TOWARDS A DIGITAL NEW JOURNALISM

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ABSTRACT

Since the emergence of interactive journalistic longreads, this labour-intensive form has been hailed as 'the future of journalism'. Just as the very first literary journalists in the 1960s, this form tries to engage the reader and by evoking empathy. The first step from objective, factual journalism towards a narrative form was foregrounding the personal experience of the author by employing literary techniques. With the emergence of the Internet another step has been made: not only do authors use literary techniques: they also try to engage the reader by embedding audio, video, photographs and infographics. Those elements all work towards transportation theory: a cognitive term for the process of being transported to a story world. It is a state of mind in which the reader, subconsciously, is influenced by the story s/he has been exposed to. This was the ultimate goal of literary journalists, who believe that a reader cannot be reached with a cold, factual news story. This research shows that in digital longreads the reader is influenced by literary techniques as well as by multimedia.

Keywords: literary journalism, literature, journalism, transportation theory, multimedia, New Journalism
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INTRODUCTION

Very few stories achieve a viral status on the Internet, but some days before Christmas 2012 one story managed to attract millions of readers. When the New York Times published the project Snow Fall, The Avalanche of Tunnel Creek, a small revolution took place in the world of online journalism. The article was unlike anything readers had seen before. Snow Fall, as the article is named, is a journalistic production written by John Branch and tells the story of an avalanche in Washington State that cost three people skiing their lives. However, the ‘magic’ of this story was that it was much more than a story consisting of text: it is described as a ‘mammoth-sized’ interactive multimedia production including video, 3d-animations, pictures and an attractive layout: most importantly described as an all-immersive production. Only six days after publication, New York Times-editor Jill Abramson told her staff in a memo that Snow Fall had reached over 3,5 million people, with an average time spent of 12 minutes. These are numbers that many other news websites can only dream of, since the Internet is a place of constant hurry and competition. Therefore, the New York Times was immediately hailed as a game-changer when it comes to online journalism.

The reception was overwhelming. It was awarded a Pulitzer Price, a Webby Award and a Peabody award, but most importantly this new style of presenting stories caused a lot of uproar in the journalistic world, and as a consequence a lot was written about it. Seldom did a journalistic production dominate the twitter-sphere like Snow Fall did. Jeremy Rue, journalism professor at Stanford University, writes that the day after Snow Fall was published he received a dozen e-mails from faculty members, students and non-journalism colleagues with messages akin to ‘Hey, did you see this?’ It was unlike anything he had ever seen before, and unlike any development that had tried to shake up journalism in earlier years. It was more like ‘an interactive documentary that happens to have paragraphs’ than an actual feature that happens to be interactive, as The Atlantic-reporter Derek Thompson strikingly phrased.

An endless chain of tweets consisting of whispers whether this form could be ‘the future of journalism’ was immediately unchained. To most people Snow Fall looked and felt like the solution to all the problems that traditional journalism had been increasingly encountering, most importantly the huge threat that the nature of Internet formed to long-form reading. A few examples: ‘Just keep scrolling. Holy Freaking Hell” - a statement of astonishment by Canadian journalist Andrew Coyne. American journalist Erica Berger believed Snow Fall to be a huge promise: ‘This New York Times piece is

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THE future of longform journalism and storytelling. I'm absolutely bewitched and entranced.” Or the statement by Jeremy Caplan, director of the Tow-Knight Centre of Entrepreneurial Journalism who writes: “Wow! The future of Web storytelling looks this: Snow Fall, a superb text-video hybrid.” Moreover, it turned out to be more than just an impression: journalists confessed that ‘to snow fall’ became a regular verb to use in the newsroom. “Everyone wants to snow fall now, every day, at all desks”, editor of the New Yorker Jill Abrams said on a conference. Furthermore, ‘to snow fall’ did not only dominate the newsroom of the New York Times or other US-newspapers. Phrases such as ‘Can we snow fall this story?’ also reached the newsroom of Dutch quality newspaper De Volkskrant, as journalist Haro Kraak explained in august 2013.

The New York Times is often credited with the pioneer-role because this production was such a success. However, the article most definitely wasn’t the first article to create such an immersive reading experience. More than a month before the publication of Snow Fall, the Nieman Journalism Lab published an article about ‘the future of features’, because they noticed that an increasing amount of attention was given to design. Mediums such as sports network ESPN, alternative music website Pitchfork and tech website The Verge were shifting their borders from text-only articles to so-called ‘reading experiences’, exploiting the possibilities that the Internet has to offer with regard to design and multimedia. Still, neither of those articles was as well-received as Snow Fall was.

However, the first cracks in the seemingly glorious future of this form were soon discovered. These people, most of them journalists, believed that snow falling was too labour-intensive and most importantly, too much focused on the form instead of on the content. They were not impressed by the flashy layout, but instead believed that it would only distract people, and moreover: there was no way that people would actually read the article. As Haro Kraak wrote: “There is a great chance that you came across the article, but there is a small chance that you finished reading the seventeen thousand words that it consists of."

In addition to that, these journalists looked at the time it takes to make such a production, the labour involved and the costs and concluded that there was no chance that this could save journalism: there were eleven people involved in the creation of Snow Fall, and these people had been working on it for six months. How was that going to work if this was supposed to grow to be a frequently used form in online journalism?

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6 Jeremy Caplan (@jeremycaplan) “Wow! The future of Web storytelling looks this: Snow Fall, a superb text-video hybrid http://projects.nytimes.com/2012/snow-fall-preview/#/?part=tunnel-creek ... by @NYTimes 20 december 2012. 9:50 PM. Tweet.
7 Haro Kraak “Rennen, de Snow Fall Trein” De Volkskrant August 2013. Print.
9 Ibidem
“There is no feasible way to make six-month sixteen-person multimedia day-to-day journalism” so did Derek Thompson from *The Atlantic* state. Many people agreed with Thompson: no matter how great the project looks, there seemed to be a consensus that the size of the team was larger than necessary for just one production. In addition to that, the story that *Snow Fall* was telling was not regarded as extremely newsworthy; after all it was nothing more than a reconstruction of a natural disaster that struck six people, an event that, though tragic, not everyone found worthy of such a huge commitment. There is no way that the story would make it to the front page, let alone that a newspaper would spend a lot of money on reporting it.

