristics of *abstract*, the *orientation*, *complicating actions*, the *evaluation*, the *resolution* and the *coda* were present in stories containing UGV. The table below shows how the framework above was applied in relation to the presence of UGV footage within the narrative structure of the stories analysed.

**Table 5.2. The narrative structure of a story where UGV is present.**

	News reader's intro	First pictures	Complicating action (s)	Evaluation	Resolution	Last pictures or coda
Whale 1	Still image similar to UGV	UGV		UGV		UGV
Whale 2	Still image similar to UGV	UGV	UGV x 2			UGV
Storm		UGV	UGV			UGV
Rampage		UGV	UGV x 2		UGV	UGV
Warriors						UGV
Arden		UGV				UGV
Tourist tax		UGV				

In the table above, six out of seven stories featured UGV as the *first pictures* and *last pictures* in the narrative structure. The use of the UGV at the start of a news story aimed to capture a viewer's attention, whereas at the end of a story it was intended to leave a final memorable impression of what the report was about, according to participants. At the end of a story, the UGV also provided the newsreader with a visual 'cue' to react to and provide cohesion with the rest of the news bulletin. UGV incorporated mid-story was most frequently used to present a *complicating action* that asks, "What happened then?" although it was not usually identified as an *evaluation* that asks "So what?" or a *resolution* that provides a consequence.

#### 5.4.3.1. The A-B-A model

Accordingly, the study identified a cyclic structure that was commonly present in the narrative structure of the UGV stories that can be broken down into three 'moves' described as the A-B-A model, where:

A – UGV is featured at the beginning of the story to engage audiences, particularly where the footage has strong audio-visual properties. This is despite evidence within the semi-structured interviews and video-ethnographic style fieldwork that suggested this was not always possible due to the lower technical quality of either the visuals or the audio, or both;

B – The body of the story draws primarily on professional footage to bring context through visuals and interviews;

A – UGV is repeated at the end of the story, where it is used to leave the audience with a memorable image, or provide the newsreader with an opportunity to react and therefore provide a seamless link to the rest of the bulletin.

Often the UGV was repeated multiple times within the narrative structure of the story, and repurposed in different ways that included the application of freeze-frames, zooms and slo-mos in order to avoid audiences losing interest during repetition. This, again, speaks to the role of UGV to titillate rather than feature as part of a straight report.

#### **5.4.3.2. Enhancing the bulletin structure**

Television news bulletins are a highly structured form of discourse, governed by a limited set of structural elements and the order in which they occur (Redfern, 2014). UGV judged to be of high audio-visual quality was found to be incorporated into the structure of the television news bulletins as part of a tease and/or highlights package, and sometimes appearing multiple times throughout the bulletin structure. This suggests that the news value of UGV can be considered by news workers as a desirable driver towards attracting and maintaining audience attention throughout the television news bulletin. The placement of UGV teases were determined in relation to other stories that had been selected for teasing, and on one occasion, appeared ahead of a story of major international significance. This demonstrates that the news values associated with UGV can sometimes transcend the more traditional news values such as negativity and magnitude. This trend may have an enduring effect on the direction of news bulletins towards a more ‘entertaining’ than ‘reporting’ model over time.

#### **5.4.4. News values**

As discussed in Chapter Four, the two most common news values to be applied to stories that featured UGV were *audio-visuals*, which consisted in almost two-thirds or 65 percent, and *shareability*, which was present in just over half or 52 percent of the stories. The qualitative analysis findings shed some light on the effect these news values have on the treatment of the stories by the television journalists. It also highlights two areas of the analysis that were not addressed by the study, and these included the news value of *timeliness* and *personalisation* which, on reflection would have been helpful themes to have included in the analysis.

#### 5.4.4.1. Audio-visuals

Greguš and Mináriková (2016) claimed that stories containing the greatest number of news values were ranked more highly than others in a television evening news bulletin. However, this study argues that, rather than the quantity, it is the category of news value present that has the greatest influence over news selection. In Chapter Four, the study found that the *audio-visual* news value had the most significant impact on story selection, a finding that is not surprising, as television news is a medium that relies heavily on visual storytelling (Schlesinger, 1978). Furthermore, stories featuring UGV with strong *audio-visual* news values also were frequently present in the structure of a bulletin, such as teasers or mid-bulletin highlights packages. This suggests that not only can the visual power of UGV influence news selection, but also suggests that UGV stories are trending towards an entertainment rather than the informative paradigm. The trend has previously been identified in literature within televisual news generally (Comrie, 1996; Jones, 2017).

One of the most newsworthy forms of *audio-visual* news value is within eyewitness UGV that can raise the newsworthiness of a story that may be weak in other news values. This was identified in the Rampage story, where extraordinary eyewitness footage contributed to the story selection and ranking within the first section of the news bulletin, despite the fact that the story featured little *relevance* value for a New Zealand audience. The story was framed in the newsreader's intro with, "New videos emerged ..." that highlighted the content as non-professional while also demonstrating a news value of timeliness in the way the UGV was framed. This suggests the power of UGV as a novelty factor that can contribute to the emotional impact of the imagery, and thereby taking a story beyond its conventional news value.

Eyewitness UGV can also provide opportunities for the television journalist to go beyond the original posting, by using the footage to advance cultural meaning through the use of professional means. The study found evidence of UGV being manipulated to maximise the "woohoo" factor of a close encounter with a whale, drawing on the emotional impact of the footage, rather than using it to bring information to a reported event. This finding suggests that UGV supports a move towards the production of television news stories that seek to provide viewing pleasure rather than newsworthy information to the viewing audience.



*Audio-visual* news values can also lead to the exploitation of UGV footage that is out of context with a story. The best example of this was Tourist Tax”where sensationalistic UGV was used to draw audiences to a report on a new policy the government was considering imposing on tourists to New Zealand. By framing the UGV as evidence that the public was reeling from the volume of freedom camping visitors, the television journalist was attempting to increase the news value of the story by introducing the values of *magnitude* and *relevance* in order to justify the incorporation of the footage that required censorship due to its anti-social content.

UGV with strong *audio-visual* properties can also be used to forge a connection with an audience that cannot be achieved by professional footage, as was identified in the Ardern story. In the example, the television journalist drew on Instagram video footage posted by the New Zealand Prime Minister holding her newborn baby as she commented on a public family funding initiative in response to a social issue. The UGV of the infant was among the first images released on social media ahead of traditional news outlets and this increased the newsworthiness of the story. It also resulted in a serious report becoming manipulated by the Prime Minister into something of a party-political broadcast, where the Prime Minister ended with, “That was all I really wanted to say”. This suggests that, while UGV can be applied within lighter or non-controversial stories, it can also direct harder stories towards a softer treatment as it can divert a viewer’s attention away from facts and towards entertaining visuals.

#### **5.4.4.2. Shareability**

The news value of *shareability* is a characteristic inherent in UGV as it is a motivating factor in the creation of user-generated content (Wunsch-Vincent & Vickery, 2007). However, the participants argued that UGV that had been shared widely on social media was considered over-exposed and this decreased its broadcast news value, reinforcing Bell (1995) that news organisations liked to be timely rather than to publish their work after other sources have done so. This suggests that a combination of the two news values of *shareability* and *timeliness* are of greater value than they are individually. Accordingly, *timeliness* and *personalisation* (Bednarek, 2015) are two news values addressed in this summary that were not investigated in the analysis, yet the study revealed each be a

contributing factor in the newsworthiness of UGV in television news. These news values are discussed next.

#### **5.4.4.3. Timeliness**

The news value of *timeliness* refers to time-related concepts that include newness, recency, immediacy, and currency (Bednarek, 2015). UGV was found to be helpful when bringing a fresh or new perspective on an existing story and was identified in Ramage where the story was framed with the newsreader's intro, "New video's emerged ...". The UGV enabled a story about a gun attack to be updated and developed beyond a simple report to a longer piece of reportage, by adding newfound eyewitness footage that had emerged several hours later. In this way, it is the discovery of the UGV that resonated with the audience as it brought a new perspective – and potentially new information – to a story that had previously been covered by professionally generated footage. The application of UGV in this way suggests that UGV and its sources can play an integral role in the newsworthiness of broadcast news, which is discussed next.

#### **5.4.4.4. Personalisation**

The incorporation of sources into a story provides the news value of *personalisation* is frequently used within television news (Lealand and Martin, 2001) as it enables an issue-based story to be seen through an individual who has been affected, as people have news value in a way that processes do not (Bednarek, 2015; Bell, 1991). Not only did personalised UGV appear in multiple stories, it also enabled television sports journalists to go beyond the limited traditional approach of simply covering the conflict and results of a competition to shedding insight beyond the sidelines. A senior sports journalist argued that, in a sports-mad country like New Zealand, interviewees were frequently reluctant to participate in a broadcast interview as they felt they would be unfairly judged for what they said on television by local sports fans, "because you know, in sport, people have so much to lose". Therefore, increasingly, athletes were being controlled by sports management organisations, who dictated where and when a sports interview would occur. *Personalised* UGV was one way to bridge the gap, as sportspeople were more willing to post their comments on social media, despite the potential audience being far greater online than in a television news broadcast, the participant added.

However, drawing on *personalised* UGV can not only soften a news report as described in section 5.4.4.1., it also has the potential to challenge professional journalistic gatekeeping when used by persons in positions of power. As discussed, in the Ardern story, the Prime Minister's social media post allowed her the freedom to articulate her ideology without contest, and spread her message (Engesser et al., 2017). It also depoliticised the story by incorporating, not only the Prime Minister as a mother, but also as an affected member of the general public in order to make a statement about a much wider group of people. A source's power to control their social media message is a diversion that challenges the role of the Fourth Estate to hold people to account through the professional boundaries of journalism. This raises the question of whether or not stories with UGV are perceived by an audience less critically than those with professional footage. If so, then it suggests that UGV may best be used for softer or non-controversial stories, or used alongside critical material thereby directing the story towards a softer treatment. Furthermore, it leads us towards the finding that UGV can also be a key driver in the production of stories that may not have been found newsworthy otherwise where the quantitative analysis revealed over a third or 36 percent of the stories would not have existed if it had not contained useful UGV, as described in section 4.7.2.

#### **5.4.5. News values and sources**

The previous section provided examples where UGV manifested its value through its newsworthiness, while this section examines evidence of how the material itself was treated as a newsworthy source. The study found inconsistencies in source attribution suggesting that UGV is only acknowledged when the footage or its creator has a story-telling role that is newsworthy. For example, in the Rampage story, the newsreader's intro stated, "New video's emerged ..." that framed the UGV through the news value of timeliness as described in section 5.4.4.3., a practice that was not commonly identified in the data. Furthermore, the footage was one of two pieces of UGV incorporated into the story, and featured an eyewitness account of the attack as it unfolded. The source was judged to be an integral part of the story, and received attribution in an on-screen caption, was named in the voiceover script and also participated in an on-camera interview. The second piece of footage featured a carpark outside the building where the offender was arrested. The source was acknowledged in an on-screen caption only, as it was likely to have been considered secondary to the main news event.

Because of the nature of television news stories, an audience naturally makes a connection between what they see, and what they are told (Yorke, 2013). Accordingly, there was potential for source ambiguity in Whale 2 when a person was named in a voiceover at the same time the UGV was screened, although the source of the footage was not clearly established. The observation is provided as a reminder that the crafting of a voiceover that is juxtaposed alongside UGV requires careful attention. This, and other newsroom practices are discussed next.

#### **5.4.6. Newsroom practices**

While there appears to be a value of newsworthiness placed on UGV footage, the study found there were challenges when incorporating the content into a story. However, few scholars have looked directly at the practices surrounding videotape editing (Schaefer & Martinez, 2009). The way video images are edited together to frame stories has historically evolved through news routines from analogue to digital editing (Silcock, 2007), and the study aims to advance this scholarship through its findings in relation to the video-editing of UGV within television news.

