The Future of Journalism

Papers from a conference organised by the BBC College of Journalism

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Preface

This book is the result of a BBC College of Journalism conference held in London at the end of 2008.

1. The End of Fortress Journalism

By Peter Horrocks

Peter Horrocks was appointed Director of BBC World Service in February 2009. He had been Head of the BBC's Multimedia Newsroom since 2005, and previously the BBC's Head of Current Affairs. Since joining the BBC in October 1981 as a news trainee, he has been the Editor of both Newsnight and Panorama, the BBC's domestic flagship television current affairs programmes. Peter wknd Pi aTJ3(ly)]TJBBC'asken th-13.3e Edisimp(vi)9.1(:ele)10.o

fortress journalism is deeply unsettling for us and requires a profound change in the mindset and culture of journalism.

Fortress journalism has been wonderful. Powerful, long-established institutions provided the perfect base for strong journalism. The major news organisations could nurture skills, underwrite risk and afford expensive journalism. The competition with other news organisations inspired great journalism and if the journalist got into trouble – legally, physically or with the authorities – the news organisation would protect and support. It has been familiar and comfortable for the journalist.

But that world is rapidly being eroded. The themes are familiar. Economic pressures – whether in the public or private sectors – are making the costs of the fortresses unsustainable. Each week brings news of redundancies and closures. The legacy costs of buildings, printing presses, studios and all the other structural supports of the fortress are proving too costly for the revenues that can now be generated.

Internet-based journalism may be the most significant contributor to this business collapse. But the cultural impact on what the audience wants from journalism is as big a factor as the economics. In the fortress world the consumption of journalism was through clearly defined products and platforms – a TV or radio programme, a magazine or a newspaper. But in the blended world of internet journalism all those products are available within a single platform and mental space. The user can now click and flit between each set of news. Or they can use an aggregator to pull together all the information they require. The reader may never be aware from which fortress (or brand) the information has come.

The consequence of this change in users' consumption has only dimly been understood by the majority of journalists. Most of the major news organisations had the assumption that their news product provided the complete set of news requirements for their users. But in an internet world, users see the total information set available on the web as their 'news universe'. I might like BBC for video news, the Telegraph or Daily Mail for sports results and the New York Times for international news. I can penetrate the barriers of the fortresses with ease.

The ability of audiences to pull together their preferred news is bringing the walls of the fortresses tumbling down. In effect, the users see a single unified news universe and use technology (e.g. Google, Digg etc) to get that cont

coined the neatest way of describing this: “Cover what you do best. Link to the rest.”

That linked approach requires a new kind of journalism, the opposite of fortress journalism. It is well described as “networked journalism”, a coinage popularised by Charlie Beckett at the LSE/Polis. And it requires organisations to be much better connected, both internally and externally. That kind of networking can be unnatural for the journalist or executive brought up in the fortress mentality. What changes might be required?

It means moving from a culture which is identified by the news unit you are in towards a culture based on audience understanding. So as a journalist don’t think of the world as being identified by the programme you work on or the network you provide for. Don’t think of the world solely through your paper or magazine. If you are a subject-based journalist, remember that the reader is likely to be consuming your journalism within a much wider frame of reference. They are probably not consuming news through your specialist prism. You’ll need to link with specialists in other fields. As a technology journalist, you might get more coming to your story via a link from the entertainment or consumer section than those choosing to read about technology.

News organisations can assist their teams by providing much richer data about how audiences are consuming. And we are helped in this by technological changes. On-demand journalism automatically generates much more specific data about audience usage of stories and story types. Most online sites have real-time systems that provide editors with information on story popularity.

There is a danger that such information systems could

prompt editors to prioritise stories simply according to the numbers. A recent study by Andrew Currah[1] identified a move towards a narrower agenda of sports and celebrity stories in newspapers as being partly caused by an over-concentration on these techniques. The BBC has developed test Beta software that allows the main BBC news front page to be presented according to the order of users' click preferences – i.e. the most popular stories at the top. It creates a news product that is pretty iz4( )8.4 Tw[6 -1.71iz4)-3.7 3

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or ethnic minorities. We know that there are certain parts of the audience that consume BBC News less than others. Detailed information will enable us to address these audience gaps. However we will always make sure that BBC News' editorial values are our guiding principles and not simply 'chasing audiences'.

Yet the biggest impact of greater use of audience insight is on overall organisational attitudes. Within the BBC, the research for the Creative Future project on journalism and for its re-assessment of the BBC News brand proved conclusively that, for audiences in the UK and internationally, the aspect of the BBC that they most appreciate is 'BBC News'. They value the BBC's individual news programmes, but it is that overall concept that matters most.

The integrity and dominance of the BBC News brand was a powerful driver in the rebranding of BBC News in 2008. But it has also acted as a powerful organisational and cultural driver. BBC News has been re-organised on multimedia lines. Instead of departmental teams gathering each morning in platform-aligned meetings, there is a single conference where all of BBC News comes together to discuss priority stories. Tithe barriers and secrecy within the organisation (our mini-fortresses) have been torn down. Programme plans and running orders that were once hidden are now open. In determining whether a piece of information or content should be held back from another part of BBC News or shared, we apply the test of a notional member of the audience looking at us. In almost all cases that mythical BBC licence payer would want good journalism shared as widely as possible.

It has also prompted major re-organisation. In the past, as various BBC services and programmes were launched, they were often added to the existing organisation without being properly integrated. The structure of BBC News could be imagined as a series of archaeological sedimentary layers, with the attitudes and working practices living on from the initial foundation of that unit. Recent reforms have adopted a holistic and integrated approach to working practices and all the other accretions of the many different

In recent years attempts have been made to create more cross-linking, and technology is now being employed to allow more automatic cross-fertilization. But the BBC website structure is still a better approximation of the organisational diagram than it is a mental map of the BBC's purposes and its audience needs. The only answer to this long-term is a BBC-wide appreciation of overall audience requirements and a ruthless focus on what we do best and what content we can provide, as a coherent proposition, to all our audiences.

What closer integration of content also needs to take into account is the proper balance between an efficient, centralised system and the needs of the BBC to serve a variety of audience needs. In a resource-constrained organisation the temptation will often be to centralise and standardise. BBC journalists typically describe this as a fear about producing bland 'news nuggets' in a news factory. BBC News has currently negotiated this balance by creating systems that ensure that basic BBC news content (e.g. press conferences, speeches, raw material) is gathered and processed as efficiently as possible. The greater efficiency of those systems leaves more resources available for differentiation around that core. Programme makers are able to chase alternative angles, explanations that illuminate the central news and therefore offer variety around it.