So is this indeed the future form of journalistic storytelling? Just over three years after the publication of *Snow Fall*, it is safe to say that it surely inspired many authors and news platforms, and it seems like the form is here to stay. When people think of online journalism, people think both of the fast-paced news supply and of the stylish and multimedial online journalism. Editors of the *New York Times* explained that journalists have grown more and more confident with combining long-form reading with multimedia. Moreover, they are increasingly positive about telling their stories in a multimedial, immersive production. Still, the most-heard criticism is the time it takes to make such a production, but compared to when *Snow Fall* was built thanks to new and improved tools building such a story already takes less time than it did. Moreover, this might be just a start: the possibilities of combining text and multimedia are endless.

Since this development is so recent, little research has been conducted so far on this topic. However, the rise of the multimedial story has been one of the greatest changes in journalism of the last couple of years, and the enthusiasm unlocked by both audience and journalists is definitely promising. This thesis will study five longreads that have been published in 2013, and will look into the way in which authors and designers of interactive journalistic productions try to immerse readers, building on the premise that the core of online longreads such as *Snow Fall* lies in the literary journalistic tradition. First of all, the narrative of each longread will be isolated and scrutinised in a narrative analysis. Second, the multimedial elements will be taken into account and their position and function in the production will be pinpointed. By looking

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14 Sicha “Everybody secretly hates Snow Fall” 22 May 2013
at the way in which audio, video and image are used in the productions it will be possible to draw some conclusions on in which way multimedia is used to tell a story. The productions selected are all examples of newsworthy, serious journalistic stories and cover the whole world: from Australia to France, journalists are snowfalling the stories they need to share with the world. The articles widely differ in subject: one article is about the Tour de France, while another one tells the story of Philippine fisherman in the South-Chinese sea. Nevertheless, all the articles have the very same goal: telling the reader a story that he or she was not familiar with before.

And this need to tell important stories rooted in everyday life is not exactly new. On the contrary: people have been telling stories as long as humanity exists, because the form of the story is generally seen as extraordinarily powerful in many different fields. For example: stories are seen as a powerful marketing tool. On websites of large companies such as Budweiser and McKinsey people write about the importance of telling the right story. Also, the story is seen as a great vehicle to transfer information for educational purposes. Storytelling in classrooms is seen as crucial for it is seen as the cornerstone of the teaching professions. In addition, it is also of great value to humans on a personal level. Research has shown that being exposed to stories for just six minutes reduces the human stress level. The common denominator in these examples is that the function of stories is creating a sense of order in a chaotic environment. As literary theorist Jerome Bruner summarises in Making Stories: stories make the world seem a bit easier to grasp, though the world never turns out to be as orderly as it seems in the story. This corresponds with the attempt to try to catch the news in a story. Tom Wolfe and Norman Mailer deliberately started writing news articles in the form of literary stories to give people an experience instead of a collection of facts, because stories have the power to make people think, keep people reading, and perhaps change their life a little bit. Stories create an ‘illusion of reality’, as Bruner states. The ordinary is treated with reverence and thus stays a bit extraordinary; otherwise there would be nothing to tell a story about. This thought is still a motor that keeps contemporary journalists writing. One could argue that with all the technological possibilities that are available now, stories have the ability to become more powerful than ever before.

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17 Idem, 11
18 Idem, 16
CHAPTER ONE: ON LITERARY JOURNALISM

Journalists have been experimenting with stories as a way of communicating the news for a long time. One of the most striking examples of the reason why they believe that the story is a powerful form is the way in which Truman Capote’s *In Cold Blood* came about. In November 1959 Capote read about a brutal case of murder in the *New York Times*: no more than three hundred words had been devoted to explaining that an entire family had been murdered in their own farm. In a *New York Times*-interview Capote explained: “The story was brief, just several paragraphs stating the facts: A certain Mr. Herbert W. Clutter, who had served on the Farm Credit Board during the Eisenhower Administration, his wife and two teen-aged children, had been brutally, entirely mysteriously, murdered on a lonely wheat and cattle ranch in a remote part of Kansas.”19 The fact that there was no context given whatsoever, and that the news article all the way on page 39 was so distant in tone intrigued Capote. Moreover, he felt that the set-up of the article did not do justice to the gruesome lot of the Clutter family. Feeling the need to explore the ‘larger truth’ Capote devoted the seven years that followed to finding out what had happened.

What Capote discovered was that the effect of a short, factual news report is radically different from the effect that a news report in a narrative form has. According to him, the story behind the murder was much more captivating and fascinating than the mere act of murdering that was described in the newspaper.20 Capote was not the first one to discover this. Ever since Daniel Defoe started practicing what is now regarded as ‘literary journalism’ in the late 1600s the tension between mere facts and a more personal view has been explored.21 In fact, narrative journalists are increasingly backed by scientists who study the connection between narrative and behaviour, showing that telling a story is an extremely powerful means to communicate because it allows readers to engage and interact with the event described.22 Building on that premise, the act of storytelling has been named the ‘ultimate weapon’ because it can change people’s view to a much greater extent than a factual, distant story can.23

However, this knowledge only comes in hindsight. Only recently scholars have started to explore the power of narrative, and literary journalism has been practiced for over three centuries. Literary journalists have been defining themselves against the normative assertions of traditional news organisations ever since those organisations

20 Ibidem
started promoting the plain, factual and objective style of news reporting, so does scholar John J. Pauly of The University of Tulsa explain in his keynote lecture on the *International Conference of Literary Journalism*. Literary journalists bemoaned the indifference of the traditional news organisations with regard to in-depth reporting on cultural issues and long-form writing, and reacted by doing so themselves.