##### **5.4.6.1. Repetition**

It is not common for professional footage to be repeated within a story, however, UGV is sometimes repeated multiple times. Two of the UGV stories, Whale 1 and Whale 2, repeated a shot of a breaching whale up to three times, while featuring different visual effects, including freeze frames, zooms and slomos. These variations would have minimised the risk of the audience losing interest through repetition. The participant who edited Whale 1 commented that they had wanted to “milk it” because the pictures were “just amazing” and had the “woohoo!” factor as described in section 5.2.1.3.

##### **5.4.6.2. When quality does not matter**

Video-editing techniques were used to minimise the audience perception of differences between the higher quality professional footage and the lower quality UGV footage. These included editing neutral shots between the two pieces of content and other editing techniques that required the design of the story or the scripted voiceover to be compressed to match. However, where the newsworthiness of the UGV was significant, its quality was a secondary

consideration. For example, in the Ardern story, low quality UGV of the Prime Minister and her newly born baby was edited alongside high-quality professional footage of an interviewee into a split screen to represent two people's perspectives on the same subject. The split screen technique is not unusual in itself, but the visual clash would have challenged a television journalists' professional standards in a New Zealand newsroom. This suggests that newsworthy UGV can be used in television news irrespective of its technical quality, where the emphasis is on the entertaining the audience and not presenting a professional journalistic product.

#### **5.4.6.3. Enhancement or misrepresentation?**

The on-air packaging of a television news bulletin typically features a newsreader sitting at a desk, in front of a video wall that features an image from the ensuing story. The purpose of the video wall is to attract audiences to a story, where the image is often stylised to represent the corporate look and colours of the network. However, on two occasions, the images featured on the video walls were not sourced from the UGV. Audiences may consider this to be misleading. The instances found within the data related to low-risk stories in relation to wildlife where the doctoring of reality did not affect the outcome of the story in a way it would if the image of a person was altered. Nevertheless, the practice – conducted by graphics workers and not news workers – is worth noting, as it contributes to the view that UGV can be used more for its emotional pull than its ability to advance reported information.

#### **5.4.6.4. Filters**

Filters are applied to the UGV for censorship purposes, such as the anonymising of the individuals who may be represented in a way that may cause reputational harm. This suggests the treatment of UGV is no different from the treatment of professional footage. Journalistic practice requires adherence to the Broadcasting Standards Authority standard 1, "Current norms of good taste and decency should be maintained, consistent with the context of the programme and the wider context of the broadcast" (Broadcasting Standards Authority, 2020). Privacy is an area that the BSA considers broadcasters need guidance on, as social media content posted online is not necessarily filtered (Evans & Kuehn, 2017).

#### **5.4.6.5. Verification**

It was not possible to identify any findings in relation to the verification procedures applied to the UGV within the analysis, as it is a process that is not represented within the text of a news story. However, the observational field work revealed that verification details typically were gathered when the UGV was ingested into the newsroom's content management system and entered into the footage metadata. Participants all shared the view that verification was a necessary but time-consuming procedure, and some had found ways to verify UGV while meeting the culture of tight deadlines. Some used organisations' official company Facebook pages and while not verified, they provided participants with a degree of confidence that the UGV was valid. This finding is consistent with other studies that found journalists relied on official sources to provide content that the journalist assumed was truthful (Matheson & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2020). One participant said verification was about mitigating the risk of exposing the organisation to errors and suggested using a caveat, such as "This video it's claimed was posted from ...". However, there was no evidence of this practice found in the broadcast news stories analysed.

Overall, it appears that user-generated material has become embedded in news practice to a point that it is no longer considered outside normal information sourcing. However, there was a general view that training in simple and expedient practical verification strategies was required rather than learning how to verify UGV 'on the job' or defaulting to younger, technologically competent newsroom staff to conduct the procedure on a reporter's behalf.

#### **5.4.7. Conclusion**

The findings of this study suggest that UGV in television news work broadens the scope of non-journalistic source content that can be drawn on by a television journalist, whether it be a few seconds of colourful pictures or enough content to produce a full story. Amateur creators produce content that may not match up to professional standards yet this is embraced by professionals as adding interest and authenticity in their believed expectations of audiences. However, the incorporation of UGV into news work comes with challenges that differentiate the user from the professional television journalist. A user is not likely to be sensitive to the timely demands of the daily news deadlines, and frequently lacks the technological and content management skills of newsroom professionals. Also, television journalists are conscious of the different motivations and thinking of citizens as they attempt

to incorporate content – as the process is not a seamless matter of citizen journalists joining the news team.

The study found the overall perception by the participants was that UGV was a valuable alternative when there was a lack of their own content to cover a news event. So much so, that UGV has become one of the first things a television journalist searches for online when assigned a story, and one of the first pieces of content he or she will seek on arrival at a spot news location.

The next chapter discusses these findings along with the quantitative findings presented and summarised in Chapter Four.

## **Chapter Six:      Discussion of results**

### **6.0. Introduction**

This chapter provides a discussion of the key research findings drawn from the results in Chapters Four and Five, and these are considered in relation to previous research outlined in Chapter Two. The first section revisits the aim and timeliness of the study of UGV and television news; the second section reviews the methodological approach that was taken; the third section discusses the findings framed within the quantification of UGV, and also discusses the power, challenges and opportunities social media video introduces into television news. The final section is a brief summary of the chapter.

### **6.1. The aim of the study**

The aim of this study has been to investigate the shift in norms as television journalists find new ways to meet the challenges imposed and opportunities afforded to them when they incorporate UGV into their professional work. The study has gone beyond previous scholarship and taken a deep dive into the analysis of television news stories that feature UGV and finds evidence of the decision-making processes applied by the news workers in their work.

The study is presented after a hiatus of approximately 10 years since the academic lens last focused in detail on user-generated content within television news (Harrison, 2010; Wardle & Williams, 2010; Williams et al., 2011). It is also evaluated against more recent research into user-generated content generally (Johnston, 2016, 2018) and has been considered in relation to the changes in journalistic norms derived from the digital disruption of the Web 2.0. landscape (Henderson & Cremedas, 2017). Furthermore, it also provides updated analysis of television news content in New Zealand that advances Comrie (1996) and Cook (2002). While this study has focused on television news bulletins in New Zealand, the results provide an effective comparison with other English-speaking Western countries such as Australia, Canada, Britain and America and non-English-speaking countries like Switzerland, Iceland and Belgium (World Values Survey, n.d.).



## 6.2. The methodological approach

Using a constructivist paradigm (Vygotsky, 1980), a mixed-method design approach (Campbell & Fiske, 1959; Creswell, 1994, 2017; Johnson, Onwuegbuzie & Turner, 2007) was applied that drew on both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to identify the frequency and common attributes of television news that features UGV, and analyse the news artifacts in order to gain a better understanding of the effects of UGV on news work. A New Zealand nexus was applied for two reasons: firstly, the country's television and news services have been designed and implemented under the influence of British and American systems, and therefore provides an opportunity to consider the experiences of a 'hybrid' industry; and secondly, New Zealand is a country recognised for its ability to rapidly adopt new technology (Horrocks, 2004) while also being highly exposed to the issues of the global news ecology because of its small size. This makes it possible for the study to observe an overall system and its dynamics more clearly than that of a larger country.

The study drew on 133 television news stories that featured UGV and were gathered from a master set of 3,360 minutes of primetime television news bulletins recorded from the country's two mainstream networks TVNZ and TV3 during four consecutive weeks in June and July, 2018. The data were analysed quantitatively to measure the frequency of the phenomenon and key attributes common to news that were present in the data. Then a qualitative analysis framework was applied that was adapted (Krippendorff & Bock, 2009) in order to select a set of broadcast news stories that were considered to be "ideal types" (Weber, 1949, p. 92). Accordingly, seven stories were analysed using critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1995) and the findings were triangulated with data from 447 minutes of semi-structured interviews (Baker & Edwards, 2012). These were supported by ethnographic-style videography (Dufon, 2002; Sissons, 2016) of three senior journalists as they produced stories, two of which featured in the seven selected for deeper analysis. These were Story 1: Whale, and Story 3: Storm.

Machin and Niblock (2006) argue that the gap is closing between those who practise journalism and those who theorise about it. Accordingly, the practice-based researcher combined theory with the practical experience of more than 20 years in television news and

production to shed light on the evolving work of the television news journalist in the post Web 2.0. era.

The principal research question was:

RQ: How are television broadcast journalists responding to the challenge of how to harness user-generated video in their everyday work?

This question was divided into sub-questions that measured the frequency of UGV in television news and identified key characteristics. These included:

RQ2: What categories can be applied to the television news stories featuring UGV, and how frequently do they occur?

RQ3: What are the most frequent news values that can be applied to television news stories that feature UGV?

RQ4: How often is UGV either the principal focus of a story topic, or drawn on to supplement existing professional footage?

RQ5: Is UGV more likely to be incorporated into locally produced or internationally sourced stories?

The findings supported the following hypotheses:

H1: UGV has become a common factor in the production of television news stories, and therefore is a desirable source of alternative content drawn on by journalists when professional footage is not available.

H2: UGV fills a gap in visuals when unscheduled news events cannot be easily accessed within the confines of news production resources, geographic location and daily television news routines.

H3: UGV footage has a news value and it can influence the decision-making process in relation to the treatment of stories, as well as introducing topics into the news agenda that would not otherwise be covered by television news.

H4: A story featuring UGV is more likely to have been internationally than locally produced, and therefore is likely to reflect the high threshold that international stories meet in order to be sold offshore for local broadcasting.

These questions are discussed in relation to the study's findings, and contextualised within existing literature.

### **6.3. Relationship to existing literature**

The study aims to satisfy a gap in the existing literature in relation to the occurrence of non-professional content in selection and the storytelling processes applied by television journalists in the production of news. The findings build on the scholarship of Wardle and Williams (2008) and others who began to look at the integration of user-generated content into the BBC newsroom following the London underground bombings in 2005 (Douglas, 2006; Harrison, 2010; Hermida & Thurman, 2008), the Arab Spring (Ali & Fahmy, 2013; Campbell & Hawk, 2012; Cottle, 2011; Wardle, Dubberley & Brown, 2014;) and more recently the war in Syria (Johnston, 2017; Mast & Hanegreefs, 2015; Murrell, 2018). Their research has examined the processes and implications of dealing with increased volumes of user-generated content by journalists, with some attention paid to the journalistic output as an ongoing practice (Murrell, 2018; Johnston, 2016, 2018; Henderson, 2015, 2019; Henderson & Cremedas, 2017). However, this study is believed to be among the first that has quantified the frequency and characteristics of UGV, and deeply analysed the news artifacts themselves, thereby setting a benchmark for longitudinal studies in the future.

The study's findings suggest that UGV is broadening the way news stories are being told and also has an influence on editorial judgment in the selection and production of news. It also provides a critical analysis of the visual and linguistic features of television news stories incorporating UGV, that advances knowledge of the practice and suggests implications for the role of television journalism in the future.

#### **6.4. The presence of UGV in television news**

Television journalists have drawn on non-professional film or video footage for many years (Tuchman, 1975; Harrison, 2010), a practice that became popular after the invention of the amateur camcorder in the 1980s (Boyle, 1992). The practice surged in the early 1990s after the introduction of the smartphone camera combined with the interactive capabilities of Web 2.0. that enabled users to share their content via the Internet (Reich, 2018). The mining of content by non-professionals has provided journalists across all media platforms with fresh resources for news gathering such as sourcing images of breaking news, including natural disasters, accidents and protests (Alysen, 2012). A large number of academics have investigated the incorporation of user-generated content into multiple news platforms. Naab and Sehl (2017) claimed the majority of the reviewed studies applied quantitative methods and content analyses to examine user-generated content in television news, that addressed the “what” questions but not the “why” or the “how”. They argued that academics found it challenging to understand the new form of media because of the continuously changing nature of its content (Naab & Sehl, 2017, p. 1265). By drawing on a practice-based background, the researcher has attempted to fill this gap in the literature.

