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Looking Back to Go Forward: The Ethics of Journalism in a Social Media Age
Glenda Cooper

26.1 Introduction
In recent times, both journalism and who is defined as a journalist have undergone significant change. With the growth of the internet, and the subsequent ability of anyone with a smartphone camera and a web connection to publish, the business model of journalism that had remained stable for decades has been declared broken and the public service model of journalism under threat. Meanwhile, a US president communicates via Twitter; Facebook Live spreads news while the mainstream media scramble to keep up.
The question scholars therefore have to address is how can mainstream media function ethically in this challenging environment? Journalists have traditionally adopted a normative framework defined by professional constructs, in particular the values of accountability, autonomy, and authenticity (Hayes, 2007). With a media cycle that has been transformed to the "1440-minute news cycle" (Bruno, 2011), some academics have suggested a whole new ethical approach needs to be developed for next-generation journalism. This chapter, however, will argue that these changes in the business model and in technology actually strengthen the call to return to traditional ethical approaches to journalism. The news may be coming to us livestreamed or via an app rather than on the printed page or beamed through a cathode ray but for those who consider themselves journalists, an ethical framework that considers public service, privacy, verification, and sensitivity around graphic imagery remains hugely pertinent.
This chapter draws on academic research and original interviews. It is structured as follows. Section 22.2 introduces in more detail the concept of what journalism is and who journalists are in a world where anyone can publish, while section 22.3 looks at the increasing problem around fake news. The following three sections focus in on specific ethical issues. Section 22.4 looks at how livestreaming has altered the type of content we are exposed to, in particular the use of death imagery. Section 22.5 argues that privacy is more of a pressing concern than ever in a world of porous information boundaries. Section 22.6 looks at the need for crediting and copyright to be taken seriously as mainstream media appropriate content for their own profit. Finally, as consequence of the ethical issues highlighted, section 22.7 discusses how the mainstream media can work to regain trust given the questions over these practices discussed so far and the need to return to an idea of public service journalism.

26.2 Defining Journalism and Journalists Today
Every day in the United States, around ninety-three fatal shootings occur (Everytownresearch, 2017). Most of them will not command much notice, except from grieving relatives, and the courts, if necessary. Yet between the July 5 and 7, 2016, three separate events occurred in the United States that did grab worldwide attention.
The first was the shooting of Alton Sterling by police in Baton Rouge; the second that of Philando Castile by police in Falcon Heights, Minnesota; the third the deaths of five police officers in a bloody shoot-out in Dallas.1

All three events were controversial. But what made these three incidents particularly unusual was that they were all captured on mobile phone videos, and either rapidly broadcast or distributed via Facebook – and then in various forms by the mainstream media – raising ethical questions right at the heart of journalism at the moment.

These are troubled times for journalists and media organizations who have seen their industry changed out of all recognition in recent years. As Emily Bell, Director of the Tow Centre for Digital Journalism, describes it:

Our news ecosystem has changed more dramatically in the past five years than perhaps at any time in the past five hundred. We are seeing huge leaps in technical capability – virtual reality, live video, artificially intelligent news bots, instant messaging, and chat apps. We are seeing massive changes in control, and finance, putting the future of our publishing ecosystem into the hands of a few, who now control the destiny of many. (Bell, 2016)

In the past, news stories used to be journalist-only spaces where ordinary people appeared merely as archetypes in narratives, or sources for comments – the outraged passerby, the grieving widow(er), the "vox pop." Journalists acted as gatekeepers – controlling what we the public were told, or not told. Those journalists who acted ethically (and of course, not all did) protected their sources, fact-checked, and at least paid lip service to the principles of objectivity, impartiality, and balance.

But in the past two decades the advent of the Internet, and particularly that of social media, has challenged mainstream media. The very way we consume news has changed. "It's happened in the past ten years," says Alan Rusbridger, former editor-in-chief of The Guardian who pioneered the online version of the newspaper, during an interview with the author. "The concept of the 'front page' died – and content was divorced from context."