The forthcoming historical overview will show how literary journalism slowly developed from writings such as Daniel Defoe’s *Moll Flanders* into an immersive, digital-only environment such as *Snow Fall*. The latter tries to draw the reader into the narrative with sounds, pictures and other technological means: elements that Defoe could not even imagine. However, looking at the message that literary journalists then, and the multimedial journalists now want to transmit, one will see that the two forms are not so different after all: the thing that did not change between the 18th and the 21st century is the search for the best and most powerful way to transmit the story that authors want to tell. The recent transition from paper to screen is a very radical and fast-developing one, but placing the digital literary journalism in the historical context will show that its roots are in literature, and that the underlying goals of the authors never changed. Whether one reads a story from 2015 or from 1800: the drive of journalists to tell stories grounded in society is timeless.

### 1.1 Defining literary journalism

There is no such thing as one definition of ‘literary journalism’ for it encompasses a wide variety of articles. Norman Sims, author of *True Stories: A Century of Literary Journalism* (2006), proves himself hesitant of formulating a definition. He explains that he believes it to be impossible to capture literary journalism in one exclusive definition: according to him, attempts to provide definitions are, at best, abstractions of reality. However, taking into account that definitions in general are almost without exception abstractions, for the very goal of a definition is capturing terminology in an abstract version of reality, some type of definition of literary journalism should be given.

The label ‘literary journalism’ is often used interchangeably with terms such as ‘narrative journalism’, ‘new journalism’, ‘creative non-fiction’ and ‘documentary narrative’. Those terms can be, and are all used to describe the same piece of writing. This is possible because the most important common denominator is inherent to the name: those terms are all labels for the genre of telling *true stories*. Writer, professor and literary critic D.G. Myers commented on literary journalism on the website of the National Book Critic Circle. According to him, literary journalism means nothing more than *fancy journalism* and *pretentious journalism*. Being a literary critic, he believes that claiming the right to call ones own writings ‘literary’ is a pretentious act and

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25 Norman Sims, True Stories, 6.
moreover, literary critics should be the ones to decide whether or not a piece of writing can be classified as literary. However, focusing too much on the meaning of ‘literary’ would not do justice to the debate for the reason that writing literature on itself was never the goal of the practitioners of the genre. In addition to this: the literary world itself has never made up her mind what should be called literature, and what not. Much more than showing off and impressing the reader stylistically with literary techniques, literary journalists use these techniques to affect the reader, as amongst others John J. Pauly pointed out. He explains that techniques such as looking through the eyes of a literary character, or using leaps in time leads to much more engagement than a plain form of writing does. Taking this into account, using stylistic and literary devices can be seen as useful rather than fancy.

Hence, from all the terms used to describe longform journalistic articles the term ‘new journalism’ has the most specific meaning to it. First of all, looking at when this genre emerged one will see that new journalism has a specific timeframe attached to it. New journalism is a result of a shared feeling of disorientation among a select group of journalists active in the 1960s, and started becoming common practice around this time. Its practitioners are usually limited to the authors that Tom Wolfe selected in his anthology of journalism and manifesto The New Journalism, and include names such as Joan Didion (Some Dreamers of the Golden Dream), Michael Herr (Khesanh), Gay Talese (Frank Sinatra has a Cold) and Norman Mailer (The Armies of the Night). The use of the term is usually limited to this generation exclusively because it is generally seen as a reaction to the state of the news in the late 1960s, as journalistic theorist John Hollowell explains in his study Fact and Fiction. Despite the fact that the use of literary techniques in journalism is hardly new, both the scale on which this was used by the new journalists and the way in which the emergence of the movement can be seen as a reaction on the state of journalism lead to the conclusion that the new journalists are a delimited group.

Journalism professor Robert Boynton from New York University observes a similar tension in contemporary journalism. He pinpoints a new movement active around the 1990s: non-fiction writers who, like the New Journalists, devoted themselves to a certain issue and wrote a non-fiction novel or expansive journalistic article about it. They share the need to devote themselves to one certain issue for a longer time, and both Boynton named the movement New-New Journalism, which both emphasises the connection with the new journalists and the fact that this should be seen as a new, separate development. In essence, Boynton does not differentiate between the ideal, motivation or vision of the two groups. He speaks of two generations rather than of two

28 Idem
29 Norman Sims, True Stories, 50.
separate movements. In the preface of *The New New Journalism: Conversations with America’s Best Nonfiction Writers* Boynton speaks about the way in which he interprets New New Journalism as a continuation of New Journalism. The license to experiment with form in order to address social and political concerns is one that the New Journalists earned, and New New Journalism should be interpreted as a continuation of this form, so does Boynton argue. This licence has everything to do with the literary techniques that were purposely used for the first time in journalism by the New Journalists.

In this respect, all literary journalism that was published after 1970 can be seen as a product with its roots in 1960s New Journalism, for it was that specific group of journalists that showed in which way literary elements in journalism can be used and it was this group that fought for the recognition of the genre. This stands in sharp contrast to the belief that New Journalism ‘died’ in the 1970s, for it indicates that in fact the license survived the years. If the same licence is used, journalists using it can be seen as people belonging to the same group.

Making another leap in time, today’s ‘new journalists’ operate primarily from the Internet instead of from print. The Internet is the playground where journalism develops every day, and it is safe to say that the possibilities have not been explored yet. However, the goal of the storytelling-element, which is essentially the core of literary journalism, is not any different in either print or online. On the contrary: as John Hellman states in *Fables of Fact*: the New Journalists did not start experimenting out of an urge to be different, or to form an avant-garde-movement: according to Hellman they were simply looking for better way to represent reality, and found it in using literary techniques derived from literary realism. Today, the possibilities of representing reality are greater than ever. Nevertheless, the big difference is the way in which this is achieved: one could argue that the effect of longreads on the internet could be twice as strong because next to literary techniques, internet journalists have access to digital means as well. Because the goals and the ideals of the two forms are so similar, in this research this online form will be referred to as ‘Digital New Journalism’. This term stresses the connection the digital new journalists have with New Journalists, but also foregrounds the fact that they operate in a digital environment. In order to understand how journalism got there, it is useful to look back at the history of literary journalism.