Based on the New Zealand data gathered, this study has found that the broad spectrum of user-generated content (including textual posts, tweets, photography and video footage) was found in 30 percent of stories in the average prime-time news bulletin. Furthermore, UGV was found in at least two stories in every prime-time bulletin on either of the country’s mainstream networks. This dispels Harrison’s (2010) argument that UGV would merely evolve as opportunistic video stored as a repository of potentially useful sources, and instead shows that UGV has in fact become a significant and frequently used resource for visual storytelling by television journalists.

People who produce their own social content – including UGV – are motivated by the desire to express themselves, connect with peers, and achieve a certain level of fame, notoriety, or prestige without the expectation of profit or remuneration (Wunsch-Vincent & Vickery, 2007). Some of the frequently attributed categories include animal and sports videos which are described next.

#### **6.4.1. Animal videos**

Animals and wildlife videos were rare in the news, appearing in just six percent of the stories that featured UGV, despite clips such as funny cat videos being widely shared on social media (Bednarek, 2016). Some examples within the data included footage of a racoon that made its home on the outside of an inner-city sky scraper, a bear that invaded a person's property, a whale that breached the water in front of a boat load of tourists, and a shark that bit off a person's finger. While Bednarek (2016) argued that funny cat videos and the like were not real journalism, the study found that there is now a space for animal and wildlife videos within television news, where the quirky footage is used with the aim of eliciting an emotional response from an audience, rather than simply delivering news reportage.

Furthermore, stories that feature animal and wildlife UGV footage were found to influence the structure of the end of a news bulletin. This is consistent with research that shows lighter stories are used to bring levity after a bulletin has focused on the less appealing and or negative aspects of society (Redfern, 2014; Soroka & McAdams, 2015). Also, the study found that UGV can offer value when incorporated into teasers and mid-bulletin highlights packages in the same way professional footage of a strong visual nature is designed to engage and retain viewer attention throughout the news hour (Chang, 1998).

#### **6.4.2. Sports**

The study found that UGV was less frequently used in sport stories, making up only seven percent of the stories featuring UGV. This finding is in conflict with Kwak et al. (2016) who found user-generated content in sport news was pervasive and, in fact, expanding. The study's finding was compared with Pearson (1996) who found that, where regular sections were a part of the design of a news bulletin, there was an increased need for additional content required to fill the news hole. In other words, a finite number of stories were required for every bulletin, irrespective of the newsworthiness they represented. This is likely to explain why a bulletin's sports stories can frequently appear to include softer news stories than those in the main section of the bulletin.

However, according to one of the study participants, drawing on UGV in sport stories brought a new dimension as it enabled storytelling in a positive way rather than limiting it to a traditional conflict and results approach. The participant's comments raise a question: are

stories perceived by an audience to be less critical when UGV is a factor; and therefore, is UGV most suitable for lighter or non-controversial stories? If so, could this result in the use of UGV influencing harder stories towards softer treatment? A question that would be satisfied by investigating audience perception, an area that is outside the scope of the study but worthy of enquiry at a later time.

#### **6.4.3. Law, order and crime**

Law, order and crime is a category of UGV that is unlikely to gain attention from a social media user when considered against a social media user's motivation as defined in Wunsch-Vincent and Vickery (2007). However, the study found the category could be applied to 16 percent of the stories gathered. Examples showed that television journalists used UGV footage to identify victims of crime, along with eyewitness and 'shaming videos' (Hess & Waller, 2014) in the storytelling of crime, that took the stories beyond the confines of legal constraints while maintaining ethical and regulatory codes.

#### **6.4.4. Unexpected events and eyewitness UGV**

Unexpected events (Tuchman, 1973) made up 12 percent of those featuring UGV, and fire, or disasters and accident stories. Typically, these are stories that a newsroom cannot plan its resources for, and sometimes can occur outside the news production cycle or in an out-of-the-way location that may be difficult for a television journalist to get access to.

Eyewitness accounts can be visually compelling and therefore advantageous to visual storytelling as they can give the television audience a sense of being there. According to one of the study participants, asking for eyewitness UGV had become one of the first things a television journalist now did when arriving to cover an unexpected or spot news event. The participant said unexpected events were considered to be simple to cover on smartphones, and this was like doubling his camera crew. He said he used eyewitness UGV at a rate of one-in-every-four stories he produced.

The study also found eyewitness footage incorporated into a television news story can become more important than the news topic itself. An example of this was when a story that featured the UGV of the New Zealand Prime Minister and her newborn baby to illustrate an issue-based story. This speaks to the power of UGV as a form of visual storytelling that can

move a story onwards from a simple report to an emotional experience that brings an element of authenticity unable to be achieved by professional means. Also it supports the argument by Wahl-Jorgensen et al. (2010) that audiences prefer authentic content that gives an insight into the reality of people's lives.

The study found that some story categories do not lend themselves to drawing on UGV for televisual news story telling, and these are discussed next.

#### **6.4.5. Categories less likely to feature UGV**

The study found that stories with complex perspectives, such as global warming, social policy, or immigration were not suited to the incorporation of UGV, with fewer than five percent present within the categories of war and terrorism, social issues, children, science and technology, politics, health and welfare, and entertainment. Furthermore, there was less than one percent of stories about disability, the environment and economics, while religion, education and other (which allowed for any categories that had not been accounted for) were not present in the data at all. These categories were typically reported on in stories of a thought-provoking nature and required visuals that provided information that was expert-centric. Therefore, the stories were less prone to shareable visual content, supporting the view that the use of UGV in television news is limited by the type of UGV that is available.

The findings of the category coding phase of the study also revealed a correlation between type and newsworthiness, and the study drew on a set of news values to explore the data further.

#### **6.5. News values**

Professional footage was found to contextualise the news value of a piece of UGV footage, and thereby advance the content beyond what can be seen on social media. As discussed in Chapter Two, when UGV becomes part of professional work, the editorial decision-making can be investigated by drawing on a set of news values derived from the seminal research of Galtung and Ruge (1965). However, the most current application of news values within television news in Greguš and Mináriková (2016) did not address social media influence of news selection, a key area of interest to this study. Despite being applied to newspaper data and not television news, the study drew on the news values proposed in Harcup and O'Neill

(2017) that included the values of arresting *audio-visuals*, *shareability* and *surprise* (p. 1482) as the study considered these best reflected the newsworthy attributes of user-generated content. By applying these and other news values within the set, the study found there was a connection between how news workers identified the value of an event as newsworthy and the power and influence of UGV.

The judgement of news value can also be connected with a series of factors that incorporated characteristics of the news happenings, as well as external aspects that impacted upon journalism practice (Caple & Bednarek, 2015). Therefore, the coding was also able to provide clues to the decisions made in UGV selection and the practice of incorporating the footage into a visual news narrative. The two most common news values applied to the broadcast news stories featuring UGV were *audio-visual* and *shareability*, and these are discussed next, followed a discussion on the lack of connection between multiple news values demonstrated and the ranking of a story.

#### **6.5.1. Audio-visuals**

Audio-visual attributes have long been an integral factor of television news (Tuchman, 1975), a medium that relies on the spectacularism of its visuals (Bergsma, 1978; Cottle & Rai, 2009; Schlesinger, 1978). Additionally, television news' predilection for actuality footage means that a story with strong pictures is likely to take editorial precedence over one without (Montgomery, 2007). Accordingly, the study found that arresting UGV audio-visuals were present in 63 percent of the UGV stories. Also, in just over a third or 36 percent of the stories examined, the audio-visual qualities of the UGV content were the principal reason why the stories were selected for production. Therefore, it is not surprising that these values are so dominant, as audiences increasingly engage in the sharing of visually interesting content online.

#### **6.5.2. Shareability**

Shareability, or having the potential to generate sharing or comments on social media (Harcup & O'Neill, 2017), was not recognised in scholarship until 2017 and has received limited attention in relation to television news since then. UGV is created to be shared (Wunsch-Vincent and Vickery, 2007) and the study found *shareability* was the second most common news value present within 52 percent of all stories featuring UGV. The reason for the high



proportion is likely to be because UGV that meets a threshold of shareability is most likely to command the attention of television audiences, a desirable attribute at a time when news organisations are striving to maintain market share in an increasingly competitive media landscape.

However, shareability as a news value can have its limitations as the study found some participants considered that the saturation or over-exposure of UGV on popular social media sites such as Facebook and YouTube was a negatively determining factor in its selection as news. This was because it emphasised a temporal lag between newsmakers and amateurs who can share content at a faster rate than a broadcaster can process and publish it, and so had the potential to undermine the credibility of the news as a market leader. Therefore, this study suggests that shareability is strongly connected with the news value of *timeliness*, that is a common driver within news selection.

It became apparent during the analysis that the news values of *timeliness* (Bednarek, 2015) had a significant role within the selection of UGV for news. This news value was not investigated in the analysis, yet the study revealed it was a contributing factor to the newsworthiness of UGV in television news as discussed in sections 5.4.4.3. and 5.4.4.4.

### **6.5.3. News values and ranking**

The composition and ranking of a television news bulletin is the result of a number of choices made by gate-keepers who accept or reject material based on a number of determinants (Glasgow Media Group, 1976). The study found that a story featuring UGV with compelling audio-visual properties sometimes was ranked more highly than a story of greater news significance that was not particularly visual. Visually strong UGV can also be prioritised over professional footage in the structural elements of a news bulletin, including teasers and highlights or top stories, and sometimes packaged in more than one way. But the study found that UGV stories do not necessarily lead a television news bulletin as editorial teams are more likely to lead the bulletin with the traditional values identified in Pooley (1989) such as *bad news*, or *negativity*. This suggests a story's visual dimension is not central to its value as news.

Greguš and Mináriková (2016) claimed there was a correlation between the number of news values present in a television news story and its ranking within a bulletin (p. 88). However, the study has found this is not the case. For example, in Table 4.6.1., six stories were coded with seven news values yet only two of these were ranked first in the news bulletin; and at the other end of the scale, stories with only one news value were ranked as high as fourth position in the bulletin. Therefore, it is the nature of the news value that affects its ranking and not the number of values that can be applied, and *audio-visual* news value has been found to be at the top of the hierarchy.

#### **6.5.3.1. Framing**

The framing of news speaks to the selection of some aspects of a perceived reality that make them more salient in a communicating text (Entman, 1993). While the study data showed that UGV was selected and framed to complement professional footage within the context of a news story, the amateur content could also be framed to demonstrate a news value that was out of context with the intention of the creator. For example, in the study a story that featured UGV of tourists defecating in public spaces was used to reinforce a public's dislike of freedom campers, and this was used to attract interest in an issues-based story that is frequently challenging to tell visually. This raises ethical concerns that the Broadcasting Standards Authority has attempted to address. It is an issue that broadcasters, themselves, say they actively continue to monitor (see section 5.2.7.4.). It also highlights the vulnerability of UGV that is publicly shared, and how the content is subject to an interpretation determined by a television journalist in order to satisfy its value as news, which may not reflect the amateur's original intentions.

#### **6.6. Surface features of a story**

As has been discussed, television news is valued for its strong visuals, where audio-visual language is designed to be easily understood in order to convey common meanings to a diverse audience in a brief time span (Graber, 2009). Accordingly, this section draws on critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1995) in a discussion of the visual and linguistic features of a story featuring UGV and how they are stimulating a change in the production of television news in New Zealand.