The UK and international news industry is under threat from structural and cyclical change. The

it may well be the first portent of a much wider sharing by the BBC to support the UK news industry. If other sectors of the news industry decline, the government has said it would consider the BBC offering widespread support – possibly to commercial radio news, network TV news and online operations at local and national level.

Some of this might not be through formal partnerships but by extending and formalising the underpinning of the media sector that the BBC has often supported. For instance, the BBC could share its audience research, its production technologies, its know-how in multimedia journalism, its training capabilities, like the BBC College of Journalism, and its technological expertise in areas such as metadata. Metadata and the effective 'tagging' of all content will be the lifeblood of the new sharing/linking journalism. So it would be appropriate for the BBC to develop that capability, as it is an organisation that should be the embodiment of sharing.

Beyond the sharing of facilities and capabilities, the BBC might also syndicate its content more widely to other websites and other news organisations. But if the BBC just develops partnerships through providing to others it will not be seizing the real two-way opportunity of partnership. To be true to that the BBC will need to consider taking content from its partners. And, online, it will need to be more generous in its inclusion of content from others and linking outwards. The BBC's strong position in on-demand content provision in the UK needs to be accompanied by a corresponding generosity in directing audiences to others who produce great content.

The BBC Trust has asked the BBC to link out more and there

coverage with partners who are also competitors and partnering non-media organisations such as NGOs. This will be tough stuff.

But new news journalists will need the flexibility to cope. They will need to network with the audience as much as they do with their colleagues. The audience is becoming a vast but still untapped news source. The most go-ahead journalists are using social networking tools to help find information and interviewees. Responding on blogs and using those to promote a dialogue with informed members of the audience is leading to improved journalism. It can be time-consuming but it can yield real ben1 of e2-cen1 of9(w)3

2. Introducing Multimedia to the Newsroom

By Zoe Smith

Zoe Smith started in journalism at the age of 15 with a weekly column in the Watford Observer. While at university in Glasgow she wrote for The Herald, and she worked at The Financial Times during her studies at City University in London. A haphazard path from the Observer's internship scheme to Rolling Stone Italy, Press Gazette and the Daily Mail online led her to her current position as an online broadcast journalist at ITV News. She also runs networking events for journalists under 30.

As someone who has 'grown up digital', it's hard to comprehend how news organisations could even question the need to make exciting content available on multiple platforms. The figures speak for themselves. Just Google it.

Nearly a quarter of the world's population use the internet. Every year 200 million join the online revolution. According to Google, the internet is the fastest growing communications

medium in history. When the internet went public in 1983 there were 400 servers. Today there are well over 600 million.

If you don't get why you as a journalist, editor, programme or organisation need to invest intelligently in web platforms, you risk being ignored by an ever growing number of young people for whom television is an irrelevant medium. In his book Grown up Digital, inspired by a $4 million private research study into the habits of young people aged between 11 and 30, Don Tapscott reveals that 74 per cent of the UK's 'Net Generation', if forced to chose, would prefer to live without television rather than the internet.

I learnt first hand the importance of recognising the power of online platforms when Press Gazette, the magazine for which I was the broadcast reporter, was threatened with closure. Its illustrious history spanning more than half a century at the heart of Fleet Street wabits o17centurt218mportanfa612.6(ts-h)0.4(Its)yf ia1 T, 715 Tw2

teams of enthusiastic young people who spend shifts spanning 24-hours gathering content and editing video and text. Added value and exclusive content is produced in the ITV newsroom by two web producers and correspondents, reporters and producers alike. The content is then hosted on a channel within the ITV.com network. We're some way from a fully converged operation.

It was only with the relaunch of News at Ten in January 2008 that the two-person team from the digital end of ITN moved into the ITV Newsroom and started producing and commissioning multimedia content. Encouraging journalists and editors to think about more than one platform has not been simple. Being in the same room doesn't automatically mean that people working on different media will be thinking on the same page.

The *modus operandi* of newsgathering and news output within broadcast operations has been honed over many decades. At ITV News, the process of providing content for various outputs has been operational for barely over a year. A great leap forward has been made by including online producers in the daily programming meetings to get an understanding of what stories are being covered and what angles different bulletins are taking. Efficiency is the key to multiplatform journalism – define a workflow that works for your organisation and ruthlessly stick to it.

In the main, most editors and journalists will admit that they are technically challenged. This culture will have to change as multiplatform journalism becomes an issue more of the present and less of the future. Already we've witnessed the growing importance of 'developer days' where news organisations open the doors to the geeks to come up with inspirational new ways to 'give

your content wings'. The BBC already does this very well through Open Source projects and via Backstage, its web-based developers' network. Collaboration is the key to successful journalism in an increasingly connected and shared media space.

On a daily level, programmers and developers or journalists with programming skills should increasingly be an integral part of journalism teams. Charles Arthur, editor of The Guardian's Technology supplement, blogged: "If you're doing one of those courses where they're making you learn shorthand and so on, take some time to learn to code.

"All sorts of fields of journalism – basically, anywhere you're going to have to keep on top of a lot of data that will be updated, regularly or not – will benefit from being able to analyse and dig into that data, and present it in interesting ways." His advice, although aimed at journalism students, is equally relevant for practicing journalists looking to extend their skills.

Be clear what your organisation hopes to achieve through multiplatform journalism. Respect the technology but make it work for you; just because you have shiny new gadgets doesn't mean they're going to be the best medium for telling all stories. It requires time to craft good journalism, so maybe asking your correspondent to send a vlog (video blog) or even a blog from a breaking news event may not be the best use of their time. If you urgently require content for your website, why not use Twitter? It's less time consuming but still enables users to track a moving story, and is also the perfect vehicle for viewers to share their knowledge with journalists in real time.

Adding a multimedia team to the structure of your newsroom

information outside of traditional broadcast or publication deadlines, but they allow viewers to interact with journalists and each other through comments. This enables the platform to be more than a destination; rather it develops into a network where like-minded people will come to interact.

The web is becoming an increasingly social platform – this is about more than buzzwords like ‘Web 2.0’. Around one in every six minutes that people spend online is spent in a social network of some type. In January 2009, Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg noted that, with 150 million people around the world actively using Facebook, if the social network were a country it would be the eighth-most populated in the world, just ahead of Japan, Russia and Nigeria.