### 1.2 Verisimilitude in fiction: Defoe and Dickens

The period of literary realism in the nineteenth century inspired New Journalists, so does John Hellman write in *Fables of Fact*. Many scholars pinpoint this as the period in

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33 Idem, xi
34 Ibidem
37 Following Boynton’s terminology naming this movement New New New Journalism or Newest Journalism would have also been possible
which the first literary journalism truly emerged. However, many anthologies name eighteenth-century author Daniel Defoe when determining the very first literary journalist, looking exclusively at his writings and not at the state of journalism in his time. Ben Yagoda and Kevin Kerrane, authors of anthology The Art of Fact, call him a ‘great factual storyteller’, which strikingly summarises the tension between fact and fiction. Nevertheless, calling Defoe a true literary journalist would be problematic when defining literary journalism. Instead of deliberately choosing the literary form, Defoe’s writings should be seen as a product of their time, and a distinction between literature and journalism had not been made yet in the eighteenth century. Professor Doug Underwood, author of Journalism and the Novel (2010) argues that journalism in the time of Defoe did not have the same meaning as journalism has today. Journalism in the eighteenth century could look like fiction, and fiction could look like journalism. Readers did not expect anything different from a novel than from a journalistic article. As a result, using both forms was considered usual practice, so mixing fact and fiction was not seen as a statement of an author searching for a better way to communicate his vision. Rather than the first literary journalist, Defoe should be seen as a contemporary example of this ambiguity. However, there is another reason why looking at Defoe is relevant for New Journalism today. Defoe was one of the first ones to actively react on journalism as it was practiced around him, which was rather unique in his time. He founded his own journal The Review which was meant to serve as an ‘antidote for the prevailing bad journalism’ - he believed that it had too little to do with the ‘real world’ as people experienced it - and he translated his social and political awareness into articles and stories. This set the tone for many journalists after him, and shows the concern with society that is still inherent to digital new journalism. For this reason, Underwood believes that Daniel Defoe is a forerunner of the new journalists in the 1960s.

This lack of distinction between literature and journalism still existed in the second half of the nineteenth century. This was the time of journalism on a very small, personal level. Charles Dickens and Mark Twain were practitioners of the so-called sketch, a genre that according to Professor Norman Sims had a great influence on new

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38 John Hellman *Fables of Fact* 8
41 Idem, 47
43 As Richetti writes in Defoe’s biography *The Life of Daniel Defoe*, Defoe was also a devoted politician, a writer of political pamphlets and a social activist.
journalism, as he argues in True Stories: A Century of Literary Journalism\textsuperscript{45}. There are different reasons to believe that this is indeed the case, the most important ones being the choice of topic and the rise of informality. First of all, as Sims argues it was the first time that authors realised on a larger scale that there was not necessarily a true disaster or a tragic event needed in order to write a news story. Looking at Daniel Defoe, despite the fact that operated out of personal concerns and a deep social awareness, his projects were still concerned with larger subjects that he believed required attention. His famous work Moll Flanders for example, is written from the viewpoint of a hooker, and A Journal of a Plague Year describes the situation in London right after the plague. The journalists who devoted themselves to writing sketches were not interested in these large topics, but believed that daily life, as a topic was widely underestimated.\textsuperscript{46} Charles Dickens wrote Sketches by Boz, impressions of daily life in London, and Mark Twain wrote sketches of daily life in the American West, such as The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras, that was published in the newspaper Sacramento Post.

The second reason to believe that sketches had an influence on New Journalism is the way in which the author treats the reader. As Dickens’ biographer Robert Douglas writes, the sketch-writers were the first ones to consider the way in which the author communicated with the reader in journalistic articles.\textsuperscript{47} Whereas regular journalism is often described as cold and distant, (digital) New Journalism tried to tighten the gap between reader and author by thinking of the most powerful way to communicate the everyday story to the reader. The authors of the sketches were the first ones to focus on the way in which the story was transmitted: sketches were supposed to be a fireside-story, a story to evoke a feeling of warmth and familiarity.\textsuperscript{48} An important reason for the popularity of the sketch was that the authors succeeded in evoking this feeling. Readers were treated as close friends rather than as random strangers reading the newspaper, and as a consequence informality and humour started becoming apparent in media. Those elements appeared to stay. Looking at (digital) New Journalism, addressing the reader became common practice, and the search for the best way to reach the reader is still going on.

Another genre that has its roots in daily life was muckracking journalism. The muckrakers shared the same goal: showing the reality of everyday life. There are two crucial elements in digital new journalism attributed to the muckrakers. First of all, the foundation of investigative journalism and second the very strong feeling of social awareness and need to unravel abuses in business, politics and daily life. Journalist Jessica Dorman writes in an article on Niemans Journalism Lab that today’s (digital) journalism should look back at the muckrakers and draw some inspiration from them,

\textsuperscript{45} Norman Sims, True Stories: A Century of Literary Journalism. (Evanston, IL: Northwestern UP), 1
\textsuperscript{46} Sims, True Stories, 76
\textsuperscript{48} Sims, True Stories, 60
for they provided a very powerful and pure form of investigative reporting.\textsuperscript{49} Whereas the sketch is a rather light-hearted form of writing, the stories of the muckrakers were much darker. As muckraking is a product of the Industrial Age, it tried to foreground the living conditions of the fast-growing working class in Western Europe. These living standards were worsening rapidly: the pollution was immense, there was not enough space for everyone to live and issues such as child labour and famine became serious issues that no-one seemed to be able to tackle.\textsuperscript{50} The muckrakers were concerned with the daily life of the working class and started reporting and with their ultimate goal being raising awareness to the living conditions of these people.\textsuperscript{51} In other words: the fireside-like stories had to make space for the more serious, investigative stories that tried to show readers how bad the situation was. It should be noted that most people who would read these stories in that time did not belong to the working class, as a consequence trying to bring these stories to attention was a way of telling (most) readers stories from a different community.