### **6.6.1. Visual features**

As discussed in Chapter Five, Yorke (2013) stated television news should be considered as a visual artifact and not just a text that, according to Schaefer (1997), reflects a set of conventions that provide evidence of actual places, people, and events that add authority to conventional journalism reports. This enables journalists to edit authentic imagery into a sequence, in order to construct a narrative structure driven by convention and a context in which the images are presented. These conventions have been applied within documentary, drama and other genres of fiction or non-fiction, and also have been adopted within news visual storytelling. However, the study found that they become altered when UGV was present in television news, beginning with the narrative structure.

#### **6.6.1.1. Narrative structure**

Television is ephemeral, episodic, specific, concrete and dramatic in mode where its meaning is derived from the contrast and juxtaposition of contradictory signs, and its logic is oral and visual (Fiske & Hartley, 1987, p. 15). The study found the logical structure of a televisual news story is influenced by the use of UGV. For example, it is a common convention to begin a story with engaging and strong opening visuals instantly telegraphing the story to come (Shook et al., 2013). The study found UGV footage frequently appeared at the start of a story and also at the end of the story, and was rarely repeated in between. By positioning the UGV in this way, the television journalist is prioritising UGV visuals over professional footage and thereby raising its value in the minds of the audience. The form of novelty value that is created by UGV applied in this manner demonstrates the power it can have to take news beyond traditional reportage and into the realm of becoming a form of entertainment manifesting itself in an overall softening of news.

#### **6.6.1.2. Acknowledgement of sources**

Wahl-Jorgensen et al. (2010) found that audiences liked user-generated content because it was immediate, added drama and human emotion and was seen as more real and less packaged. The researcher observed in the 1980s –1990s that footage sourced from outside professional journalistic routines was clearly identified as library footage. However, during the 2000s a practice emerged where library or any other form of non-journalistic footage was not necessarily identified. However, the study found that UGV footage was identified when it demonstrated a value of newsworthiness. For example, eyewitness footage of a gun attack

in the Rampage story emerged after the story had broken, and because of its timeliness, the news organisation used it to produce a follow-up story where the newsreader stated, “New video’s emerged ...”. According to Tewksbury et al. (2011) on-screen labels identifying externally supplied video news can affect audience perceptions of the credibility of the news. Again, the study found a correlation between the news value of the UGV and the degree of acknowledgement applied to its source. The source of a newsworthy piece of footage would be acknowledged through an on-screen caption and/or by a line in the voiceover script. Furthermore, on some occasions the source would be interviewed in order to provide additional context to their role within the story. It was also noted that on some occasions, an agreement to acknowledge a source was the result of negotiations between the television journalist and the amateur at the time of gaining access to the footage for broadcast. But, where the news value of UGV footage was less significant, in other words the footage simply filled a gap within the visual storytelling, the source of the material received little or no acknowledgement.

Therefore, the greater the news value of the UGV, the more likely it is that the source becomes acknowledged despite any perceptions by senior television news workers that a uniform standardisation exists.

#### **6.6.1.3. Manipulation and replacement**

In a news bulletin presentation, a video wall (Ray, 2003) is a part of the news set that displays an electronic image relating to an upcoming story behind the news reader (Yorke, 2013). Its purpose is to visually orientate the audience towards the upcoming story. Typically, video wall images are drawn from the news story, however the study found these images are frequently subjected to manipulation or entirely replaced to overcome issues typically associated with the low quality UGV and to present a look more consistent with the sophisticated and stylised appearance of the newsreader in the news studio. Featuring altered or alternative imagery has the potential to mislead an audience by setting an expectation of seeing something other than that which is delivered within the story. However, this technique is not applied when a story is of a sensitive nature or where facts might be disputed. But, the practice is in conflict with the power and appeal of UGV as, from an audience perspective, its roughness and signs of non-manipulation shows its authenticity, enhancing its ability to take you to a place that professionals are unable to do.

### **6.6.2. Linguistic features**

The study found that very few linguistic characteristics were altered between the way professional footage and the way UGV was applied within a story. However, two characteristics were identified that suggested a development in the scripting of television news, not necessarily directly linked to a change in practice motivated by the use of UGV. These included a development in lexical structure and a broadening of scriptwriting genres.

#### **6.6.2.1. Caption-like lexical structure**

Television journalists most frequently apply variations of the present tense, such as the present-perfect and present-continuous tenses in order to reinforce the temporality of a story as being most recent or up-to-date or in the immediate past (Bell, 1995). However, within an eyewitness account of a newsworthy event, two television journalists' voiceover scripts demonstrated a tenseless present temporality that featured a caption-like lexical structure (Alikhani & Stone, 2017) where the information was restricted while maintaining a coherent relationship to the visuals. An example was identified in the Storm story, where the voiceover was scripted as, "The small town of Te Karaka completely cut off" without the use of a verb. This structure was not commonly seen within the broadcast news story data, however, when applied within the use of UGV, it reinforced an immediacy that is unable to be achieved through the use of professional footage.

#### **6.6.2.2. Broadening of scriptwriting genres**

The study also found evidence of scriptwriting genres other than the traditional news language constructs, where two mechanisms were identified. These included anthropomorphism or assigning a non-human entity with human characteristics that is most frequently applied within the documentary genre (Hight, 2017), and synthetic personalisation or a compensatory linguistic device for speaking directly to an audience commonly applied in advertising (Fairclough, 2015). The use of these devices demonstrates a shift towards a blurring of boundaries between communication genres in the scriptwriting of television news that does not appear to have been identified prior to this study.

## **6.7. New ways of working**

One of the greatest challenges a television journalist faces is meeting the time pressures of the news production cycle (Tuchman, 1973). However, traditional journalism practices are changing because of the disruption in information and communication patterns caused by social media (Brandtzaeg, Lüders, Spangenberg, Rath-Wiggins & Følstad, 2016). The study found that, while in some circumstances UGV is treated the same as other visual material, television journalists are finding new ways of working while the demands of on-air deadlines remain the same. Some of the key areas affected are discussed in this section.

### **6.7.1. Verification**

Verification is considered a “strategic ritual” (Tuchman, 1972, p. 661) that legitimises a journalist’s social role as being demonstrably different from other communicators (Shapiro et al., 2013). When gathering and posting UGV material the amateur videographer is unlikely to verify their sources or information, an omission that sets them apart from professional journalists (Niekamp, 2012). Shapiro et al. (2013) found that attention to accuracy was seen by many journalists as central to their professional identity. But there was a considerable amount of diversity in verification strategies at times mirroring social scientific methods and different degrees of reflexivity or critical awareness of journalists’ own blind spots and limitations (Shapiro et al., 2013, p. 657). Brandtzaeg et al. (2016) found that to avoid trade-offs between verification and fast-paced publishing, journalists needed efficiencies in order to manage an overwhelming amount of social media content they drew on. The study found the inconsistencies in the approach to verification were consistent with those that previously had been identified in scholarship, such as failing to verify social content sourced from official websites (Matheson & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2020) such as councils, Civil Defence and local utilities. These actions could be considered an abdication of responsibility as they present a vulnerability in the process that creates the potential for errors to become amplified. While there were no examples in the data, the study found anecdotal evidence that errors occurred from time to time. Furthermore, the study found verification practices were learned while on the job or, by default, had become the domain of the younger, technologically savvy news workers. The study suggests that verification requires more consistent attention at all levels of newsroom practice. Television news workers would benefit from training in simple and expedient practical strategies. Those strategies are likely to be influenced by the way and

expediency with which television journalists interact with their sources, starting with the first point of contact, as discussed next.

### **6.7.2. Sourcing**

In addition to the typical amount of time it took to set up interviews and gather professional footage, the study found further time was required to source, locate and negotiate access to newsworthy UGV. Moreover, video-ethnographic evidence showed that amateurs were unlikely to be aware or affected by the same pressures of timeliness, technical quality and production of news delivery. Therefore, there was greater potential for the production of stories being affected by rookie errors committed by amateur sources. Delays could be compounded in a country like New Zealand where Internet connectivity issues caused by weak connections in some rural areas could lead to lags in transferring amateur footage from the source to the television network. One example in the data, discussed in section 5.2.3.6., described how a short piece of footage took up to eight hours to be transferred to the network for editing. These points suggest that any perception by a television journalist short on pictures that UGV may be a quick fix is unfounded. However, this did not stop the television journalists from sourcing UGV from provincial locations throughout the country, rather than relying on footage from the main centres because it was more accessible.

### **6.7.3. Video-editing**

Very few scholars have approached the study of visual narratives in television news editing because the technique has been considered highly specialised and academics struggled with the analysis (Henderson, 2012; Tuchman, 1978). Two reasons for this have been proposed in reviewed literature. Firstly, scholars interested in news production were not always journalists and fewer still were video editors, therefore there was a disconnect between the understanding of theoretical concepts and television production. Secondly, television news practitioners learned their craft through practice and were less inclined to think about or articulate their editing choices (Henderson, 2012, p. 68; Schaefer & Martinez, 2009). Therefore, the researcher has made a practice-based contribution to academic literature that spans both spheres through the findings of this study.

The study identified challenges associated with editing amateur footage that highlighted the differences from that and professionally recorded footage. Abdollahian et al. (2010) found that UGV most frequently resulted in footage that was unstable, weak in visual quality or composition, of poor audio quality and/or short in duration. What is more, the study found that UGV footage typically consists of one take whereas professional news camera-operators are known to record up to five times as much footage as required in the finished story, featuring multiple takes of a variety of shots, shot sizes and angles that provide the video-editor with a range of options when the story is edited. Accordingly, the study found that television journalists and video-editors had adopted some strategies to overcome the shortcomings of UGV:

- a. Vertically-orientated (Canella, 2017) UGV footage was frequently edited in between two neutral shots to minimize the jarring effect of a change in visual format to the landscape-orientated professional footage.
- b. To avoid jump cuts (Drew & Cadwell, 1985), when breaking up longer pieces of UGV into shorter sequences, the footage was sometimes inserted at reverse speed into a story.
- c. Low quality synchronous audio could sometimes be replaced by good quality asynchronous audio from professionally recorded footage if the subject matter was similar.

Griffin (1992) claimed the journalistic norm of authenticity prohibited the manipulation of footage that could place in question the credibility and authority of a news organisation's report. However, the study found that UGV footage was frequently manipulated within a story, especially where the content displayed strong audio-visual news value. An example of this was in section 5.2.1.3. when compelling visuals of a breaching whale were repeated three times within the same story, and manipulated at different speeds and freeze frame variations. Professional footage is seldom repeated in this way, except in coverage of events such as in sports stories when a small piece of footage may be repeated if it displays controversial or exceptional game play. This suggests that there is a hierarchy whereby professional footage has a status as a report, while UGV, can be manipulated in multiple ways and has a status as a piece of entertainment. It also suggests that filmic conventions described in section 3.2.4.5.



are often interpreted with more flexibility when editing UGV than in traditional storytelling modes, in order to avoid disruption in the mind of the viewer (Glasgow Media Group, 1976).

## **6.8. The effect of UGV on news practice**

Television news-making and production is complex, and what we see and hear through television as the end product is subject to many influences and constraints that are normally invisible to the audience (Machin & Niblock, 2006). The sociology of news work enjoys a central role in shaping scholarly and practical understandings of the professional norms, values and practices of news (Belair-Gagnon, 2019). By applying a sociological lens, the study discusses the effects on news practice when UGV becomes an additional source of audio-visual information drawn upon by television journalists.

### **6.8.1. Plurality of voices**

Dwyer and Martin (2010) claim that the participatory and social interactions of ‘active audiences’ provide different concepts of public expression, social cohesion and community that go beyond the peripheries of legacy media. Naab and Sehl (2017) found that the creators of user-generated content drew attention to their own individual interests and that broadened the scope of topics beyond those associated with traditional journalism. The view was supported in Johnson and Dade (2018), who found that some news organisations’ increasing reliance on UGC brought new elements to a story and opened up wider discussions and decisions about what was newsworthy and what is not.