Yet if you think you’ve got the internet cracked, you may wish to reconsider. There is no room to rest on your laurels in this constantly evolving medium. In a recent interview with ITV News, Sir Tim Berners Lee – the professor credited with inventing the World Wide Web – said: “Website designers will get better and better at following guidelines about how to make things work on mobile phones. More and more people are going to be using mobile phones and things you put in your pocket, to access the web. That’s a really important move.”

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App Store, making it the number-one free news app globally. Who ever said the younger generation isn't interested in news? The key is making it available in a format that they want to use.

3. Multimedia Reporting in the Field

By Guy Pelham

Guy Pelham is Live Editor for BBC Newsgathering. He specialises in identifying new ways of reporting live for all BBC network news outlets. He works with technical colleagues in News and across the BBC to help select the right equipment and provide it to journalists on the ground. Previously, he worked as Editor, Special Events for World Newsgathering and as Deputy UK News Editor. He has worked extensively in the field on stories including the Madrid train bombings, the death of Pope John Paul ll, the Suffolk murders and the Sheffield floods.

'Oh God, not *another* outlet!' That was the cry from hard-pressed correspondents when bi-media became part of our working lives all those years ago. We heard it again when 5 Live and then News 24 arrived on the scene. This time it's about multimedia – and BBC people out on the ground are asking serious questions about how we'll cope.

Will multimedia mean an increased workload and, if it does,

will the quality of our journalism suffer – especially when budgets are tighter and we can deploy fewer journalists? Can we afford to do it? Can we afford *not* to do it?

One example sums up the multimedia dilemma as aptly as any. My colleague David Shukman went to the remote Pacific island of Midway. The story: how the vast amounts of plastic

through it all. Even though blokes aren’t supposed to be any good at multi-tasking.

technology of newsgathering has been revolutionised in the past five years.

Broadband internet is now available in the world's most remote locations, thanks to ultra-portable, battery-powered BGAN satellite terminals. With a laptop and camera, our journalists can go live for TV and radio, file video and audio, write text, and stay connected to the rest of the BBC. It has transformed our global news coverage.

News teams can use mobile broadband to search for pictures on Jupiter[1], via Davina[2], and pull it onto their laptop for editing, thus saving endless phone calls and frustration. Many network correspondents anchored to a live point now rely on BlackBerrys to keep them across the latest developments.

Network Rural Affairs Correspondent Jeremy Cooke often works with a VSAT vehicle, a small van with a lightweight satellite dish on board which gives him fast broadband via satellite. It means he can feed, or do lives for TV and radio, and work online via his own fast broadband connection ... wherever he may be. "VSAT buys me time, which allows me to do more journalism and better journalism," he says.

But there is a flip-side. There's always a flip-side. The better the kit on location, the higher the risk that our people will be asked to do even more. And if newsdesks don't understand the capabilities – and limitations – of the kit they deploy, then cock-up will follow.

[1] The BBC's news media server in London

[2] Another BBC media sharing system ('Digital Audio Video Interactive News Archive')

So, maybe in the end technology can't be the complete answer. The journalist will eventually be overwhelmed by the sheer size of the BBC machine. Jeremy Cooke again: "If you are the lone correspondent on the breaking story, things become near impossible. That's when we need the most support and understanding from newsdesks. It's not a question of being unwilling; sometimes it's not do-able."

So does the answer lie back at Television Centre? The omens are not auspicious; there are plenty who say the BBC has

multiplatform properly, rather than as just a bolt-on when we have the time? The question for the future is how we draw all these strands together – multi-skilling, technology, better co-ordination – to make multimedia an integral part of what we do.

4. Dealing with User-Generated Content: is it Worth it?

By Paul Hambleton

As Executive Producer of Television Newsgathering at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Paul Hambleton has been thinking about and working with user-generated content (UGC) since 2007. He says he has learnt that it's easy to agree that UGC is worthwhile. But exactly how media professionals should engage with it is a more difficult question.

We were aware of the wave of social networking, and YouTube hysteria; video uploads and citizen journalism. Our job was to try to figure out how the media could get involved. Clearly there was a need and a want from the public to express themselves, and our conventional media practices were not giving them that opportunity.

But where are we now, in 2009? Let's just say we are in the game. Media organisations around the world are developing citizen

journalism sites; they are building three-dimensional web pages with comments and ‘your video and audio’ opportunities.

We solicit ideas and comments from our radio and television audiences. However, we still struggle to understand the intersection point between our audience, our journalism, and their feedback.

A group of aboriginal leaders from the central Canadian province of Manitoba urge that hate charges be laid against CBC, the Canadian public broadcaster. Why? It’s because of some poorly-moderated user-generated comments which escaped into the public domain on our website – in the name of free expression.

It’s the kind of stuff that defines that stupidity point in our intersection with our media audience: the point or moment where freewheeling UGC seems to enable and indeed to empower the

When we ask our audience what our core values should be, they rank those old classics up there at the top: the 'real story', presenting all sides, not taking sides, dealing with issues that affect my daily life, and so forth. A comprehensive poll done by the CBC in 2008 told us so. You have to go right down to the end of the priority line before you will find 'user-generated content' as something that our audience is asking us to facilitate. Yes, it could be that awful phrase that implies some kind of homework assignment; but really what it tells us is that we, the media, have not yet figured out how to make that connection beyond asking for written contributions in the comments sections of our online news pieces. We have this adolescent understanding of our relationship with our audiences that rarely get past a kind of high-school type of environment: here's what we want from you; and here's how you can get involved.

So how do we empower the audience to engage with us without it looking like we just want freebies from them? And how do we engage more motivated contributors, without alienating the natural blog-style participants? How do we raise the level of engagement?

We need clarity of purpose: what exactly would we like from our audiences, and what are we offering them in return? Let's take the 'contract', if you will, with YouTube. It is simplicity itself: people submit material, and other people watch it. It has no value beyond that which is attached to it by the contributor and those who watch it. It is judged by audiences in 'views', and the contributor knows there is nothing else expected.

But people expect more from the media – more than idle

comments from those with time on their hands, or random videos of bad weather or car accidents. Many of those would-be contributors want journalistic standar

was self-mediated. We thought this was brilliant, but within a week two interest groups begin freeping[2] the site: a group for abortion, going head to head with a group against abortion. They went toe to toe. Our idealistic and motivated contributors lasted but a few minutes in the sea of abortion rhetoric. In the end, the top two wishes for a better Canada were a nation that supports abortion and one that opposes it. Other more genuine ideas wound up buried in the vitriol of the abortion debate. Why? Because without moderation the wisdom of the masses naturally descends to a common denominator that is determined by those with the most time on their hands. Free expression is not terribly compassionate.