Despite the popularity of the cheap newspapers – the penny press – muckraking journalism was generally not available to the working class. The reason was that it was mostly published in magazines which devoted themselves to publishing these revealing stories, such as McClure Magazine, a magazine that was deliberately founded in order to offer different stories than traditional newspapers such as the penny press covered. This is still something that digital new journalists try to do: the topics that these journalists report about are often grounded in daily life, but still try to expose a conflict or a condition that many people are not yet aware of. An example is a production of Dutch newspaper De Volkskrant called ‘We are getting out of chocolate’, which tries to draw the attention to the living conditions of the people producing chocolate.\textsuperscript{52} This suits the motivations of the muckrakers, because it draws the attention to something that is on one hand very near – the consumption of chocolate – and something closely related to the topic that readers probably never heard of: the people that produce this chocolate, and their living conditions. As scholar Jim Kuypers explains: the feeling that arose was the feeling that journalism should be meaningful, and that people had the ‘right to know’.\textsuperscript{53} Like Daniel Defoe, the authors that wrote for McClure Magazine founded their own magazine out of an urge to offer the audience an alternative to mainstream media. Despite the fact that muckrakers are ‘alternative media’ (as opposed to mainstream media) and the influence of alternative movements is often seen as rather limited, journalism scholar Jessica Dorman argues that the muckrakers managed to ‘turn local

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{51} Ibidem
\bibitem{52} Kadir van Lohuizen \textit{De chocola raakt op De Volkskrant} (1 december 2014). Web. 25 juli 2015
\bibitem{53} Jim A. Kuypers \textit{Press Bias and Politics: How the Media Frame Controversial Issues} (Greenwood Publishing Group, 2002) 13
\end{thebibliography}
issues into national issues, local protests into nation-wide crusades', so that they managed to ask attention for certain issues.\

1.3 Literature and Journalism

Only in this Industrial Age literature and journalism started developing into different entities. It should be noted that making the distinction between the two forms is not innocent. However, looking at in which way literary journalism should be seen is interesting for the debate. Dr. Phyllis Frus from Hawaii Pacific University explains in ‘What isn’t literature?’ that this distinction between literature and journalism foregrounds the difference between non-fiction and fiction. Frus argues that literature should always be read as fiction, thus as an imaginative text, and that journalism should always be non-fiction. In other words: she believes that a crossover is not desirable. In addition to that, she argues that the concept of literary journalism on itself is very problematic for the reason that it owns the aesthetic features of literature, and the information value of journalism. Frus denies any critical differences between non-fiction and journalism, treating all of it as merely texts. Moreover, she proposes ‘reflexive reading’, a way of reading in which a reader reads every text in which aesthetic style is foregrounded as fiction, and every ‘neutral’ text as non-fiction. As a consequence, not the author, but the reader is the one to differentiate between the two. Journalistic articles would classify as non-fiction, because those articles are generally not expected to come in an aesthetic package. In other words: readers expect a straightforward text with no aesthetic value whatsoever. A lack of such a package makes a text seem more neutral, and as a consequence it seems to be more truthful. Literary journalism would be read in the same way as literature, for it appears to be the same. The underlying assumption here is that journalism makes a different truth claim than literature. In order to ensure that, many formal features that readers recognise and accept are attached to journalism, assuming that journalism was representing reality in an unambiguous and monolithic way.

Daniel Lehman disagrees with Frus and stresses that non-fiction should be read in a different way than fiction, because of its truth-value. Like Frus, he recognises that non-fiction shaped like fiction has a radically different effect on the reader, but he believes that the argumentation of Frus falls short on the point where she states that a

56 Phyllis Frus "What Isn't Literature" *The Politics and Poetry of Journalism* (Tennessee, VanderBilt University) 7
57 Idem, 10
58 Idem, 4
distinction between the two is not necessary. Lehman argues that readers should be guided upfront in what type of text they are reading, and it is important to recognise that there is a boundary between the two: “The confession that, finally, it is impossible to delineate an exact boundary between fiction and nonfiction does not mean that the boundary does not matter.”

Instead of reflexive reading, he proposes to read non-fiction ‘over the edge’, meaning that the reader should always be aware of the fact that the people and events apparent in the narrative exist in the actual world too. The approach of Lehman is much more fruitful, for literary journalism consists of much more than the aesthetic features that literature holds. The truth claim should not be seen as one of the many features of literary journalism, but instead should be seen as the crucial factor that separates literary fiction and literary journalism.

Looking back at the nineteenth century, this is the period in which this discussion on what the difference literature and journalism should be, started. The distinction was made in the light of the view of ‘positivism’ that slipped into the twentieth century. Literature became a domain of fiction, and non-fiction accomplished an ideal form of journalism. This ideal form of journalism was supposed to consist of distant, factual information that was supposed to inform the reader as objectively as possible. Michael Schudson, academic sociologist and author of Discovering the News describes the immense influence that this objectivity ideal had: not only did literature and journalism go separate ways; it also rather soon caused a split in journalism itself because not all journalistic articles managed to live up to this objectivity ideal. Furthermore, the part of journalism that classified as objective and factual was combined in the informational press, and the more literary articles were combined in the story press.

The informational press was institutionalised by media tycoon Walter Lippman, a prime example of a positivist. Lippman believed in a way of reporting that was free of any emotion, and believed that the cure for the illness of journalism, for the reputation of journalism was at a low, would be science. The reason that mainstream newspapers were attempting to ban all subjective influences was that the task of newspapers changed: it became their responsibility to inform the audience objectively and truthfully – all imposed because Lippman believed he was trying to ‘save’ journalism. The positivists would assert that it was very well possible to inform the audience without adding personal value to the events. In addition to that, inherent to positivism is also the belief that language in itself is a neutral instrument that can deliver a message free of...