Meanwhile journalists are no longer gatekeepers – they are gatewatchers (Bruns, 2008). Their role is not just as gatherers of information anymore, but as curators of user-generated content (UGC).2

Ethically, this raises two main challenges. First, creators of this content are not trained as journalists and subject to the norms that journalists themselves adhere to, which means very different kind of material is shared. Second, how journalists themselves go on to reuse that content is often more reminiscent of a smash and grab raid than careful considerations around privacy, taste, decency, and copyright that they would be expected to give to material created by professionals.

During an interview with the author, Dr. Claire Wardle, Director of Research and Strategy at First Draft News, a non-profit that looks at the challenges around trust and truth in a digital age, says "In newsrooms, the competition is fierce, UGC is cheap, easy to access and audiences like the authenticity of such content." "And for those who take the moral high ground," she continues, "they're faced with the digital equivalent of audiences slowing down to watch a traffic accident."

The "turning point," as Dan Gillmor of the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication puts it, was the Indian Ocean tsunami. On December 26, 2004 when it struck, none of Reuters' 2300 journalists or 1000 stringers were on the beaches. "For the first 24 hours," Tom Glocer, the former head of Reuters pointed out, "the best and the only photos and video came from tourists

armed with telephones, digital cameras and camcorders. And if you didn't have those pictures, you weren't on the story" (Glocer, 2006).

What seems almost quaint now is that, at the time, there was no way for people to share these dramatic images easily. Some managed to share via blogs – one website, waveofdestruction.org, put up by Australian blogger Geoffrey Huntley had more than 682,000 unique visitors in just four days (Cooper, 2007). But many others simply went home – only to be met by journalists at the airports, desperate to get hold of their footage (Burrell, 2005).

Today, however, if you see something interesting you can snap a picture or take a video on a cellphone – then share it via social media sites such as Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, or Snapchat, or closed messaging apps like WhatsApp. You can even broadcast it live via Periscope or Facebook Live, which has been pushed relentlessly by the social media giant. Mark Zuckerberg was apparently so impressed with how much time people spent watching video online that he put 100 of his company's top engineers on lockdown for two months to come up with a tool (Dwoskin & Timberg, 2017).

This content can greatly add to how we understand what is happening in the world. Ordinary people can alert the wider community to stories that would not have been covered otherwise – especially in an era of cutbacks and budget squeezes amongst media organizations. It allows different points of view to be heard. Those who watch it or read it often praise the authenticity of the content – first person, raw, and subjective; which can bring alive what impact a story has had on a community.

26.3 The Growing Problem of Fake News and Distortion

But there are problems too, most notably faking. In the early days of UGC it was seen as more authentic and free from the biases of the mainstream media. However, this was not the case. While many posts, pictures, and tweets allowed the world a first-hand glimpse into a breaking news story, things were not always what they seemed. The "shark" pictures from Hurricane Sandy3 might have caused amusement but in a country like Syria where many journalists are unable to get access, our understanding has often heavily depended on UGC, which may be created by activists with their own agendas.

Places like the BBC's UGC Hub in London have highly trained journalists who work to verify such content – identifying the creator, checking location, language, even assessing if the weather or clothing is correct for where the event is said to be taking place. But ordinary people looking at content online are unlikely to be skilled enough to spot these giveaway clues.

And this has recently gone much further than the odd Photoshopped picture or manipulated video. "Fake" news (or what I would call the deliberate spread of misinformation) has sparked what could be dubbed a moral panic (Cohen, 2002) and gone beyond user-generated content to embrace the media generally. This was exacerbated in the wake of scandals such as that of the UK phone hacking, which saw the News of the World newspaper be closed down in its wake (Keeble & Mair, 2012).