Which brings us to that stupidity point once again. When does empowering people to take part become just a blurge of bad taste? As with any change, we need to move slowly but surely.

In Canada, research is telling us that people are increasingly taking in their news on multiple platforms. More than a quarter of regular news consumers are drawing on four platforms: TV, radio, newspapers and online. A third of them use at least three. Clearly our audiences are looking for a new experience with their media, or at the very least they are open to it. Left to their own devices, they are creating their own new experiences.

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[2] From the Ethics Scoreboard website: 'freeping' is *"coordinating efforts to overwhelm online polls with thousands of silly, obscene, irrelevant or politically pointed responses. The name comes from Free Republic, a politically conservative activist website that has a readership especially responsive to poll sabotage requests. Recently Grand Forks, North Dakota City Council candidate Scott McNamee asked his fellow Free Republic visitors to stack an online poll offered by a Grand Forks radio station's website. When his opponent questioned the ethics of the stunt, NcNamee apologised while*

Our research also tells us not to rush headlong into this. We in the media are quick to peddle the newest ideas or technologies, and we forget that our audiences can't or don't want to move that

to be proud of.[3]

How do we reassure that writer and that witness that this is what we are looking for: honest and authentic accounts of real life?

5. Video Games: a New Medium for Journalism

By Philip Trippenbach

Philip Trippenbach studied international development and economics in Canada before starting work as a TV journalist for the CBC in New York. Since then, he has discovered that the many hours he spent playing video games in his childhood were, in fact, preparing him for a brave new world of media development. He now works in Current Affairs Development for the BBC in London, where he develops interactive journalism projects. Philip's work centres on identifying and exploiting the new opportunities for journalism provided by social media and gaming.

Video games are the youngest medium in our civilization. But in the few decades of their existence, they've come further faster than any other medium in history. Video games have become a mainstream medium – in fact, they are poised to become (and may already be) the dominant medium of our society. There are more

gamers than football fans in the UK.[1] Video games outsell both films and music.[2] And despite the current recession, their sales are growing at double-digit rates[3], while other media sales figures are steady, or declining.[4]

It takes time for the full potential of new technologies to be realized. When they were introduced in the early 20th century, both radio and television were dismissed as frivolous entertainments, unsuited to the serious business of journalism. Though some people still perceive video games as little more than gung-ho escapism, like any medium they are capable of great sophistication and intelligence.

The gaming audience is large and diverse. Gamers are ready for factual games that help them understand the world around them. And the interactive nature of video games gives journalists an opportunity to reach audiences in powerful new ways. It is an opportunity not to be missed.

In the last five years, video games have climbed out of their early 'geek' niche. In the UK, one of the most mature gaming

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markets, the average age of a video gamer in 2008 was 33.[5] Over a third (37%) of the UK's population describe themselves as active gamers[6] – and that's across all age categories, including the over-60s. In the 16 to 29 age bracket, the proportion of 'active gamers' rises to 48%.[7] And essentially *everyone* in the under-16 bracket is an active gamer.[8]

What's more, the proportion of gamers in every age bracket is rising with each passing year. Video gaming is not a youth pastime that people abandon as they grow older. Rather, it is

social and outgoing as non-gamers, if not more so.[10] What's more, the gender balance of gamers is close, though men and women do tend to play different games.[11]

Of course the primary reason most people play video games is because they're fun. But many players report that they also find games more stimulating and more thought-provoking than TV or the cinema.[12] BBC audience research indicates that an overwhelming majority of gamers of all ages feel that games can

Dopico, one of the game's makers:

"This is an adult game – it requires a lot of skill, and knowledge of military tactics. It attempts to depict modern military combat accurately. We have many players from the military. They contribute from their experiences, and they consult with us informally on accuracy. People come straight back from Iraq, play the game, and they like the feeling of realism they get. Some of the team members are actually doing military training at the moment … America's Army is the game most played by military people, and we are the second-most played – the military users provide an invaluable feedback, like mailing us and saying 'the AK47 sounds good, but it should actually reload like this ..."[15]

America's Army[16] is a free game used as a recruiting tool for the US armed forces. Arguably it is advertising or propaganda rather than journalism, but it shares Insurgency's commitment to accuracy and realism. Both of these games are, in a very real sense, interactive records of what it's like to be a soldier on the streets of Baghdad.

Where games really come into their own is as a medium for deep explanatory journalism – especially journalism about complicated systems with many inter-relationships, interacting forces and factions. These can be important situations to understand, such as factional politics on the streets of Baghdad in

[15] Personal communication with the author

[16] http://www.americasarmy.com/

2005-06, or the complicated realities of the global fight against malaria. This sort of story is very difficult to tell in text, and doubly so in video, as these media require journalists to arrange dynamic relationships and issues into some sort of fixed linear narrative.

Video games allow a different approach. A video game journalist can construct a model of how things work and interact in the situation being described, and allow the audience to explore the model at leisure.[17] The accuracy of this mode of journalism consists of making sure that the model reacts to a user's actions in the same way that it would in reality, generating an authentic experience and applicable understanding.

The successful Sim City series of games is a perfect example of this sort of interactive communication. Though not intended as journalism, these games do have a factual theme and are an example of how a game can be used to increase understanding of a factual subject. Sim City puts players in charge of planning, growing and running a city. Starting from an empty patch of land, players must build the energy grid, plan the transport network, set taxes and provide services. Though the cities that players design are fictional, success in this game requires an internalized understanding of very real concepts such as infrastructure, tax policy, budgeting and zoning practice. This is dry stuff by any account, but the games in this series have sold over 18 million copies, and Sim City players can spend dozens or hundreds of hours on the game.

[17] Ian Bogost, a professor at the Georgia Institute of Technology, calls this kind of communication 'Procedural Rhetoric' and discusses it further in *Persuasive Games: the Expressive Power of Video Games* (MIT Press, 2007)

Not every topic will be appropriate for treatment in a journalistic video game. Games as journalism are less useful for telling the facts of *what happened* in a given past event. Video, audio and text maintain their respective advantages here, not least because they can be produced very quickly. However, none of these media can match the power of video games to explain the

also make arguments about current events and are well worth a play.

Video games are a very powerful medium that can achieve

trains accurate aim and applied combat tactics. Sim City requires urban planning skills. Other popular games are challenges in geometry (Tetris), hand-eye coordination (Wii Sports), rhythm (Guitar Hero) and football tactics (FIFA Soccer).[24] In all these cases, players experience fictional (though more or less realistic) scenarios. But the skills and situational understanding players gain from facing these game challenges are very real.[25]

This challenge structure is at the heart of games' value to

complex realities of a difficult issue.