While the literature reviewed has drawn a connection between user-generated content and the plurality of independent (non-news or non-news agency) voices (Wardle, Dubberley & Brown, 2014), there is little research to indicate whether this proliferation of speech represents greater diversity in news commentary or original reporting (Dwyer & Martin, 2010). The study found more than a third (36.09 percent) of the broadcast news stories would not have been covered if the UGV content was not selected. Therefore, this study has provided a measure – within a New Zealand television news context – of the rate at which amateur voices are now contributing to the news agenda.

Accordingly, the findings of the study suggest that amateur videographers are increasingly becoming a part of the manufacturing of television news, as journalists incorporate UGV into their practice. Television news is not omnipresent, and by drawing on UGV, topics are now being covered that would otherwise be told differently or be off the news radar. This supports McLuhan (2001), who argued that technology was an extension of the human that let us go further and see clearer, but the study argues this is only up to a certain point. As one of the study's participants remarked, it was not like having an extra reporter on the ground as UGV creators were not trained journalistic interviewers. Therefore, the study argues that the strength of UGV is in the actuality as it broadens the reach of television journalist's lens, but a news report requires professionally crafted interviews and/or supporting video in order to be contextualised and presented as journalism.

### **6.8.2. Gatekeeping**

The proliferation and exploitation of the products of networked communicative spaces online, or social media, led Belair-Gagnon (2019) and others to claim that news-work was no longer a self-contained profession, and therefore challenged the professional autonomy of news workers. Accordingly, the study found that drawing on UGV could sometimes highlight the vulnerability of using content outside professional gate keeping, and these are discussed next.

A non-professional's world view does not reflect the rigour of a journalist who has been trained to apply professional standards across their work. This is because UGV posted online is not subjected to a filter unless it is considered extreme in nature, in which case it can be blocked by the social media platform itself (see example in section 5.2.4.6.). Therefore, verification or other forms of fact-checking fall to the television journalist to perform before the content can be reported as news. The study found that television news organisations need to display a more consistent approach to verification, as discussed earlier in section 6.7.1. where the demands of working with UGV within a limited news production timeframe has led to a practice of assumptions, short cuts and compromises.

Secondly, sometimes individuals choose to circumvent the boundaries of journalistic gatekeeping by posting content on their own social media sites that is unverified and unchallenged (Tandoc & Vos, 2016; Engesser et al., 2017). However, within television news, this supports the study's view that television news is moving towards softer,

entertaining stories rather than the reporting of hard facts. An example that was identified in the study showed how the New Zealand Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern had used an Instagram post with her new-born baby to announce the introduction of a public policy, as discussed in section 5.2.6. It was an example of weak editorial autonomy, as it was framed to accommodate the footage of an infant the public had been waiting to catch a glimpse of, with the equivalence of comments gathered from an affected solo parent who had been interviewed by a television journalist. As a result, the report was hijacked by the cute baby pictures and the Prime Minister circumvented any political scrutiny over her policy. This form of softening of a news story demonstrates that intimate forms of UGV can be powerful as the content can play on audience emotion and appeal, and leave little room for journalistic scrutiny.

## **6.9. Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed the findings of the study in relation to relevant previous research. The aim has been to go beyond previous scholarship in the analysis of television news where UGV is a feature, and to gain some insight into the characteristics of the content and the changes in professional norms that have arisen as a result of the practice. By quantifying the magnitude at which the phenomenon was occurring, it has been possible to fill the gap in existing scholarship that addresses the frequency and characteristics of stories featuring UGV. Furthermore, the critical analysis (Fairclough, 1995) of the stories as textual, and audio-visual artifacts has shed some light on the effect UGV has had on television news storytelling, changes in television news practice and the evolving role of the television journalist in the post-Web 2.0. era.

### **6.9.1. Frequency and characteristics**

The study has acknowledged that non-professional video footage is nothing new to television news, and since the introduction of the Internet the impact of user-generated content on the sector has been discussed by many academics (Ashuri & Frenkel, 2015; Bock, 2012; Gilmore, 2004; Harrison, 2010; Hermida & Thurman, 2008; Johnson & Dade, 2018; Johnston, 2016; Reuters Institute, 2016; Jönsson & Örnebring, 2011; Naab & Sehl, 2017; Örnebring, 2008; Paulussen & Ugille, 2008; Singer, 2010; Thurman, 2008; Vujnovic et al., 2010; Wahl-Jorgensen, 2015; Wahl-Jorgensen, 2015a; Wahl-Jorgensen et al., 2010; Williams et al., 2011; Williams et al., 2011a). However, the rate of uptake of UGV previously has not been

registered until this study. Accordingly, there is no question that UGV has become an integral part of the make-up of television news, and not just an occasional opportunistic video store (Harrison, 2010). UGV is a common feature of stories when unexpected events such as weather bombs, fires or disasters and accidents occur outside professional newsgathering routines. Furthermore, eyewitness UGV can move a story onward from a straightforward report to a story that becomes an emotional experience and therefore a degree of authenticity that cannot be achieved by a professional.

### **6.9.2. Story categories**

UGV content does not lend itself to topics of a thought-provoking nature, information rich, expert-centric, and is therefore less prone to be shared. A further limitation, is that issue-based stories seldom incorporated UGV. This is likely to be because of the nature of UGV content, that it is created by those motivated by factors that are not necessarily aligned with the characteristics of a news report. This also suggests that framing of UGV as news is determined by the television journalist, making the content vulnerable to interpretation that may be out of context with the intention of the post. Therefore, editorial judgment is a critical factor in the television news and UGV discussion.

### **6.9.3. Audio-visuals**

The study found that UGV is influencing a softer and more entertaining treatment in selection and production of news. UGV is favoured by television journalists for its news values, where the content is most commonly recognised for its compelling audio-visuals, an integral factor of the television news medium (Tuchman, 1975; Bergsma, 1978; Cottle & Rai, 2009; Schlesinger, 1978). More than a third of the UGV stories displayed strong audio-visual news values that would have secured the story for production. The more recently proposed news value of shareability (Harcup & O'Neill, 2017) was also common in stories featuring UGV, often moving a report on from straight reportage to an entertaining piece of work aimed at drawing on an audience's emotions. These findings provide clues to the selection of UGV for story production. Not only have these values explained the narrative structure of television news when UGV is a factor, they also give an insight into the effects the media has on the ranking and structural elements within a television news bulletin.

In conflict with the findings of Greguš and Mináriková (2016) the study found that there was a co-relation between the number of news values and the ranking of a story. Instead, there was evidence of a hierarchy where *audio-visual* news value was located at the top of the ranking, despite the more conventional news values of *bad news* or *magnitude* (Harcup and O'Neill, 2017). This finding is worthy of further exploration, and adds to previous scholarship that has tracked the types and occurrence of news values across a range of formats, by offering a valuable contribution towards the longitudinal studies of news values since they were first defined (Galtung & Ruge, 1965).

The study also found the value of compelling audio-visuals can lead to a change in the structuring of a television news story. Firstly, the footage is frequently positioned at the start of a story, where a television journalist is prone to lead with their strongest pictures. Therefore, the UGV is prioritised over professional footage and raising its value in the minds of the audience. This suggests the power of UGV to take news beyond a traditional report and into a form of entertainment.

Secondly, there is a connection between news value and the acknowledgment of sources, where the level of recognition appears to co-relate to the contribution the UGV makes to the story. For example, social media video can be revealed as a timely addition to a continuing story, such as “New video’s emerged” or the source can become part of a story when interviewed to provide newsworthy context to the UGV. However, for the most part, UGV is typically acknowledged in a voiceover script and/or by an on-screen caption, but supplementary UGV that is used for supplementary footage with limited news value is not likely to receive any recognition at all. This suggests that when UGV becomes a part of the television story broadcast by the network, there is no sense of sharing news production or selection with the source, as the story considered by the television journalist to become owned as *theirs* irrespective of the amount of footage incorporated from other sources.

And thirdly, UGV with strong audio-visual news values can also be incorporated into the stylistic presentation of the studio broadcast, where an image from the story appears in a video wall behind the newsreader in order to visually orientate the audience towards the upcoming story. However, in these circumstances the image either becomes graphically enhanced or may become replaced by high quality library pictures to mirror the sophisticated look of the

news set. This practice is in conflict with the authentic appeal of the amateur footage that promises to take the audience to a place that professionals are unable to go.

The results from the study also point to the fact that the incorporation of UGV into news extends conventional visual storytelling techniques in order to address short-comings in the non-professional standard of quality in amateur content. Therefore, news videotape editors have developed multiple techniques to minimise the disruption caused by UGV, while television journalists have found ways to modify the story structures and narrative to accommodate it. The study also found that UGV had a different status from professional footage that reported facts, and therefore UGV was frequently drawn on for entertainment purposes. This is leading to a general softening where television news stories are valued for their appeal as much as reporting facts.

#### **6.9.4. Linguistics**

There was evidence of new scripting techniques that signal a new direction in television scriptwriting generally, although not specifically in relation to UGV. The first, relates to a “tenseless present” temporality where no verb is used, and takes on a caption-like lexical structure (Alikhani & Stone, 2017) that works to reinforce the immediacy of UGV that is unable to be achieved through the use of professional footage. The second scripting technique identified in the study is the use of lexical techniques that are not commonly connected with the news genre. These include synthetic personalisation (Fairclough, 2015) and anthropomorphism (Hight, 2017), and suggest a blurring of boundaries across communication genre that is worthy of further investigation within the development of news media linguistics.

#### **6.9.5. Conclusion**

The study has found the incorporation of UGV into television news is changing professional practice through the broadening of storytelling techniques, through the engagement of alternative and plural voices that provide greater diversity in what has become an open-sourced profession (Johnson & Dade, 2018; Naab & Sehl, 2017; Wardle, Dubberley & Brown, 2014). These changes in practice have been discussed in relation to the broadcast news stories themselves, the informed commentary within the additional data of semi-structured interviews and ethnographic-style videography and the observations of the

researcher as a former television journalist. However, there continues to be limited evidence to support whether UGV represents greater diversity in reporting (Dwyer & Martin, 2010). But there is a strong argument towards television journalists treading a gentle path in the use of UGV, while not being overwhelmed by the time-consuming tasks of fact checking and verifying content within the pressures of the normative daily rhythms of the television news machine. However, while the television journalist is able to remain a gate-keeper of news for the time being, the study confirmed that some publics circumvent the news process and post content on their social media sites if they consider television news to no longer be relevant to their own needs.

## **Chapter Seven: Conclusion and recommendations**

### **7.0. Introduction**

This chapter presents a summary of the key findings of the research, followed by a consideration of the key implications for television news workers and their organisations, as well as recommendations for future research. The limitations of the study are discussed and the chapter concludes with a brief summary of the preceding sections.

According to Griffin (1992):

We cannot understand how tv news represents the world to us until we recognise the forms and practices at work in constructing what we see.

(Griffin, 1992, p. 138)

The above quotation encapsulates the viewpoint of the researcher whose aim has been to bring a practice-based focus to the study of an aspect of the current practices of television journalists in New Zealand. The study is framed within a context of the post Web 2.0. era where an exponential amount of user-generated content is being produced daily by an increasingly active audience. The study concludes that news media producers have found ways to bring social content into the news, and the activeness of the audience has become accepted and even celebrated as a way to reposition the news producer.

### **7.1. The aims and methodological approach of the study**

The primary objective of this study has been to investigate the frequency and application of user-generated content, and in particular user-generated video or UGV, in the production of television news stories on primetime broadcast news. The study has aimed to illuminate the challenges, opportunities and implications the incorporation of UGV has had on the daily routines of the sector's workers. The study also aimed to shed some light on the changing nature of television news texts in the post-Web 2.0. era when television news has suffered from a global decline in audience numbers. Furthermore, the study aimed to provide a point of reference that would inform future studies of television news.