This has become such an ever-present problem that in the 2016 US election the most popular fake news stories were shared more widely on Facebook than the favorite mainstream stories, with the two most popular being fake claims that the Pope had endorsed Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton had sold weapons to ISIS (Silverman, 2016). Researchers Hunt Allcot and Matthew Gentzkow state

that they cannot conclusively say that fake news swung the election. But they estimate that the average US voter read and recalled at least one or perhaps several fake news article during the election period, with higher exposure to pro-Trump than pro-Clinton articles (Allcot & Gentzhow, 2017).

As a result of the growing concern about exposure to fake news, Facebook announced in December 2016 that it was introducing a tool to allow readers to flag possible fake stories, which the social media giant would then send to fact checkers to verify (Jamieson & Solon, 2016). Ahead of the 2017 UK election Facebook also placed full page advertisements in newspapers in order to alert readers to signs of fake news on its site (Murgia, 2017).

Other problems with UGC can be that it can potentially distort focus even if it is not "faking." UGC may skew the definition of news even more towards the unexpected, the spectacular visual event, with the result that the less photogenic but equally important one can get pushed out – the chronic famine ignored in favor of the dramatic earthquake. As Tom Sutcliffe, of the Independent newspaper once put it: "The problem with citizen journalists – just like all us citizens – is that they are incorrigible sensationalists" (Sutcliffe, 2007).

26.4 Livestreaming and its Consequences

In January 2016, as many as 20,000 people watched the unremarkable sight of pedestrians trying to negotiate a large puddle in Newcastle, England (Cresci & Halliday, 2016). But this – and the viral "Chewbacca Mom" Facebook Live video – have become subsumed in questions over the more controversial broadcasts that Facebook Live has become associated with. Diamond Reynolds' filming of the aftermath of the fatal shooting of her boyfriend Philando Castile was seen by millions. She started the video with the words "Stay with me" before panning to Castile whose shirt was soaked with blood, and going on to document her interactions with the authorities for as long as ten minutes after the shooting. The video was shared by Black Lives Matter activists and a succession of protests and vigils were held as a result.

But not all, like Reynolds, only start filming after the violence has occurred. Suicides, murders, and terrorist attacks have all been Facebook Live "events." In 2017, four people in Chicago were charged with hate crimes, kidnapping, and battery after a Facebook Live video showed them beating a disabled man (Levin & Jamieson, 2017). A year earlier in 2016 a double murder of police employees in Paris was broadcast with ISIS claiming responsibility (Toor, 2016).

Showing a death as it happened was not something that journalists traditionally shared with their readers and viewers. Zelizer (2010) writes persuasively that journalists do not show the moment of death – instead they show the moments before or after, thinking that their readership would not want to see this (what British newspaper editors like to call the "breakfast test"4). But this has been challenged by UGC:

> Journalists often avoid depicting what they think is most problematic, but as recent events involving citizen journalists show, non-journalists may have no such reticence. When people other than journalists can exploit the porousness of images of impending death and distribute them at will, decisions about what to show can be taken in journalism's name but without journalism's sanction to varying effect. (Zelizer, 2010, p. 266)

Experiencing such events live can often expose people to incredibly distressing sights. When the Bangkok bomb blast happened in 2015, a Periscope user Derek