At 2pm on Sunday, 16 November 2008, a 15-year-old boy from Halland province in Sweden collapsed in an apparent epileptic fit. He was rushed to hospital, where doctors found him to be dehydrated and exhausted from a prolonged period of extreme concentration. After a brief stay in hospital on an electrolyte drip, he was discharged. The cause of his collapse: Wrath of the Lich King, an expansion of the massively multi-player online game World of Warcraft. The boy had gotten a copy of the game at midnight on the Saturday and gathered with his friends to play it. The experience engrossed them so much that they stayed up, not tiring, forgetting to eat or drink, for over 36 hours of continuous play.[26]

This story was reported in several papers as a lamentable example of what video games can do to people. The boy undoubtedly made some poor choices. But his story illustrates a larger point.

In the video game, journalists have at their disposal a medium so powerful, so engrossing, that people can forget to eat or sleep while using it. Players of World of Warcraft memorize great tomes of arcane knowledge to gain an advantage in the game's invented world. Why should this kind of power be restricted to fiction and fantasy?

Video games are as powerful as television, radio, or even books. It is time we started using them for more than entertainment.

Bibliography and additional reading are available at http://del.icio.us/trippenbach/FoJ

6. The Audience and News

By Matthew Eltringham

Matthew Eltringham is Assistant Editor, Interactivity, running BBC News' UGC (user-generated content) Hub which manages the thousands of emails and pictures sent to the BBC every day. He set up the Hub in the spring of 2005 as a pilot project, just before the 7 July terror attacks on London. It's now a 24/7 operation providing content for every part of the BBC's news operation. He started in journalism as a reporter in the Exeter district office of the Western Morning News (where among other stories he reported on Exeter City Football Club winning the old Fourth Division title). He joined the BBC in 1993 as a producer for 5 Live. Before setting up the UGC Hub, he was also an output editor on Sir David Frost's Sunday morning show Breakfast with Frost and spent four years in the BBC's Westminster newsroom as news editor and planning editor.

The UGC Hub is a team of 23 journalists based in the BBC's multimedia newsroom in London, working across all three

platforms – television, radio and online.

On an average day we get around 10,000 to 12,000 emails, as well as hundreds of pictures and video clips, sent to us from all over the world.

These emails provide a fantastically rich source of content for all the BBC's news output. Our job is to mine it for the best bits and make the most of them for the BBC's news output.

But that is only part of the job. The material sent directly to us represents the tiniest fraction of the conversations and content online at any one time. So we are increasingly moving the focus of our work into the much wider and wilder world of the web itself.

There are four key aspects to the influence that our direct dialogue with our audience has on our journalism.

First of all, we use the opinions they share with us, mainly through the News website's messageboard, Have Your Say[1].

When the Archbishop of Canterbury gave an interview to the World at One debating the case for the incorporation of some aspects of Sharia law into UK law, we received around 9,000 emails that afternoon 6 Tcmeand vi

against the Archbishop. However, it was clear from the response from our audience the previous afternoon that the papers were in the main following public opinion rather than leading it. Thus, as a result of our relationship with the audience, the BBC was ahead of the game.

But it's not just the opinions of the audience that matter – it's also their experiences.

In 2008, there was a minor uprising on Nauru, an island off Papua New Guinea, which also happens to be the world's smallest republic.

The website reported the story and we asked for a response from our audience. Within four hours we had received several emails, verifiably from the island, telling us all about what had happened. We were then able to add telling detail to the reporting of the story.

The relationship with the audience is not linear: the size and volume of the response does not translate directly into news coverage. In the case of Nauru, the incredible global reach of the BBC meant that our audience was able to share their experience with us, which again allowed us to improve and influence our journalism in a way that almost no other news organisation can.

It's a small example of the invaluable role that the audience plays in our storytelling. That role is more dramatically illustrated by pictures of bomb-damaged buses in central London, or video of burning cars at Glasgow Airport.

The other key area where our relationship with our audience affects our journalism is when they share discovery with us.

The story of the hijacking of the Sirius Star (in 2008) is one

striking example. The story broke on a Monday morning and we immediately asked for a response from the audience. By late afternoon we had the name Peter French – one of the captured Britons – and his role on the tanker, in an email from an impeccable source[2].

By Tuesday afternoon we knew the town where he and his family lived, which Newsgathering colleagues followed up. We had also recorded an interview with a former shipmate who had emailed us confirming further personal details.

But that's not all – we had interviews with Somalians, who had emailed us from Puntland in support of the pirates.

And we had emails from a number of sailors from around the world who had either just returned from the area or who had themselves been kidnapped. Most of these gave interviews across TV, radio and online.

We've extended our remit by appointing an interactive reporter to follow up stories and leads suggested to us by the audience.

One email forced a change in government policy when Newsnight followed it up and reported that foreign workers at

them[3]. The answer was a resounding ‘no difference’.

For a few years, high-profile commentators like the BBCs Richard Sambrook, Director of BBC Global News, have been arguing that mainstream media ‘don’t own the news any more’.

A couple of years ago that might have seemed like a bit of geeky scaremongering. But if you look at what went on during the US elections, for example, it’s a prophecy that is coming true.

Citizen journalism organisations like the Sayfie Review[4] reported live on Qik[5] – a video streaming website – from polling stations across Florida. The standards of broadcasting were mixed – but they got their fa

discovered the value of the micro-blogging site during the Tibet uprising of March 2008, when we used it to find an eyewitness in Lhasa. Since then it's become *de rigeur* to use Twitter in any breaking news environment.

It first came to mainstream attention during the Mumbai terror attacks in November 2008. But it was when a picture of a plane crash-landing in the Hudson River in January 2009 was posted to Twitter within five minutes of the event that it became headline news in its own right[7].

There is also Facebook, Flickr and all the other social networks that allow us to connect with people across the world. That sometimes means starting conversations ourselves, as well as monitoring what is being said.

We reported the Burma uprising of autumn 2007 through an equal mixture of content coming in directly to us and content we found on the Burmese blogs and social networks.

And we have joined Seesmic, Qik and 12 Seconds – video chatrooms that have growing global communities which have all provided us with great video contributions.

The focus for us is the audience. Sometimes, because we're the BBC, they'll come to us; more often we'll have to go to them.

But wherever it is, we have to listen because there is always someone, somewhere with something to tell us.