60 Daniel W. Lehman, Matters of Fact: Reading Nonfiction over the Edge. Columbus: Ohio State UP, 1997. 5
61 Positivism is the belief that all authoritative knowledge could be founded in science, and all information should be derived from logical and mathematical treatments.
62 Schudson, Discovering the News, 74
63 Idem, 74
64 Schudson, Discovering the News 154
65 Merljak Zdovc Literary Journalism in the United States of America and Slovenia 15
any emotion or bias.\textsuperscript{66} In this respect, New Journalism can be seen as a reaction to this dominant positivism paradigm, for it tried to offer a form of journalism that mass media in that time did not offer. Therefore, it is very well possible to argue that New Journalism as a movement would have never arose if positivism would not have gotten the upper hand in journalism.\textsuperscript{67}

Much more than a conflict between fact and fiction, the informational press versus the story press was a conflict between choosing to acknowledge that news is a product of human creativity and human perception, or not to.\textsuperscript{68} Positivism denies that this is the case, and as a consequence, so did mainstream media. New Journalism did not. Instead, they believed in foregrounding these limitations because they believed that passively mirroring reality would not provide any answers to the readers. Michael Herr who wrote the Vietnam-epos Dispatches, stated that ‘conventional journalism could no more reveal this war than conventional firepower could win it.’\textsuperscript{69} Reporting everything in a distant, objective style would only drive people into further disorientation.\textsuperscript{70} Next to that, the personalities of the New Journalists played a large role in establishing New Journalism. The journalists were a ‘bunch of free-spirited journalists who believed that they could change the world. They were both idealistic, and easy to lead astray.’\textsuperscript{71} This idealism was needed to pursue their ideal form of journalism rather recklessly, so does Boynton state, but on the other hand they were not taken very seriously for the same reason.

Scholar John J. Pauly shows another change in journalism that occurred. He explains that from 1950’s onwards, literary journalism increasingly became a way of interpreting culture.\textsuperscript{72} The world became much too complicated to comprehend, and trying to catch it in an objective, distant frame would not do justice to these events. Examples of events that left a large impression in the sixties were the availability of the birth control pill, Woodstock, The Cold War, the first man on the moon, and the shooting on Robert F. Kennedy. As Tom Wolfe phrased: The sixties were one of the most extraordinary decades in American history in terms of manners and morals.\textsuperscript{73} According to Pauly, the many changes that occurred asked for a new way of interpreting the world, and journalism was a vehicle that could be used. Moreover, it asked for a synchronization of form and subject matter: How could a certain form deliver a more powerful message? They were very much in favour of foregrounding the subjectivity as


\textsuperscript{67} Frank Harbers ‘Defying Journalistic Performativity. The Tension between Journalism and Literature in Arnon Grunberg’s Reportage’ 147

\textsuperscript{68} As cited in John Hellman, \textit{Fables of fact: the new journalism as new fiction}

\textsuperscript{69} Ibidem


\textsuperscript{71} Pauly \textit{Literary Journalism and the drama of Civic Life}, 1

John Hellman argued, and using elements from literature to emphasise emotions was a way to do this.

Looking at literary journalism in the academic world, the period of the New Journalists received far most attention in research. Whether or not that is justifiable is ambiguous. In *True Stories* journalism scholar Norman Sims admits that he did not expect to write an entire chapter on the 'usual suspects' when he started doing research on the topic. With ‘usual suspects’ he refers to journalists such as Joan Didion, Gay Talese, Tom Wolfe, Hunter S. Thompson, Norman Mailer and Truman Capote who have become ‘household names’ over the years for their names have been reprinted thousands of times in textbooks. New Journalist John McPhee explains that the movement never became what the authors in those days believed it would become. The expectations in the sixties were ‘mountainous dreams of young people’, but as the years passed by it became ‘less of a dramatic feature’ on the horizon and never fulfilled the expectations. New Journalism slowly and silently disappeared from the media in the late seventies, but this does not mean that the form that they used also faded away. The belief that a deliberately chosen form can foreground a feeling of urgency, and the motivation to tell stories that matter is something that can be traced back to the New Journalists in the 1960s. In other words: they earned a licence that is still makes it possible for journalists to blend literature and journalism into a credible form.

The New New Journalists, the novelists grouped by Robert Boynton, followed in the nineties with their extensive projects. The motivation and licence was certainly inspired by their predecessors in the 1960s, and the topics chosen also show a strong social awareness. For instance, Jon Krakauer wrote the highly popular novel *Into the Wild*, and Ted Conover spent time in prison in order to write his work *New Jack*. This group did not change a lot in the field of literary journalism, but instead ‘matured’ the movement by developing and re-using its features. Moreover, this movement is less of an experiment with language and form than New Journalism was. The experimentation has been done, so this generation refined it while staying true to the predecessors. This ‘renaissance’ of literary journalism in print ended when news organisations started adapting to the digital era, and newsrooms rapidly shrunk in size. This is when people feared for the definite end of longform reading online.

### 1.4 Digital New Journalists

Like in the Lippman-period, today in the digital era there seems to be a split in different journalistic roads again. On one hand there is the ‘move and skim’-type of online reading which would compare to the informational press, and on the other hand there is the journalism that asks for thoroughness and depth: digital new journalism that would compare to the story press. The ‘move-and-skim’-type is becoming increasingly popular; especially on mobile telephones people enjoy being able

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74 Sims, *True Stories*, xxii
75 Sims, *True Stories*, 304
to read news as fast as possible. This type of news does not offer any place for context or further explanation, which is why longform journalism can and should be interpreted as a reaction on the fast-paced news. In debates on the future and possibilities of longform digital journalism the word ‘longread’ is inevitable when defining these articles. The exact definition of this concept of longread has never been set. Dowling and Vogan claim that the concept of ‘longread’ is a ‘symbolically loaded term’ although the editor of the New Yorker believes that it is generally agreed that longreads should be lengthy, well-reported, immersive, literary non-fiction. This seems to correspond with the definition that many other articles also follow.