van Pelt filmed the aftermath live. Numerous viewers praised the authenticity of what he was filming. But live streaming apps exposed some viewers to traumatic images they may not have wished to see. At one stage the camera focused on what turned out to be body parts. Comments read, "That's a body? Wow, just a hat and meat left … OMG I can't ever unsee that." Van Pelt's response showed how difficult it can be to avoid live broadcasting of graphic content – he revealed that he didn't know what the object was before filming (Brown, 2015).
Sometimes people do know what they are filming – but in such a stressful situation do not think through clearly enough whether they should be sharing such material. When journalists then take such footage and broadcast it, this may go far wider than the creator ever intended – and can become the responsibility of the broadcaster. This was seen in the use of Jordi Mir's footage in the aftermath of the attacks on the Charlie Hebdo offices in Paris.
Mir had filmed the attackers Cherif and Said Kouachi in the act of killing a police officer, Ahmed Merabet, and uploaded the video onto Facebook, before realizing the potential consequences and deleting it fifteen minutes later (Satter, 2015). By then, however, it was too late – he had lost control of the film. It had been uploaded to YouTube and widely used. Merabet's brother later said they were traumatized by the continual reuse of the footage and attacked journalists, saying:
How dare you take that video and broadcast it? I heard his voice. I recognized him. I saw him get slaughtered and I hear him get slaughtered every day. (Alexander, 2015)
Mir, who later said his decision to upload had been a "stupid reflex reaction," turned down offers of payment, while authorizing some media organizations to use the film as long as they cut the moment of death. Some, he said, continued to run it without permission (Satter, 2015; Sargent, 2015).
For Claire Wardle, the wider distribution of such content by journalists is a key ethical issue and there needs to be much more training in newsrooms to use such content in the right way. "Managers and editors really need to think about what the boundaries are," she says during an interview with the author. "If there is a livestream, do you embed it or do you provide a link to it? If you livestream it, what are you going to do about the comments? For example, in the livestream of the Dallas shooting, people were making comments that they knew who the guy was and where he lived."

26.5 Privacy

This raises another pertinent issue. Not all content shared and used by journalists may be as graphic as the aforementioned examples. But it may be picturing people in places and situations they do not want – or ever expect – to be broadcast to the wider world. The privacy theorist Helen Nissenbaum says the fundamental problem here is a breakdown in what she calls "contextual integrity" (Nissenbaum, 2004, p. 138).
For Nissenbaum, privacy can mean different things in different situations, and that it is violated when people do not respect two types of contextual norms – those of appropriateness (what information may be shared) and those of flow and distribution (with whom the information is shared). Grimmelmann (2009) calls this a "flattening" of relationships – the erosion of the fine divisions in social relationships that there are in real life. When material is pilfered from social

networking sites by the media, then this transgression of contextual norms is taken even further.

In the most extreme cases, this can result in widespread vilification and even loss of a job and social status, as in the case of Lindsey Stone. Her bad-taste photograph in which she pretended to shout and swear in front of a sign asking for silence and "respect" at the Arlington National Cemetery, led to her being "trolled" and then fired after it was shared widely online and in the media (Ronson, 2015).

Meanwhile, Peterson cites the example of the Daily Mail, which published dozens of photos of drunk girls. The photos had been lifted from a Facebook group called "30 Reasons Girls Should Call It A Night." One of the students pictured, taken by surprise as she had not posted the photos herself, then found herself besieged by calls from overseas organizations offering her money for sexually explicit interviews. A Google search of the student's name returned the Daily Mail article as the first result (Peterson, 2010, p. 11).

For those who are not even part of the story – but end up being photographed by a random onlooker, there may also be consequences. During the Westminster terror attack of March 2017, there was a striking photo shared of a woman wearing a brown hijab and looking at her phone as she walked across Westminster Bridge, seemingly unaware of people gathered round an injured victim lying on the sidewalk nearby.

This photo went on to be widely shared on Twitter and anti-Islam blogs, and then in the mainstream media. One social media user even posted it alongside a photo of the Conservative MP Tobias Ellwood trying to resuscitate a police officer wounded by the attacker with the inflammatory caption "the main difference between Muslims and Christians" (Hunt and Pegg, 2017).

This picture, however, had been taken out of context. It was one photograph in a sequence that made clear the woman was visibly distressed. Such was the vitriol, however, that the woman eventually had to release a statement through TellMAMA, a group that logs anti-Muslim incidents, but was not named in order to protect her identity. She said:

I'm shocked and totally dismayed at how a picture of me is being circulated on social media. To those individuals who have interpreted and commented on what my thoughts were in that horrific and distressful moment, I would like to say not only have I been devastated by witnessing the aftermath of a shocking and numbing terror attack, I've also had to deal with the shock of finding my picture plastered all over social media by those who could not look beyond my attire, who draw conclusions based on hate and xenophobia. (TellMAMA, 2017)

Clearly there is often a mismatch between what the general public may expect when they put a photograph or comment into social media, and what the media think is acceptable. Those who tweet a picture or put it up on Facebook may have little idea of the consequences not only for themselves, but those who are involved in their content. When these pictures are then shared more widely, particularly by the mainstream media, it can be devastating.