[7] http://twitpic.com/135x

7. Delivering Multiplatform Journalism to the Mainstream

By Derren Lawford

Derren Lawford joined the BBC in 2000 as a tri-media Senior Broadcast Journalist for Radio 1 Newsbeat, making radio packages, writing features for the website and reporting for BBC Three. Since then, he has worked as a documentary maker and presenter for Radio 1 and 1Xtra, before moving into TV production and development.

My first foray into the world of multiplatform with the BBC Current Affairs department came about through my work on Born Survivors, a newly-commissioned strand on BBC Three that I had helped to develop. It aimed to tell extraordinary stories of young people surviving whatever life throws at them.

The series consisted of four one-hour documentaries which explored serious and significant issues for young people – teen pregnancy, self-harm, young carers and children who grew up in severe poverty.

I knew that these subjects would be of interest to the audience long after the transmission on television. I also knew that the very people we wanted to engage with in these films might not

on air and directed listeners to the website, where they could click on a link to view all the minisodes. The BBC Three website then provided a reciprocal link on the Born Survivors page to The Surgery's website, specifically its advice pages, which have a confidential phone number people can ring.

Then on the days the programmes aired, the BBC News website ran features based on the characters and streamed the Kizzy minisode, too.

To extend our online reach even further, I also researched the best places to 'seed' these minisodes on non-BBC websites. Why? Because we wanted to help our potential audience to find the minisodes, especially if they wouldn't naturally gravitate to the BBC. Once found, we wanted them to be shared among our audience and 'broadcast' by them. That's why we uploaded all the minisodes ahead of the terrestrial transmission to YouTube, Bebo, Facebook blogs and messageboards, and made them embeddable, too.

In the case of Cut up Kids, we also targeted websites connected to the issue raised in the film, namely self-harm. We wanted both to create an online community around the season and tap into existing communities.

So I contacted LifeSigns and Recover Your Life (which has over 20,000 members online). They are two of the best-supported websites for self-harmers, acting as gateways to this world for harmers and their friends and families. Both sites agreed to back the Born Survivors season and the Cut up Kids minisode on their websites, blogs, as well as their Facebook and MySpace pages. This lent the self-harm film an implicit credibility.

So what happened next? Well, the articles on the four films on BBC News online recorded a total of 879,617 page impressions. The Kizzy minisode was watched just over 33,000 times via the News website.

On YouTube, the minisodes have been watched 65,956 times and counting. They sparked a discussion among the YouTube audience about the issues at their heart – which continues today.

The following comment was posted on YouTube more than 12 months after the Cut up Kids minisode appeared online in 2007:

*survivors - bbc3 it should come up...*there is visable scars*"*

"Sorry if this has already been posted...
http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbcthree/progra...s/cut_up.shtml"

One of the contributors in the film also got involved in the debate:

"Hey, I'm Beth (from the documentary). I really think that no one should judge it, or have any strict opinion before watching it…"

The Recover Your Life users also counted down to the television transmission before posting immediate reviews:

"It's different to what i was expecting but it's a nice change they could of made it poorly and caused people to trigger i suppose Channel 4 would of done something like that

Not triggered.... which is rare for a doc about self harm seemed pretty well made to me..."

The Cut up Kids film, minisode and multiplatform impact were recognized last year with a Young People's Media award at the Mental Health Media Awards.

But that wasn't the only multiplatform success from the season.

Kizzy: Mum at 14 has pulled in a cumulative television audience of over 5 million and viewing figures have increased over time, because the audience discussed the issues and posted television listings on the sites we targeted. The third repeat on

online independently of the BBC Three programmes. Like the minisodes, these co-created films would also be embeddable, providing the audience with a real sense of ownership.

The Media Trust has close ties to hundreds of grassroots organisations that enable young people to make their own media – whether television, drama, animation, photography or websites. For this pioneering project, it agreed to find some of the most disadvantaged young people across the country who would be interested in making short films about their lives. The only criterion we stipulated was that the film should address the theme of being a 'born survivor' and be no longer than five minutes. The final films covered subjects such as living with an illness, homelessness, living in care and being a young refugee.

Each of the nine young filmmakers worked with a BBC mentor, one of whom was Tom Marchbanks:

"I spent a couple of weekends over the summer with my mentee, a 16-year-old boy on a one-way ticket to prison or hospital. He certainly had issues, but also amazing vision and creativity. The best part for me was becoming friends, colleagues almost, and seeing his initial suspicion of me replaced with interest and excitement for the project. The worst part was his time-keeping. The whole idea of taking skills out into the community while making

The BBC Three series and the online series of co-created films were both marshalled by Series Producer Sarah Waldron:

“Finding the balance between young people feeling free to create their own content and it fulfilling the BBC guidelines was

material will be used and how long-lasting the impact will be. And I think that does concern us all."

The co-created films were also posted on YouTube and broadcast

audience once the programme finishes. A key part of my job was relaunching and redesigning the site, but I also needed to create a team to fulfil my multiplatform ambitions for a strand that is on almost every week of the year and has been on our screens since 1953.

My team is embedded within the main Panorama production team, so there's a constant flow of information and content both ways. I recruited people with a variety of skills including writing, picture editing, self-shooting, desk top editing, web encoding, production assistance, blogging and archive research.

To ensure that multiplatform thinking and practice is central to Panorama, I liaise closely with the Editor, Sandy Smith, and Deputy Editors Frank Simmonds, Ingrid Kelly and Tom Giles, from the commissioning process right through to the production.

So much work goes into a Panorama film, and the website is the perfect platform to showcase the best of it online. For Britain's Terror Heartland, there were blog posts from Deputy Editor Tom Giles, with reporter Jane Corbin providing extra context, while an extended interview with Pakistan's Interior Minister, Rehman Malik, gave an extra perspective. Jane also wrote a feature on the programme for the BBC News website and introduced it online in a short video[4].

The website now has more to read, watch, comment on and contribute to. Viewers coming to it for the first time should find enough features, picture galleries, short videos, full-length films

[4] http://news.bbc.co.uk/panorama/hi/front_page/newsid_7783000/7783602.stm

and blog posts to encourage return visits.

Thanks to the BBC's Political Editor Nick Robinson and Business Editor Robert Peston, blogging has become an integral

comments posted are moderated by YouTube, not the BBC, so contributors need to appreciate the significance of being online in perpetuity. If a posted comment is extremely offensive we can get it removed, and have done in the past. But it's also important to note that these sites are self-moderating. Often other users will admonish comments they deem offensive.