There is no doubt that the rise of the Internet has been one of the most radical changes that news and newsrooms have ever been facing. The entire way that news is made and consumed changed in just a few years time. In the annual ‘State of the Media’ report of PEW Research Centre it shows that 2015 was the first year in which more US citizens consumed the news on their mobile phone than in newspapers. And this number has only been growing over the years, with the amount of readers of paper newspapers plunging. Furthermore, the so-called Digital Age is often held responsible for ‘dumbing down’ people and discouraging them to read books, or longer articles. Similarly, many people believe that the Internet is killing storytelling, arguing that people are not able to concentrate as long as they were used to and are not able to read a long story anymore. As a consequence, so they argue, people are collectively becoming a ‘society of scanners’, which is why a large group of readers sticks to the advantages of print. One of these advantages that it at least does not interrupt or distract the reader while one is reading. In other words: a large group of journalists believes that longform-reading is simply not suitable for the ever-distracting Internet. But might this view be too pessimistic? Many people think it is, and see primarily a lot of benefits.

As early as 1995, twenty (!) years ago, journalist and technology commentator Joshua Quittner, a great admirer of the New Journalists, expressed his visions about Internet and (literary) Journalism, stating that a revolution was needed for ‘by the end of the century, a hundred million people might be using it’. As difficult to image as that was, it turns out he was wrong: by the end of the century more than 350 million people were connected. It is miraculous how prophetic the words of Quittner turned out to be. Moreover, he urged his colleagues to create web-specific content in ’95 already. This

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77 David Dowling and Travis Vogan Can we “Snowfall” this? (Digital Journalism 3:2, 2015) 210
79 This is widely discussed on the Internet, for example in this letter to the editor. Kevin Donelly. The Digital Age is Dumbing Down our Children The Australian (July 28, 2012)
80 Joel Acherbach "Joel Achenbach: Gary Smith and the endangerment of detailed, long-form stories" Washington Post Web. 29 november 2009
81 Ibidem
warning is still very relevant, since many newspapers still struggle to offer their content online. "The Web is jammed with newspapers and magazines taking their paper-based content and repurposing it. (That's the buzzword, I believe, for the online equivalent of leftovers)."\[^{85}\] Journalism scholar Steen Steensen proved in a comparative study on online feature writing that traditional media have difficulties adapting old media to the internet: still, most content on website of newspaper is formed by one-on-one translations of from the printed newspapers.\[^{86}\] A waste, according to Quittner. He, rightfully, hails the Internet as one of the most radical game-changers that ever occurred in journalism: a 'sea change', the biggest one after New Journalism.\[^{87}\] Quittner believed that the New Journalism 'smashed the conventions of the reportage.' However, he believes their influence would have been much bigger if they would have had the toolkit that today's journalists own. 'Imagine what those new journalists could have done with video and sound, with hypertext links and limitless bandwidth. Yes, a journalism that uses the best devices of the novel – and the movie! and the radio! and the CD-ROM! and networked communications! – to tell stories.'\[^{88}\] The people who have these tools (and much more – seeing that Quittner refers to tools available in 1995) are today's digital journalists, who use them to tell stories and explore the most powerful way to use those.

In 1997, two years after Quitter published his plea for more multimedia in journalism, Mark Bowden published the article Black Hawk Down\[^{89}\] on the website of the Philadelphia Inquirer. It was an instant hit. The article offers a narrative about a battle between American and Somali groups. Despite the fact that the number of possibilities was not even close to what is possible now, the literary narrative was enriched with audio, video, infographs and photographs: clearly a predecessor of today's digital new journalism. Between the publication of Black Hawk Down and Snow Fall a lot happened in the world of online, longform journalism, but still it took the publication of Snow Fall to somehow declare the birth of the new genre of longform journalism.\[^{90}\]

While research into multimedia is relatively new, there seems to be a general consensus agreeing with Joshua Quittner that the possibilities of multimedia in the news have not nearly been fully exploited. Stories from newspapers are re-used without adapting them to the Internet, whereas articles could be much more powerful when those would make use of the multimedial nature of the Internet.\[^{91}\] There are a few studies that look into the use of multimedia directly. Susan Jacobson from Temple University looked into multimedia journalism in the New York Times between 2000 and 2008, the 'pre-Snow Fall-period', and found that in this period the number and sophistication of multimedia

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\[^{85}\] Quittner "Look, you know some things are going to have to change around here", 1995.  
\[^{86}\] Steen Steensen "The Shaping of an Online Feature Journalist" *Journalism* 10 2009 708-710  
\[^{87}\] Quittner "Look, you know some things are going to have to change around here", 1995.  
\[^{88}\] Ibidem.  
\[^{89}\] This production is still accessible on http://inquirer.philly.com  
packages grew immensely.92 Jacobson notes that most multimedia packages functioned as add-ons, meaning that they are meant to expand the reporting, and that the focus is still on the written word.93 Jacobson extended the research on digital new journalism in the *New York Times* by studying 50 longreads published between August 2012 and February 2013. The articles are scrutinised in order to define which forms of multimedia they use, and the way in which they are presented.94 Jacobson argues that instead of regarding multimedia in online narrative as separate, rather isolated blocks that stand outside of the narrative, one should see them as an integrated part of the central narrative. Dowling and Vogan agree on this, and believe that digital longreads have a great potential. Their research primarily focuses on journalism for the tablet market. They see multimedia primarily as a means to attract new audiences for people are very sensitive to sophisticated design, but believe that this is something very promising for online journalism.95 In addition to that, Dowling and Vogan state that both New Journalism and digital new journalism ’paradoxically emerged out of technologies reputed to truncate and radically abridge’.96 In other words: technologies that were meant to produce faster and shorter journalism caused the rise of movements that as a reaction started producing slow, longform journalism. Just as happened in the time of positivism: out of the focus on objective, distant journalism the New Journalism-movement emerged.