Some media organizations have taken this on board. The BBC, as a public service broadcaster, was one of the first in its guidelines to reflect on how material from social networking sites should be used. It comments:

Whilst some in the media might argue that, once an individual has begun a declarative lifestyle … they cannot expect to be able to set limits on that, people

making content for the BBC should ask themselves whether a door that is only ajar can justifiably be pushed further open … Use of social media content by the BBC often brings that content to a much wider public. (BBC, 2014)

Many others, however, still see any content in the public domain as “fair game.” Yet these reporters would often simultaneously sign up to journalistic norms of protecting sources, respecting the privacy of those whom they report on if it had been the journalist taking the picture or writing the story instead.

26.6 Crediting

One of the other ethical issues that is raised by the use of such content is copyright. Often journalists take content – words, photos, or video – and reproduce it without naming the creator or giving them any money for the use of their work. Again, journalists should ask themselves whether they would use another professional’s content in such a way – and if not, why should they use ordinary people’s? Journalists who utilize other people’s video, photographs, or tweets should certainly be asking themselves the following questions:

Who was the author, and who is the rightful owner?
Is it copyright protected?
What possible problems with reuse and linking might there be?

Can UGC be copyright protected? Copyright law, certainly in Europe, often focuses on the expression of an idea rather than the idea itself, and does not concern itself with the quality or merit of a piece of work. So a hurried picture, video, or blog could be seen as copyrightable. In fact the main problem may be establishing authorship – both for creators claiming ownership and mainstream media looking for permissions in fast-moving news events. This goes further than copyright and also embraces moral rights as well (i.e., rights of attribution, the right to have it published anonymously or pseudonymously, and the integrity of the work).

The 2016 Brussels terror attacks saw a case in point. Anna Ahronheim, a defense correspondent with a Middle East TV channel, shared a video on Twitter of the explosions at the airport (https://twitter.com/AAhronheim/status/712177856768569344). It was retweeted nearly 27,000 times and Ahronheim was commonly credited with it – despite having merely taken the video from a WhatsApp group. Even after the social news agency Storyful tracked down the real creator, Pinchas Kopferstein, and Ahronheim tweeted “Just FYI, this is NOT my video. Im [sic] not in #Brussels. It was shared with me on whatsapp.I dont have a name for credit but please DONT use mine” (https://twitter.com/AAhronheim/status/712270155208912896),5 she was still commonly credited (Cobben, 2016).

David Clinch, of the social media agency Storyful concluded that journalists should approach how to establish ownership of content differently:

Instead of asking “can we use it?” journalists need to ask: where does this video come from, where were you when this happened? Do you have any other images to show that you were there?
(quoted in Cobben, 2016)

Journalists should also be sensitive to the idea that not everyone may want to be credited for their work. This is a particular problem when mainstream media websites embed tweets, which can reveal to a much wider audience who took a

particular picture or video – and can lead to trolling. After the Moore tornado of 2013, one eyewitness, a security guard, took Vine videos6 and shared them on Twitter. He was subsequently overwhelmed by the media attention with journalists asking permission for his six-second clips to be reused, but it also brought him to the unwelcome attention of trolls, who attacked him (erroneously) saying that he was making money out of a disaster. This distressed him so much that he took down all his video clips and even removed himself from social media temporarily to try to get away from all the attention (Cooper, 2018).