If video material is illegally uploaded, this can be removed too – for example, if there are serious editorial concerns about the age of the contributors featured, or an excerpt from a film is being deliberately used out of context. And of course, in purely legal terms, any illegal uploading is a breach of copyright. Whenever we have requested material to be removed in the past, this has been done within 24 to 48 hours.

We do have control over the metadata. Keywords that are used to describe and find content online are essential, but we need to ensure that, when using descriptive shortcuts and shorthand, we don't inadvertently defame. For example, for a film like Daylight Robbery, which was about billions of dollars stolen, lost or unaccounted for in Iraq, you would avoid using keywords such as 'corrupt Cheney' or 'Bush crook'.

One of the biggest cultural changes for television production teams is the notion of exclusivity. There are fears that by releasing key material, in whatever form, from our programmes ahead of transmission, we could reduce the audience for the full television version.

These fears can only be dispelled by example. Thankfully, in the short time I have been at Panorama, we have already had a few successes, most notably Primark: on the Rack, as well as

What Happened to Baby P?.

The Primark film was on YouTube, BBC News online and BBC Thread, the BBC's ethical fashion website, before transmission. It was watched over 20,000 times. More than 230,000 people read an article about it on BBC News online, too. Yet 4.3 million viewers tuned in to BBC1 on the Monday, making it one of the biggest Panoramas of 2008. Afterwards, an additional 57,000 people caught it on iPlayer.

It was a similar story with What Happened to Baby P?. The production team gave my team some footage to cut for the web only that wouldn't make it into the television programme[8]. One hundred thousand people watched it that week on the News website; 500,000 read our news article; and 3.9 million viewers tuned in to BBC1. Despite blanket coverage the week before the programme, 67,000 watched it on the iPlayer, too.

My conclusion? Multiplatform initiatives in current affairs programming can offer the audience strong journalistic content here, there and everywhere.

[8] http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/panorama/7732125.stm

8. Death of the Story

By Kevin Marsh

Kevin Marsh became Editor of the BBC College of Journalism in April 2006. Before that, he was Editor of BBC Radio 4's Today programme. He joined the BBC as a news trainee in 1978 and worked in Belfast and Birmingham before joining The World at One. After a short spell at ITN, he re-joined the BBC as Deputy Editor of The World at One, before becoming Editor of PM and The World at One. In 1998, he developed and launched Broadcasting House – the first new news programme on Radio 4 for a decade. He is a Visiting Fellow at Bournemouth University Media School, a Fellow of the Royal Society for the Arts and Commerce and an alumnus of the Cambridge Programme for Business and the Environment. He has been a participant and panellist at four World Economic Forums in Davos and lectures regularly on the media to international audiences.

The story is dead.

The basic unit of currency that nearly all of journalism has

traded in since it began is finished.

And it's dead because of three big things we've all seen happening, but that we've been reluctant to put together to come to the inevitable conclusion - that the story is dead.

It's obvious why we're reluctant to come to this conclusion: the story is at the centre of everything that we do.

What's the first question we always ask? 'Is it a good story?' The language we use about our journalism comes back to the story.

'Get the story.' 'Tell the story.' 'It's a lead story.' The thing we tell young journalists to focus on above all else: 'Be a good storyteller.' 'Use the touching detail of the story to tell a bigger truth about the world.'

The story has become everything that we do. It lies behind all our rites and rituals. The things we think make journalism. Scoops, deadlines, headlines; accuracy, impartiality, public interest – they all lean on the fundamental assumption that we do our business in stories.

So what are the three big things that have killed it?

First: journalists have extended 'the story' way beyond what it was once useful for. It's a great way of learning some things about the world – but it's rubbish for many other forms of public communication.

In spite of that, we have stretched 'the story' as a format and sub-genre further than it could ever really go. And we did that to create the whole idea of journalism and journalists as a trade and a tribe apart. We did it to define ourselves. Only journalists could spot stories; only journalists could find the top line that could

Storycurve[1], other writers, teachers and academics in the world of journalism have come – independently – to a similar view.

Jeff Jarvis, on his blog Buzzmachine[2], wrote about what he called the end of the 'article' ... but his reasoning was similar to mine.

Paul Bradshaw[3], one of the most respected online journalism teachers in the UK, tells me he's been teaching the death of the story for years.

And Mindy McAdams, one of online journalism's big thinkers, wrote last year about the idea of journalists as 'curators' of information[4] – a role in which their idea of 'the story' has no place.

What's also clear is that some big news organisations – including us here in the BBC – are starting to organise ourselves in ways that assume 'the story' is dead – without actually articulating it.

Ask yourself this: what's more important to the biggest force in news today, the news aggregators like Google News? Is it the way in which information is finely honed and shaped into journalistically approved 'stories'? Or is it the way one piece of information – because inside the big Google News barrel, it's not news any more, at least, not as we know it – from whatever source can be linked to another?

The story is dead.

Let me clear, though, exactly what I'm talking about here.

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[1] http://storycurve.blogspot.com/
[2] http://www.buzzmachine.com/

[3] http://onlinejournalismblog.com/

[4] http://mindymcadams.com/tojou/2008/curation-and-journalists-as-curators/

When I talk about 'the story' I mean something quite specific … capital 'T' capital 'S' – 'The Story'.

I'm not predicting the death of storytelling, narrative as a human activity, as a linguistic and cognitive form.

E.M. Forster was right, back in the 1920s, when he talked about storytelling as one of the first human, communal activities, as the first way we found to tell each other something useful about the world outside the experience of our listeners.

He conjures up an imaginary scene where what he calls 'shockheads' sit around listening to storytellers[5]. And he imagines three possible outcomes to this kind of early newscasting – outcomes that should have worried journalists much more than they ever did: either the 'shockheads' stay entranced and awake; get bored and fall asleep; or get so bored they kill the storyteller.

We like narrative because the conscious part of our brains works in a linear way: we can take in first one thing, then another, then another – what Forster called 'story'.

And we can put them together to find causes and effects: because of this, this happened and that resulted in this – what Forster called 'plot'. It is an immensely useful and attractive way of communicating.

So, no, I'm not predicting the death of narrative.

What I am saying is dead is the capital 'T' capital 'S' story – the journalistic creation that grew out of narrative and accounts of

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5 http://74.125.77.132/search?q=cache:H_A91attHm8J:ncertbooks.prashanthellina.com/class_11.English.WovenWords/Essay-06%2520(The%2520story).pdf+shock-heads+E.M.Forster&cd=10&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=uk

the world.