The study was carried out in New Zealand, where a hybrid television news system was built on the experiences of American and British networks. It took place in a country that is



highly exposed economically because of its small size, and with a population known for its ability to rapidly adopt new technology. Data were gathered from free-to-air recordings of the primetime news bulletins of the country's two mainstream broadcasting networks, Television New Zealand and TV3, for four weeks in 2018 and stories featuring user-generated content were extracted. A rubric was created to reliably identify UGV apart from other forms of non-journalistic video content present, such as police and sports footage, and closed-circuit television imagery as described in section 3.1.3.3. A mixed-method approach was applied within the study, using a quantitative approach to gain a broad overview of the presence and frequency of UGV in television broadcast news, and qualitative analysis to examine the news texts in detail. The findings were triangulated with data from semi-structured interviews and video-ethnographic style fieldwork conducted with a group of senior television journalists that drew on participants' working knowledge and provided insights into the findings that were identified in the analysis.

## **7.2. Summary of key findings**

Firstly, the study was able to gather longitudinal evidence of changes in the subjects reported in New Zealand bulletins over a period of almost 30 years between 1990 (Comrie, 1996) and the study data gathered in 2018. This timeframe was found to be critical in social history as it covered a period that featured impacts from deregulation of the broadcasting sector, introduction of the Internet and Web 2.0., and the introduction of personal web-enabled technological devices including the smartphone. The study found the greatest changes in the data included an increase in three story categories, namely, science and technology, law, order and crime, and sport stories. Economic stories continue to be present, suggesting they have a regular role in television news. These findings provided context within a study that has focused on the presence of user-generated content within television news.

The study builds on existing scholarship that has recognised the adoption of user-generated content into news by adding that the content has now become a regular ingredient in almost a third or 30 percent of prime-time television news bulletins. In particular, UGV has been found to be present in two to three stories per bulletin where it has been used primarily to supplement professional journalistic footage. A third or 36 percent of the stories featuring UGV covered an event that met the threshold of newsworthiness in its own right and would not have been covered by the network if the amateur footage had not been harvested from social media sites.

The study has found that UGV is broadening the way news stories are being told, where the content is valued for its ability to draw audiences beyond reportage and into the entertainment realm. UGV can be used to shock an audience, prompt an emotional response, provide a lighter treatment to a serious topic or provide balance to a bulletin that focuses on the more negative aspects of society. Furthermore, the role of UGV can become elevated above the role of the news topic itself, such as when the content provides eyewitness testimony or features well known individuals or those in a position of social power. Each of these treatments are motivated by a television network's necessity to maintain market share in an increasingly competitive media landscape.

#### **7.2.1. UGV and its suitability for television news work by category**

The study found that UGV was better suited to some categories of story than to others. The greatest number of stories present in the data were sports, which made up a quarter or 25 percent of stories. However, the ratio of sports stories featuring UGV to the total sports stories was only seven percent demonstrating that the uptake in this category was low. The finding is in conflict with Kwak, Kim and Zimmerman (2016) who argued that user-generated content in sport news was pervasive. However, the study found that user-generated content enabled television journalists to introduce a new dimension into the way they reported on sports which had previously been limited to a traditional conflict and results approach.

Law, order and crime stories were the second most frequent category among the UGV data, another category found to have a low ratio of 11 percent of stories featuring UGV to those that drew on professional footage. The study argues that UGV is considered by television journalists as best suited to lighter or non-controversial stories and, that the content has the ability to influence harder stories towards a softer treatment.

While fire and weather stories were the third and fourth most frequent categories found in the data, it was significant that half of the stories in the fire and weather categories drew on the same amount of professional content as amateur content. The amateur footage of fire and weather events was highly visual but, because of the unpredictability of the subject, often occurred outside the daily routines and geographic reach of a newsroom. Therefore, UGV provides the potential for an alternative library that broadens the scope and resources of a

newsroom, thereby offsetting practical limitations that would normally restrict a story from being told effectively as previously recognised in scholarship.

Now there is space for UGV of quirky animals and wildlife within television news despite academics claiming it is not real journalism (Bednarek, 2016). The footage was used to elicit an emotional response from an audience and was particularly evident in stories such as a raccoon living on a skyscraper facade or a bear going for a dip in a family swimming pool. These examples suggest that UGV is contributing to a lowering of the news bar beyond reports to include content that entertains, and brings a more dynamic mix to a television news bulletin. However, stories with complex perspectives that were thought-provoking or required expert information were less likely to draw on UGV as they were unlikely to generate shareable visual content.

Bell (1991) claimed most news outlets carried more news originated by other organisations than by their own journalists. The study has built on this notion and found that almost two-thirds or 62 percent<sup>11</sup> of stories featuring UGV were internationally sourced compared with 38 percent that were produced locally. The majority of the internationally sourced stories were sports stories, while all other categories were nearly half that percentage or fewer. This suggests that networks draw on international sport stories to fill the finite sports news hole when there is insufficient produced locally.

### **7.2.2. News values**

Naab and Sehl (2017) claimed quantitative studies into user-generated content in television news addressed the “what” questions but not the “why” or the “how” as academics found it challenging to understand the new form of media because of the continuously changing nature of its content (p. 1265). The study has gone beyond the quantitative findings and has conducted a deep dive analysis of the data in order to fill this gap. By identifying the most frequently applied news values, the study has been able to gain an insight into the decision-making processes that provide an understanding of why the use of UGV is common in television news. As Caple and Bednarek (2015) found, the judgement of news value can be connected with a series of factors that incorporated characteristics of the news happenings, as well as external

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<sup>11</sup> The figure of 62 percent combines internationally produced stories (59 percent), and stories that featured both international and local elements (3 percent).

aspects that impacted upon journalism practice. The notion was applied to the study, and drew on Harcup and O'Neill's (2017) news values as cultural determinants that influenced news selection in the post Web 2.0. era where there was a connection between how news workers identified the value of an event as newsworthy and the power and influence of UGV.

The study found that arresting *audio-visuals*, integral to television news (Tuchman 1975), were a strong driver in the desirability of UGV harvested for news, a news value that was applied to two thirds or 63 percent of the stories. *Shareability* was also a news value prominent in the data, that promoted the engagement of audiences that could be considered similar to the engagement of viewers on social platforms. However, if the UGV receives a high level of attention on social media platforms the news value of *shareability* becomes ephemeral as, Bell (1995) argued, broadcast news organisations did not like to publish their work after other sources had done so. Therefore, the study found *timeliness* was a critical factor when drawing on UGV for broadcast television news. Accordingly, the study argues that the news value of UGV requires a combination of the three news values of *audio-visuals*, *shareability* and *timeliness* to achieve the threshold of newsworthiness, as they offer greater news value collectively than they do individually. The finding builds on the current definition of UGV, "personal video generated and consumed by average users as opposed to 'produced video' which is produced and edited by professionals" (Abdollahian et al., 2010, p. 28), and advances it within the context of television news to become, "personal video harvested for news that features timely, arresting audio-visuals that is desired for its shareability as opposed to 'produced video' which is created for professional purposes".

Redfern (2014) claimed that studies had not devoted attention to the formal structure of television news and therefore the study contributes to this gap in scholarship. UGV with strong audio-visual properties was also found to be incorporated into the structural elements of a television news bulletin, as promotional teases or updates aimed at engaging and retaining viewer attention throughout the news hour. Furthermore, arresting UGV imagery contributed to the studio presentation of the news programme where it became stylised and superimposed on the electronic video wall behind the newsreader, a device used to visually orientate the audience towards the upcoming story (Yorke, 2013). However, the value of the image became lost when it either was visually manipulated or replaced in order to match the stylised look of the programme, misleading the audience with a visual promise of authenticity that

was not delivered in the story. There was no evidence of the practice being applied to stories of a sensitive nature or where facts were disputed but these findings support the study's overall view that the composition of a television news bulletin has developed a higher threshold value for lighter news items that satisfy a network's desire to present a balanced and entertaining bulletin.

### **7.2.3. Sources and acknowledgement**

Non-professional footage has been used by television broadcast news ever since the early days of domestic film recorders, amateur camcorders and more recently smart phone technologies (Boyle, 1992; Harrison, 2010; Reich, 2018; Tuchman, 1975). Until the 2000s, the content was clearly identified as 'library footage' but since then, the acknowledgement of non-professional content had become less common. However, UGV was found to carry its own news value when it was promoted within a story to offer an extra dynamic that could not be provided by professionals. For example, eyewitness footage of a gun attack that was posted after a story had broken was used to bring a new aspect to an existing story, where the footage was framed with, "New video's emerged ...". This suggests news editorial teams are drawing on the audience's desire for UGV and that a novelty factor present in the UGV takes a story beyond its conventional news value. Also, the study found the content was required to reach a high threshold of newsworthiness before the source of the material was acknowledged. An informal hierarchy had evolved that began at a lower level with an on-screen caption and, or, mention in the voiceover script, and at a higher level, the source would participate in an on-camera interview. Therefore, the news value of *personalisation* was a motivation for professional footage to be gathered in response to highly valued UGV, enabling the source to not only gain acknowledgement of their contribution, but also to tell a story through their own eyes. Filler material that merely supported the existing professional footage and not considered to be particularly newsworthy was outside the hierarchy and therefore received no acknowledgement.

There were no data gathered that would explain whether source recognition had been an agreed condition of access to the UGV by the television journalist or the network. However, an amateur videographer relinquishes ownership and authority over their content when it was provided to a television network. Therefore, there is a level of vulnerability that a source was likely to experience when the intention of their footage was not accurately reflected by its television broadcast counterpart. An outstanding example showed how lewd and

sensationalistic UGV had been framed to enhance an issue-based story with a tenuous link to the news report. However, the study found New Zealand television networks have adopted an industry-wide code of ethics, reinforced by the statutory agency of the Broadcasting Standards Authority that has the power to penalise and or fine those found to be in breach of its own codes.

#### **7.2.4. Linguistic features**

The study found television news was broadening scriptwriting genres. Eyewitness UGV was found to bring a real-time account of the action as if it was happening live, and by applying the simple present tense, a television journalist framed the footage as immediate and to be seen in the here and now despite the fact that it had been through a rigorous production process hours earlier. Here the merit of the UGV was favoured over the news event itself where the temporality of ‘nowness’ that would be lost if the footage was supported in the past tense. Furthermore, a tenseless scripting style had evolved that reflected a caption-like lexical structure that did not feature a specific temporality. Again, this reinforces the power of the immediacy of UGV footage, a characteristic unable to be achieved through the use of professional footage.

The study also found evidence of a crossover into scriptwriting lexis drawn from documentary and advertising genre that do not appear to have been connected in scholarship with television news scriptwriting prior to this study. These findings suggest a softening in the reporting of news as hard facts, although this was not necessarily motivated by the presence of UGV.

#### **7.2.5. Composition**

Few scholars have looked at the practices surrounding videotape editing (Schaefer & Martinez, 2009) and the study has addressed this gap through its findings in relation to the video-editing of UGV within television news. There was a recurring narrative structure found in the data that featured three structural ‘moves’ that the study proposes as a model:

A – UGV is featured at the beginning of the story to engage audiences, particularly where the footage has strong audio-visual properties that are of an acceptable technical quality

B – The body of the story draws primarily on professional footage to bring context through visuals and interviews;

A – UGV is repeated at the end of the story, where it is used to leave the audience with a memorable image, or provide the newsreader with an opportunity to react and therefore provide a seamless link to the rest of the bulletin.