"I do think it's the crediting aspect is important because if you embed something elsewhere then it's been taken out of context," says Wardle during an interview with the author. "For example, if someone posts a picture on Instagram of their kid in an Easter Bunny costume that they expected 50 friends to see, then what happens if a mainstream media organisation embeds their post and name in their site? Or what if you happened to take some important footage of the Westminster attacks but you weren't meant to be there, or don't want to be a target of trolls. It's about seeking people's permission and respecting their wishes."

26.7 Regaining Trust

The impact that social media and the Internet have had on journalism is undeniable. This chapter so far has dealt with the content and the impact that has had on how journalists report the news. But with the whole business model broken, editors chasing viral videos and hits, the whole public service model of journalism has come under threat.

"I suppose the classic defence of what we [journalists] do is that we are there to oil wheels of democracy, let citizens make better informed decisions and to hold power to account," says Alan Rusbridger during an interview with the author. "That is the argument why journalism deserves to survive and why it matters but I think the economic model for that is really challenged."

The economic model that journalism had existed on for around 150 years – a combination of advertising and circulation – means that public service journalism has always been subsidized in some way. The Internet cannot be held solely to blame for journalism's current woes – newspaper circulations in the United States and the United Kingdom have been in decline since the 1950s (Campbell, 2011) – but the way that it disrupted the traditional classified advertising sector resulted in the print sector hemorrhaging money.

"Public interest journalism is not a going concern," says Aidan White, director of the Ethical Journalism Network, during an interview with the author. "The question arises whether we need it and whether democracy requires pluralism of information to operate and be credible. But we need to work out who is going to pay for it and how do we define new business models. But so far no has one come up with sustainable answers."

There have been various attempts to come up with solutions. Some include a philanthropic approach to public service journalism where foundations or individuals step in and fund. This includes, for example, the non-profit ProPublica, which was set up as a public service journalism site and initially funded by the Sandler Foundation and then others. Bill and Melinda Gates's foundation has funded The Guardian's Global Development site and partially funded NPR's global development and health beat.

This has not been without controversy. For example, when the Open Society Institute founded by George Soros (who also put money into ProPublica) gave $1.8 million to NPR back in 2010, there was criticism from both right and left about whether one person should have that much influence (Meares, 2011).
There have also been other inventive ways to fund public service journalism on a smaller scale. De Correspondent launched as a digital-only news website in the Netherlands in 2013, crowdfunded by 20,000 backers and raising $1.7 million to get it off the ground. It now has more than 50,000 subscribers and its explicit mission is to:
cover stories that tend to escape the mainstream media's radar because they don't fit neatly into the drama of the 24-hour news cycle. De Correspondent provides an antidote to the daily news grind – shifting the focus from the sensational to the foundational, and from the attention-grabbing headline to the constructive insight. We refuse to speculate about the latest scare or breaking story, but work instead to uncover the underlying forces that shape our world. (https://thecorrespondent.com/)
The NYU professor and new media expert Jay Rosen ….worked with De Correspondent to bring an equivalent to the United States which should start publishing in late 2019. Meanwhile, Alan Rusbridger was also editor-in-chief of The Guardian when it attempted to improve its finances by creating what he calls a "mutualization" project – where readers paid a membership fee, not only to get benefits but to explicitly support The Guardian's journalism. There is currently a three-tier system – supporter, partner, or patron – each with a different tier of payment per month, and with different rewards for doing so.
There are currently around 50,000 paying members and, despite cutbacks, David Pemsel, Chief Executive of Guardian Media Group (GMG) told the Digital Media Strategies 2016 seminar that GMG aimed to make its membership scheme account for a third of overall revenues within three years (Cole, 2017).
Rusbridger, who did not take up his seat as the chairman of The Guardian's Scott Trust7 after divisions with his successor as editor, says that this model is something that would be difficult to replicate elsewhere. In an interview with the author, he states:
This [The Guardian] is a brand for which the consumers are so proprietorial, so that's why we did it … There's a strong almost philanthropic tinge to it. We want to keep journalism out in the world rather than behind a paywall, and if you believe in public service, that's a public good.