'The story' is the carefully burnished unit that's been exclusively our province as journalists for as long as newspapers and news broadcasts they've existed.

'The story' is actually a very formal thing. We've created rules for it – so that we can teach those rules.

The bible of journalism education is the book Reporting for the Media[6]. It's the course book in many US journalism schools. Most British schools and colleges – if they don't encourage their students to pay $80 for it – borrow its ideas.

Here's what it says about 'the story' – which it divides into the 'lead' (what we'd call the 'top line') and the 'body'.

What's the rule for 'the lead'? Well, among other things: emphasise the magnitude and stress the unusual.

developed some sense of the rules of a ‘good story’.

They seem intuitive. They seem obvious. And I suspect you

particular topic you may – may – come close to some kind of comprehensive understanding. Though there's no guarantee of that. (A thought you might want to hold onto.)

But if we didn't accept journalism as a series of 'stories' – fractured, partial accounts – we wouldn't even get past base one of journalism's most important function: addressing the information asymmetry between people and power.

We accept the proposition that journalism will have to spanner the truth out of power bit by bit. And that it can and should put together a complex truth bit by bit. And find the facts that will fuel our public deliberations bit by bit.

If you look at journalism's great achievements, that's exactly how it happened. Russell in Crimea, the My Lai massacres, Thalidomide, Watergate, Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

The great achievements of journalism came about because a small number of dedicated, driven, skilled people went out on our behalf to find out as much as they could, and brought back to us what they'd found when they found it.

Actually, this image of the journalist is so institutionally accepted that it's gaining more and more protection from the law. The so-called Reynolds defence, further developed in the Jameel v Wall Street Journal[7] and McLagan judgements[8], protects assiduous and diligent journalists who come in good faith to a conclusion on the facts they've unearthed – even if that conclusion turns out, in the end, to be untrue.

[7] http://www.swanturton.com/ebulletins/archive/JKCReynoldsDefence.aspx

[8] http://www.pressgazette.co.uk/story.asp?storyCode=39085&sectioncode=1

So what's the problem? The problem is that not all journalism is quite like Russell and Hersh and Evans and the Insight team.

And not all of journalism's public good can be fulfilled with 'the story'.

Yet that is the job journalists have come to expect 'the story' to do – if we still believe journalism fulfils any public good – and not everyone does: my friend Professor Adrian Monck at City University argues that journalists are simply storytellers. End.

Well, maybe that's a view most of our audiences have come to as well.

'The story' – stretched, pulled, extended every which way – has created the whole complex we call journalism.

And we're now so used to the pre-eminence of 'the story', and to all the things we and it have created, that we find it hard to imagine the world any other way.

It’s hard to imagine that 'the story' is dead.

Think about what we've created with 'the story':

– The deadline.

In the world of 'the story', news is when we journalists say it is. In the *very* old world, it was when we got the paper to them or

– The headline.

The life cycle of the story depends on what we call 'legs' – whether it's still worth our attention or whether it can be left alone to slide back into the morass of 'stuff'. The paradox of the search for the ‘new top line’ – when we think a 'story' still has legs, but we're damned if we know what the new top line is.

– Relativism.

Relativism knocks a 'story' that still ‘has legs’ out of the paper or the bulletin, simply because another 'story' is newer or has stronger ‘legs’.

So 'the story' isn't just about narrative. It isn't just about going out finding out. It isn't just the preferred way we journalists have of describing the world. It's the basis of what we do and who we are. It’s ideal for the business that journalism became.

To be a business, journalism needs a mass audience. To get a mass audience, journalism needs to persuade people in that audience that they really are interested in things they thought they didn't care about.

The problem is, audiences never were masses. But with no alternative to the papers, radio and TV, they satisfyingly behaved as if they were.

We measured them, prodded them, questioned them – to find more and better ways to make them behave like a single

THE FUTURE OF JOURNALISM

newspaper group has paid dearly. And it persuaded the Evening Standard to run entirely unfounded rumour and gossip about the Duke of Edinburgh – a 'story' for which it acknowledged it had no evidence.

And – just the other day – it's about a story that appeared in the Sun:

“I was disappointed when I heard that Mr Peter Doherty, a fine upstanding member of his local community, was meeting BBC bosses on Tuesday for a job interview.”

toa)-8.d i4(dAgcordi3(g8 to (the 9Sun, P4eter D2oherty was 7in a 2meeting 1with 7BBC 9bosses 1on 7Tuesday 0for a 0job 1interview.”(urnal(sts, es

shame FF into providing Ireland's life-saving cervical cancer jabs"; "Ditching cancer vaccine is a big step back, says expert"; "Health campaigners in Ireland take fight for cancer jabs to Washington"; "Cervical cancer vaccine for Ireland's girls: online poll slams decision to pull funding".

They even have a graphic, with the Daily Mail logo, like something from a parallel universe – it reads: "Daily Mail Campaign: Roll out the vaccine now!"

So we have the same paper approaching the same information in two mutually exclusive ways; in the UK it's to attack any government healthcare decision – particularly one that has anything to do with sexual health – by portraying it as medically dangerous.

In Ireland, it's to attack any government healthcare deare4nasb healtayiyIı

all in pursuit of apparent 'stories', then you know the game is up.

It’s no great surprise that three times as many of us will trust a complete stranger in the street as will trust a journalist. And their stories.

They've rumbled us.

the beginning of each line. Almost none make it to that final, resounding, rhetorical final paragraph.

And we know from sites like YouTube that people want to see the thing, the event. 'Let me

You think you've written and crafted a story. They think you've tipped them with an alert.

There's more like this:

“I use online because I can get more detail.”

“I need more context and understanding and use online for that.”

You thought you were writing a carefully crafted story. They thought you were offering them a news alert so they could go off to assemble their own context and background.

for foreign, war and investigative reporting. We all still need people who go out there, find things out and come back to tell us what they've found – the Jeremy Bowens, Allan Littles, James Reynolds, John Wares and Peter Taylors of this world: people who work with their audiences, level with their audiences – 'Look, this isn't the totality of truth; I'm calling this as I see it. Impartially, accurately … but as I see it.'

But narrative has proved lousy and untrustworthy for almost everything else. We need to think about what audiences are telling us about how they want to be alerted to, and helped find their way through, 'everything else'.

But *if* we accept the death of the story, it's fantastically liberating – *if*

the horizon in his blog[12] – including the horizons that are largely

understand our responsibilities in curating and looking after our audiences' content.

'The story' is dead. Get over it.

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