The model was found to be present in six of the seven stories that were analysed closely. Within the model, UGV was frequently repeated multiple times while featuring a range of visual treatments that aimed to titillate rather than provide a straight report. This was a departure from standard conventions applied to the editing of professional footage that is seldom repeated unless the footage is particularly compelling, such as a winning action during a significant sports competition. The study also found that techniques that affected the social order of shots, and therefore the design of the scripted voiceover, were applied to minimise the visual differences between higher quality professional footage and the lower quality UGV footage. A participant commented that a television journalist's preference is to use their own footage that enabled them to work without the compromises often required when incorporating UGV. "The big thing is that you never know exactly what you've got," the participant said, referring to UGV.

### **7.3. Evaluation of the study's contribution**

UGV can offer a perspective on the world that differs from journalism (Wahl-Jorgensen et al., 2016), but the study found that does not mean it is better. Naab and Sehl (2017) argued that amateur communicators were drawing attention to their own individual interests which broadened the scope of topics beyond those associated with traditional journalism. An amateur's world view reflected their motivation to connect with their peers, express themselves and gain fame, notoriety or prestige (Wunsch-Vincent & Vickery, 2007). However, the motivation of a journalist differs as it is to report on newsworthy events where the footage and packaging becomes commodified and delivered as news. Therefore, the study argues one can never be a substitute for the other.

Because social media content provides a limited [and subjective] viewpoint (Jönsson & Örnebring, 2011; Naab & Sehl, 2017), the television journalist is required to apply journalistic

balance to the footage by contextualising and packaging it as a story that becomes embedded within the structure of a news bulletin. In doing so, not only do they add value to the original social media post, but they are also able to continue to play the role of a news gatekeeper, by seeding the view of the event and determining how it gets covered. The study argues that practices have evolved since Heinonen (2011) who claimed that the journalist's role of gatekeeper was put at risk during the stages of news production when user-generated content was applied. The study suggests that within contemporary news models, organisations have found ways to navigate past the disruptive effect on journalists' relationships with their audiences by retaining control over the production process.

Accordingly, the study argues that the hierarchy that exists between the journalist of higher ranking and the lower ranking amateur (Singer, 2014a) has become inflated. By labelling non-journalistic content as amateur, television journalists are able to ideologically conduct boundary-work in order to protect the autonomy of their professional activities. Nevertheless, the study found that when UGV became incorporated into television news, by default the amateur creator agreed to become a part of the television news process and therefore there was an overlap of roles. Therefore, this study agrees with Carlson and Lewis (2015) that boundaries are not divisive, but meeting points for distinct groups.

### **7.3.1. Timeliness and efficiency**

Journalism is a social institution that is susceptible to a variety of market and cultural forces that shape the news media (Schudson, 1989). The broadcast post-deregulation era, compounded by the introduction of the Internet, has led to media organisations experiencing decreases in advertising revenue that have resulted in the restructuring of newsrooms and laying off of staff (Pavlik, 2000, 2013) as described in section 2.4.1. A similar picture applies in New Zealand, where job losses peaked during 2020, when prominent industry players NZME, MediaWorks, TVNZ and Bauer Media axed a combined 637 jobs (Myllylahti & Hope, 2020). A shrinking workforce has challenged a newsroom's ability to service the finite primetime bulletin news hole of approximately 48 minutes where timeliness and efficiency are contributing factors. The study has found that any perception that UGV might be a timesaving solution is ill-founded as the incorporation of UGV in fact causes disturbances to the television news production. These disturbances occur throughout the news process, and have led to a more resilient work force who have developed their own strategies of



resourcefulness, a top attribute required to perform their role successfully (Randall, 2016). By developing resourcefulness in the technical requirements and organisation of their craft, television journalists are able to meet the challenges they face when incorporating UGV into their work.

An amateur videographer lacks an understanding of the professional processes of television news. For example, the video-recording approach taken by amateur videographers is significantly different from that of professional camera-operators. Professionally produced video is the result of team work recorded at a multiple-to-one ratio, where up to five minutes or more of footage may be gathered for a story that is edited to an average duration of approximately one-and-a-half minutes long. The camera operator is directed by the television journalist to gather a range of specific visuals that provide multiple editing options for the video-editor. When compiled, a rich shot-scene-sequence syntactic structure can be produced through the use of a voiceover to provide clues about the relative importance of a shot and its content (Abdollahian et al., 2010). However, amateur footage often is spontaneously generated, where a single ‘take’ is recorded in real-time by moving the camera in a way that is similar to how a person surveys a new environment. UGV footage sequences are unedited and unstructured, and shots are determined by the camera start and stop operations rather than by the importance of the content (Abdollahian et al., 2010). Frequently, the content is of a low standard where limited subject matter, erratic framing and the low technical quality of the visuals or the audio, or both, limit a television journalist’s ability to create a professional standard of report. Academics have argued that audiences value user-generated content for its roughness and authenticity (Griffin, 1992). The study found the industry participants considered the nature of the content was more important than its technical quality, and that a television journalist will use UGV “as long as the images are reasonably identifiable” (Participant 8). Expanding on Niekamp (2012), the study agrees that a more flexible approach to the standard industry filmic conventions has emerged, and has provided further analysis on how UGV becomes professional and non-professional footage is combined.

Other disturbances identified in the study included a lack of understanding by amateurs of the timeliness pressures of news production, where the team work of story producers, camera operators, researchers, reporters, video-editors and the on-air production team contribute to the multiple steps in the production process that are required to take place in time for the prime-

time 6pm bulletin. The study found that television journalists had a lack of confidence in UGV over content they had gathered as part of a professional team, and the study considers this may account for the reliance on gathering content sourced from official sources (Matheson & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2020). The study found that drawing on official sources cut out the middle-man, and as one participant commented, was “safe to use ” and, while not fool-proof, was considered safe enough not to require verification.

Verification legitimises a journalist’s role and sets the professionals apart from amateurs, yet the study found this continued to be an area identified as problematic by academics (Brandtzaeg et al., 2016; Matheson & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2020; Niekamp, 2012; Shapiro et al., 2013). The study agrees with Wardle et. al. (2014) that staff handling user-generated content were not sufficiently trained in verification, and that the processes relating to the treatment of user-generated content were often under-developed. The participants provided anecdotal evidence of occasional errors, and their general view was that training at all levels was required rather than learning on the job or leaving the task to younger, technologically savvy colleagues. The study proposes that simple and expedient practical strategies should be designed that are applied at the time of the first point of contact with a source.

### **7.3.2. News practice**

UGV is published freely on an amateur user’s social media site where limitations do not exist, as the individuals are posting content in order to satisfy their own needs (Wunsch-Vincent & Vickery, 2007). The recognition amateur users seek is achieved through interactions on social media, such as comments, and the number of likes, shares and ultimately, followers, but this is not satisfied in the same way when their footage is selected and republished by professionals as television news. While some amateur users will target television news networks inviting them to access UGV, for the vast majority, the uptake of UGV by television news is a sideline to posting content on social media. However, there is potential for a degree of prestige attached to amateur content broadcast within the framework of a primetime news bulletin, where a professional bar has been applied.

### **7.3.3. Sourcing UGV**

As a member of the broader newsroom, a television journalist’s decision to use the UGV will always be subject to the scrutiny of editorial teams in relation to the news of the day and the

amount of broadcast space available within the prime-time commercial news hour. The study found that it fell upon the junior members of a newsroom to identify potentially useful UGV content through monitoring social media sites, primarily Facebook, and by using online platforms such as Tweet Deck and Snapchat, and an editorial team exerted control over the content and determined whether it met the threshold of newsworthiness. When working in the field, UGV has become a cultural norm as one of the first things a television journalist asks the public for when arriving at a news event. Amateurs capturing footage of actions and events around them is so pervasive that journalists now expect that people would offer their content without being asked, or that someone had filmed it somewhere, and it was merely a case of finding it.

The television journalist remains the gatekeeper of what is and what is not incorporated into the news story in accordance with the consent of the network bulletin editors, serving to control journalism's flow of information allowed past the 'gates' (Vos & Thomas, 2019). However, the study raises the question of whether or not UGV stories are perceived by an audience less critically than those with professional footage. If so, then it suggests that UGV may best be used for softer or non-controversial stories, or used alongside critical material thereby directing the story towards a softer treatment. However, audience reception was an area of inquiry that is outside the parameters of this study.

#### **7.4. Implications for practice**

UGV is now part of the content in each mainstream primetime television news bulletin broadcast in New Zealand, a significant shift since the findings of Cook (2002) and Comrie (1996). However, the study has progressed scholarship by quantifying the phenomenon and investigating key attributes that enable academics to understand how and why UGV has become a constant factor each night within television broadcast news primetime bulletins in New Zealand.

UGV is now a normalised element of the prime-time television news bulletin in New Zealand, as at least one to two workers are interacting with amateur content every day. Therefore, it is timely for networks to acknowledge that the worker's role has become broader, as they have developed their own resourcefulness to accommodate technological knowledge now demanded of them. A step in the right direction has been the incorporation of story producers

in the newsroom that help to alleviate the time pressures associated with sourcing and processing amateur content while serving the tight daily turnaround of television news. However, verification practices continue to be inconsistent and these skills should be enhanced by targeted on-the-job training, particularly of junior newsroom staff who are frequently the first to monitor and scrutinise potential UGV. Furthermore, training in the rules relating to copyright and the ownership of social media also is needed, as the study found there was a perception that UGV was in the public domain and therefore freely available to be broadcast on television news under the guise of fair use. This is despite the fact that the New Zealand television networks had adopted a news-industry wide code of ethics, reinforced by the statutory agency of the Broadcasting Standards Authority codes. However, the study highlights the observation that newsroom workers felt they needed more training in this area.

### **7.5. Limitations**

A limitation of the study has focused on a New Zealand nexus that provides a starting point for other studies that explore the topic cross-nationally.

It has focused on the television journalist and their current work practices, much of which was based on the judgment of the journalist when making assumptions in relation to their perceptions of the audience. Audiences were not the foci of the study, nor was audience perception investigated.

The study was further limited by the unpredictability of news. Data were gathered during the middle of the year at a time when significant public events such as elections, or annual festivities such as Easter and Christmas could be avoided in order to minimise the potential effect they may have had on the content examined. Furthermore, by gathering data from two television news networks within the same period, there was an overlap in content where some of the same stories were covered by both networks. But rather than being a limitation, the study found this added to the richness of the data, as it enabled the Research to compare the treatment of UGV by a public broadcaster with that of a commercial network.

Finally, despite dialogue being conducted by the researcher with both New Zealand networks, only one organisation agreed to fieldwork being conducted in its newsroom.

However, the researcher is satisfied that the study was able to achieve relevant and valid data as a number of the participants who contributed had worked for multiple networks including an international television news organisation. Therefore, the insight the participants provided was applicable to television journalists across the New Zealand sector.

## **7.6. Recommendations for further research**

The key findings have contributed to scholarship in relation to the influence of UGV on the news agenda, and the implications for professional television journalists in relation to amateur content creators, also known as boundary-work theory (Gieryn, 1983, 1999; Johnson and Dade, 2018; Lamont and Molnár, 2002; Singer, 2015). As journalism responds to the changes in a globally connected society, the ongoing effects these are having on legacy television news requires ongoing research. Television broadcast news in New Zealand is experiencing an unpredictable time, where the public broadcaster, TVNZ, currently is the subject of a \$400,000 draft business case that would see the Government merge the network with Radio New Zealand (Collins, 2021). TV3's Newshub has been sold to the Discovery channel, an American multinational pay television entertainment network, making the American media corporate a substantial broadcaster in the New Zealand market (Myllylahti & Hope, 2020). Both these developments are likely to affect the business models of each, resulting in changes in resourcing and staffing levels that may have a negative impact on a newsroom's ability to function effectively. Therefore, this key period in our cultural history is worthy of further investigation in relation to television news and UGV if academics are to continue to monitor and critique the efficacy of the Fourth Estate.