26.8 Conclusion

"There's no difference from how we have always worked – what we do in 2017 compared to the year 2000," says Mark Frankel, Social Media Editor of the BBC, during an interview with the author.
The only difference is the propensity of social media channels to amplify these stories and the audience are also able to access that information in way they couldn't in 15–20 years ago. But in terms of what we present back to our audience, our approach to journalism hasn't changed – we need to put news in context and not merely present a raw and unfiltered way into the internet.
In the days following the death of her boyfriend Philando Castile, Diamond Reynolds found herself continually pressed for information by the media. In one interview with CNN's Chris Cuomo, she retorted:

I'm grieving the loss of a loved one, of a best friend, of a role model, and father figure to my child…You guys constantly keep asking me all of these disturbing questions, and I've already made my statement. I don't want to keep reliving this moment. (Horowitz Satlin, 2016)

Did Diamond Reynolds put herself in that position by posting a video on Facebook? Should she be treated in a more cavalier way because she put herself in the public domain? In fact the ethical problems that journalists are facing today are, as Mark Frankel said, very similar to those that they have always grappled with. How do they deal with the privacy of someone caught up in a tragic event? If they use pictures or videos that someone else has created should that person not be paid and/or credited for it? What remains within the bounds of taste and decency – and what should not be shared?

The ethical debate may focus on new technologies but the issues remain the same as they have ever been. Journalists should respect privacy, credit other people for their own work, think carefully before releasing violent content rather than allowing it to circulate, and not propagate fake news.

But the real problem for journalists is that public service journalism and defense of such has found itself under threat thanks to the proliferation of raw, subjective reporting by citizen journalists, the growth of fake news, and the collapse of the economic model in journalism. So in the end, the ethical questions are less about the tactics – how and when to use social media – because any journalist who abides by longstanding journalistic norms should be able to judge what is best to do. The real ethical crisis is whether the public and journalists themselves can mount a sufficiently robust defense of public service journalism for it to continue. As Aidan White put it during an interview with the author:

The first thing young journalists need to reconnect with is a fundamental understanding of what journalism is – and how it is distinct from free expression. When we talk about journalism, it is not about free expression, it is about constrained expression within a framework of values, and in particular the idea of independent journalism as a public good, with a responsibility to provide sources and information and to scrutinise both political and corporate power.

Note

The interviews with Mark Frankel, Alan Rusbridger, Dr. Claire Wardle, and Aidan White were conducted via telephone and Skype for this piece in February–April 2017.

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Endnotes

1 As of May 3, 2017, the US Justice Department has decided to bring no charges against two white officers in the case of Alton Sterling. In November 2016, police officer Jeronimo Yanez was charged with second degree manslaughter in the case of Philando Castile. Micah Xavier Johnson who shot the Dallas officers was killed by a bomb disposal remote controlled vehicle.

2 The term "user-generated content" is highly contested – with many alternatives being suggested, including "citizen journalism," "citizen witnessing," and "accidental journalism" – but it is generally accepted as the least bad option. In this context I am using as a basis the OECD's definition – that it requires some kind of creative effort, publication and it is created outside normal professional routines and practices – i.e., it is produced by non-professionals, "without expectation of profit or remuneration but the primary goals being to connect with peers, level of fame and desire to express oneself" (OECD, 2007).

3 See, for example, http://mashable.com/2012/10/29/fake-hurricane-sandy-photos/

4 Meaning what a reader/viewer could face seeing while eating their breakfast, and not be put off.

5 This second tweet was retweeted ten times in comparison by April 8, 2016.

6 Vine was a video-sharing service on Twitter. It closed down in October 2016.

7 The Scott Trust was set up in 1936 to ensure The Guardian's financial and editorial independence in perpetuity. See www.theguardian.com/the-scott-trust/2015/jul/26/the-scott-trust