Furthermore, while a global public response to the Covid-19 pandemic the found that the crisis substantially increased news consumption for mainstream media in all of the countries surveyed by the Reuters Institute, academics have argued this is almost certainly a temporary phenomenon (Newman et al., 2020). Therefore, these factors suggest that there is much change ahead for not only New Zealand networks, but also for global networks. Early investigations by the researcher into the alternative sources of video content used suggest an upsurge in the use of UGV and video conferencing, a technique that minimises a television journalist's ability to transparently scrutinise the authority of persons in a position of power when they are sheltering behind a laptop or smartphone camera lens.

The study has also provided a valuable benchmark for longitudinal studies of television news in order to document the changes in the role of the television journalist over time.

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## **Appendices**


Appendix 8.1. Participant information sheet.

Appendix 8.2. Consent form

Appendix 8.3. Ethics approval

Appendix 8.4. BSA Use of social media content in broadcasting

## Appendix 8.1. Participant information sheet.



### Participant Information Sheet

**Date Information Sheet Produced:**  
14 June 2017

**Project Title**  
“UGC and television news: how television broadcast journalists are meeting the challenges of harnessing user-generated video in their everyday work”

**An Invitation**  
My name is Danielle (Danni) Mulrennan and I am a Lecturer in Journalism at AUT University, who is currently undertaking a research project in the completion of my PhD. This research project aims to identify how television journalists are interacting with user-generated video in the workplace. As a working television journalist, you are invited to become a participant in this project. I acknowledge that the nature of news work is extremely competitive, however AUT is a neutral, academic, non-commercial entity which is not influenced by the demands placed on media work and performance. Accordingly, whether you choose to participate or not will neither advantage nor disadvantage you.

**What is the purpose of this research?**  
The purpose of this research is to inform journalistic practices in the areas where social media video and television journalism intersect. The results of this research project will be written up and submitted as a Thesis as part of a PhD (Doctorate of Philosophy). As a result of this research project, anonymised findings will also be featured in presentations to colleagues at AUT University, and also likely to feature in academic conference proceedings and/or academic journals.

**How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?**  
You have been identified by the news editor of your television organisation as a working television journalist with a minimum of five years experience in the field. The news editor has provided me, the Researcher, with your email and contact details. Your television company is in support of this research project.

**How do I agree to participate in this research?**  
You are invited to complete a Consent Form which will be provided by me, the Researcher. Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. You are able to withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of your data may not be possible.

**What will happen in this research?**  
You will be followed by the Researcher as you go about your daily work as a television journalist. What I am looking for, is an occurrence where you are required to interact with user-generated video within the production of your work. If and when this occurs, I would like to video-record this process, in other words the interactions you have with your colleagues, and if necessary, members of the public in relation to the production of the associated news story. The focus will primarily be on your actions and interactions within the television newsroom environment, such as at your desk, editing or any other relevant production areas. Copies of any online interactions relating to the production of the story - such as emails or social media activity - will also be required. Finally, I would also like to ask you some questions relating to the treatment of the UGC content you are working with. All video-recordings, online interaction and interview data will only be used for the purposes for which it has been collected.

**What are the discomforts and risks?**  
Throughout the research period, you may experience the discomfort of me, the Researcher, present as an observer. You may also experience discomfort when I video-record the work processes and interactions which directly relate to your treatment of this content. There are no risks to yourself or your property associated with this project.

## Appendix 8.2. Consent form.



### Consent Form

**Project title:** “UGC and television news: how television broadcast journalists are meeting the challenges of harnessing user-generated video in their everyday work”

**Project Supervisor:** *Dr Helen Sissons*

**Secondary Supervisor:** *Associate Professor Donald Matheson*

**Researcher:** *Danielle (Danni) Mulrennan*

☐ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 15 June 2017

☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.

☐ I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be video-taped and transcribed.

☐ I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.

☐ I understand that if I withdraw from the study then I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to me removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of my data may not be possible.

☐ I agree to take part in this research.

☐ I wish to receive a summary of the research findings (please tick one): Yes ☐ No ☐

Participant’s signature: .....

Participant’s name: .....

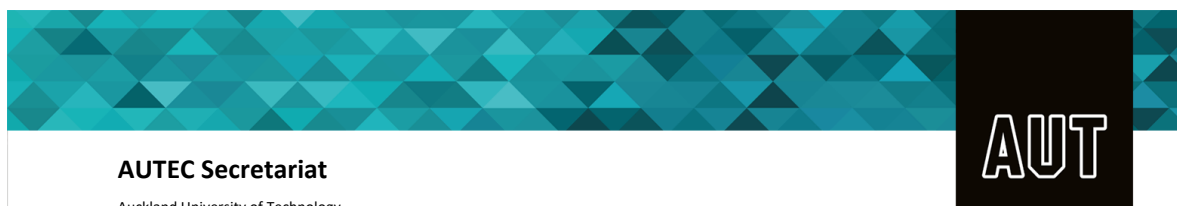
Participant’s Contact Details (if appropriate):  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Date:

**Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on March 6, 2018. AUTEK Reference number 17/236.**

*Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.*

## Appendix 8.3. Ethics approval



### AUTEC Secretariat

Auckland University of Technology  
D-88, WU406 Level 4 WU Building City Campus  
T: +64 9 921 9999 ext. 8316  
E: [ethics@aut.ac.nz](mailto:ethics@aut.ac.nz)  
[www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics](http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics)

6 March 2018

Helen Sissons  
Faculty of Design and Creative Technologies

Dear Helen

Re Ethics Application: **17/236 UGC and television news: How television broadcast journalists are responding to the challenges of harnessing user-generated video in their everyday work**

Thank you for providing evidence as requested, which satisfies the points raised by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC).

Your ethics application has been approved for three years until 5 March 2021.

#### Standard Conditions of Approval

1. A progress report is due annually on the anniversary of the approval date, using form EA2, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics>.
2. A final report is due at the expiration of the approval period, or, upon completion of project, using form EA3, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics>.
3. Any amendments to the project must be approved by AUTEC prior to being implemented. Amendments can be requested using the EA2 form: <http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics>.
4. Any serious or unexpected adverse events must be reported to AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.
5. Any unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should also be reported to the AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.

Please quote the application number and title on all future correspondence related to this project.

AUTEC grants ethical approval only. If you require management approval for access for your research from another institution or organisation then you are responsible for obtaining it. You are reminded that it is your responsibility to ensure that the spelling and grammar of documents being provided to participants or external organisations is of a high standard.

For any enquiries, please contact [ethics@aut.ac.nz](mailto:ethics@aut.ac.nz)

Yours sincerely,

Kate O'Connor  
Executive Manager  
Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: Danielle Mulrennan

## Appendix 8.4. BSA Use of social media content in broadcasting



### Media Release

25 July 2017

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#### **New Zealanders want broadcasters to ask permission before using their social media content**

New Zealanders' attitudes to their personal social media content and their expectations about how broadcasters can use it, are revealed in new research commissioned by the Broadcasting Standards Authority.

The research is the first of its kind to explore whether broadcasters are held to a higher standard by the public when it comes to publishing or republishing social media content. The finding is, they are.

The research found that, while New Zealanders are savvy about social media and understand that it may form part of the internet public highway, they believe broadcasters should observe strict privacy standards when considering using individuals' social media content.

Despite a strong information-sharing culture, members of the public do not consider that broadcasters can just take any social media content and use it in the broadcasting context. The public expect that social media content will generally remain in the context in which it was published. In some cases, the public interest may justify the republication of social media content in broadcasting. But issues of consent and privacy are core concerns that need to be addressed.

'Based on these findings, we see an opportunity to work with broadcasters to develop guidance about how and when to republish social media content that might affect personal rights,' Broadcasting Standards Authority Chief Executive, Belinda Moffat said.

The research is also relevant to a wide range of organisations that all grapple with issues relating to social media.

'The research provides insights into how New Zealanders are thinking and their expectations. It offers a starting point for conversations that we believe are urgent,' Ms Moffat says.

(page 1 of 3)

The research found:

#### ***Social media users***

- Kiwis have different motivations for capturing and sharing social media content – eg keeping in touch, relationship maintenance, expanding networks.
- Different types of users can be described as *Entertainers*, *Cautious Observers*, *Attention Seekers*, *Caring Connectors*, for example. Or in another model, *Lurkers*, *Socialisers*, *Debaters*.
- Social media behaviour is increasingly motivated by publication and users make strategic decisions about content, audience and platform.
- Different expectations and etiquette apply to different platforms, eg Facebook vs Snapchat.
- Despite a strong information-sharing culture on social media, the public expect broadcasters to observe strict privacy standards – suggesting there is a double standard at play.
- In general the public do not consider that broadcasters can just take any social media content and use it in the broadcasting context.
- The public expect their social media content will remain in the context in which they published it because taking it out of that context can significantly affect its impact and message, and the likely audience.

#### ***Broadcasters/Mainstream media***

- When selecting social media content, the starting point for many broadcasters is whether the content is newsworthy – but they are also alert to issues around individual rights, privacy and consent.
- Broadcasters rely on the general principle that it will usually be okay to republish information already in the public domain.
- However, broadcasters also use processes for dealing with social media content, including verifying the content, seeking consent and using publishing tools to protect individual rights such as pixilation and audience advisories.

#### ***Guidance for Broadcasters and the Public***

- The key consideration for broadcasters and other republishers is to treat social media content like any other source.
- Consent to use social media content should be sought.
- The public interest is important and may justify republishing social media content without consent in some cases, eg in crisis/emergency situations.
- However, broadcasters should distinguish between legitimate public interest and content that is simply interesting to the public.
- If republishing social media content will take the content beyond the original intended audience or intended purpose, then care needs to be taken. Taking information out of its original context can significantly affect its impact and the message it conveys, and may intrude on individual rights.
- Users of social media have responsibilities, legally and ethically, about what they share.

(page 2 of 3)



The research recommendations include:

- Broadcasters ought to take account of the context of the original social media publication before republishing it in the broadcasting context.
- Publicly available social media content should not necessarily be seen as a “free for all”. Issues of consent, individual rights and public interest need to be considered. Workable processes and techniques to safeguard against harm from republication need to be developed.
- It is important that entities that are concerned with these issues take a consistent approach.

‘The impact of social media on our society has been significant and its influence on contemporary culture, and particularly the media industry, continues to evolve. In our role the BSA must keep pace with rapid changes in technology, the rise of social media platforms, developing social dynamics, and the shifting legal landscape,’ said Ms Moffat.

The research was led by Dr Kathleen Kuehn, Victoria University of Wellington, and Katrine Evans, Hayman Lawyers, with focus groups with members of the public conducted by Colmar Brunton. A sample of broadcasters were also invited to complete a questionnaire to inform the research.

ENDS

**For more information contact Catie Murray at [media@bsa.govt.nz](mailto:media@bsa.govt.nz) or 021 623 794.**

#### **ABOUT THE BROADCASTING STANDARDS AUTHORITY**

The Broadcasting Standards Authority is an independent body that oversees the broadcasting standards regime in New Zealand. We do this by determining complaints that broadcasts have breached standards, by doing research and also by providing information about broadcasting standards.

**For more information see our website: [www.bsa.govt.nz](http://www.bsa.govt.nz).**

#### **ABOUT THE RESEARCH FOCUS GROUPS**

- Eight focus group discussions were conducted with 48 members of the New Zealand public.
- The focus groups were held in four locations around New Zealand – Christchurch, Wellington, Hawke’s Bay and Auckland.
- The groups were split by Younger (18-30 years) and Older (30+ years) participants, as well as Active and Less Active social media users. Active social media users were defined as being familiar with one or more social media platforms, eg Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter.
- The focus groups also contained a mix of genders, ethnicities, household income, and life stages (children/no children in the household) to ensure a diverse representation of social media users.
- Focus group discussions were qualitative rather than quantitative. This means the findings focus on themes that came out of the discussions, rather than statistics or the number of participants who mentioned a particular point.