At the yearly conference for narrative journalism in Boston author Susan Orlean who wrote *The Orchid Thief* stated that there has never been a better time to be a storyteller because of all the new elements that today’s authors of digital articles can use. According to her, only the ‘delivery system’ has changed from print to online. She compares such a ‘delivery system’ to an envelope: there are different types of envelopes, but eventually they all have the same function.97 This ‘delivery system’ on tablets and iPads instead of on paper is still growing, and is the reason for optimism.98 Mark Briggs, author of Journalist 2.0, believes that narrative journalism definitely has a future on the Internet: reading on a tablet is seen as a laid-back activity, and the in-depth and lengthy slow journalism is perfectly suitable for that.99 And this shows in the many initiatives that were founded in recent years: websites focused on longreads exclusively such as *The Atavist* and *Byliner*, or the longread-project of Dutch publishing house *Fosfor*. All

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93 Idem, 881
95 Dowling D and Vogan T Can we ‘Snowfall’ this? Digital longform and the race for the tablet market. *Digital Journalism* 3:2, 2015, 208
96 Idem, 211
97 Bill Kirtz *NY Times Abramson: ‘Long-form narrative is not only alive but it’s dancing to new music’ Poynter* 5 may 2011. Web. 2 Jan 2014
99 Mark Briggs, webinar NuLab, November 12 2013
web-based stories exploiting the tools that the Internet has to offer to make narrative more powerful than ever.

CHAPTER TWO: SCRUTINISING NARRARIVITY

2.1 Narratology

There is no such thing as defining ‘narrativity’, for the study of narrative can be analysed from many different fields which all have their own definition in which the elements that they value most are stressed. For example: a sociologist analysis of the concept of narrative is one in which the performative act of a narrative is foregrounded\(^1\) whereas a literary interpretation of the concept of ‘narrative’ focuses on the different elements that a text has.\(^2\) This was not always the case: before the so-called ‘narrative turn’ in the academic discipline of humanities took place,\(^3\) narrative studies were almost exclusively focused on analysing literary texts.\(^4\) The Dutch literary scholar Mieke Bal defines a narrative as follows: “a text in which an agent or subject conveys to an addressee a story in a particular medium, such as language, imagery, sound, buildings or a combination thereof.”\(^5\) Communicating a sequence of happenings is crucial for narrative. In her keynote work *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative* she explains the different concepts that are needed for a narrative work. The unity of a sequence of events that forms a narrative is a synonym of text. The text is the translation of the sequence in the form that fits the medium that tells the story. This can be a written text, but also a movie or sheet music. This text consists of signs, the building blocks of the narrative text.\(^6\) Signs together form a narrative text, and the narrative text is the story that is told.

The study of narrative is a vast academic field and encompasses many different disciplines and fields of research. Contemporary narrative analysis on literary texts started flourishing with the Structuralists, a school of literary criticism in the 1960’s that attempted to develop the true science of a literary text with a focus on linguistics. The basis of traditional literary structuralism and criticism was formed by the writings of the Swiss Ferdinand de Saussure, who drew attention to the structure of the language, and argued that language is primarily determined by its own internally structured and systematized rules.\(^7\) The proper study of meaning making, he believed, was using this theory in order to achieve a scientific view of how meaning is created not only in literary works, but also in all forms of communication or social

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\(^1\) Marie-Laure Ryan *Narrative As Media: The Languages of Storytelling* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2004) 5

\(^2\) Ibidem

\(^3\) In the early 1970’s the interest for narrative suddenly grew outside the literary theory: also in the social sciences and humanities scholars started to look at narrative (Czarniawska, 1)

\(^4\) David Herman *Narratologies: New Perspectives on Narrative Analysis*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1999, 24

\(^5\) Mieke Bal *Narratology*. Toronto: University of Toronto, 1997. 5

\(^6\) Ibidem

\(^7\) Charles E. Bressler *Literary Criticism: An Introduction to Theory and Practice* Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 1999, 93
behaviour. Structuralists believed that everything humans do is translated in language, and is represented in language by codes. Rather than being concerned with the interpretation of a certain text, Structuralists were concerned with analysing how the underlying structure of a text created a meaning: this was not only something that a text would do, but also circumstances such as the social and cultural world did. As Roland Barthes famously said: 'Narrative is international, trans-historical, and transcultural: it is simply there, like life itself'.

Narratology, the science of narrative, is in itself rooted in the structuralist movement, for its goal is to create meaning out of the structure and formalist features of a text, instead of studying the thematics in order to distil a meaning out of it. The first one to practice contemporary narrative analysis was the Russian scholar Vladimir Propp in his study on Russian folk tales 'The Morphology of the Folk Tale' (1928). Propp studied 100 Russian folk tales, and distilled thirty-one narrative elements or formalist features that the different tales shared. Propp argued that every single folk tale could be placed into one of the four, in his eyes universal, categories of folk tales. The formalist features he found in the tales were elements of the story that could be identified in every folk tale, such as 'punishing the villain' or 'the hero leaving home'. Propp's research did not receive wide acclaim until the 1960's, when scholar such as the Structuralist anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss started conducting research on myths. Not everyone hailed Propp: especially when the influence of Structuralism declined, academics started looking for different options. Literary critic Frederic Jameson rejected Propp's writing and believed that narrative was about power relations: when interpreting a literary work, the question should always be who the authoritative power in a narrative work is. This is a radically different vision than Propp held, who argued in terms of universal stereotypes.

After structuralism lost most of its power, the 'narrative communication model' became popular. This model is a crossover between structuralism and the rhetorical school of narrativity, and focuses on the so-called 'narrative transaction': the way in which a reader receives a message. The narrative transaction model contains of three elements: trust(er), trustee and artist, and the way in which these three players communicate in a 'narrative transaction'. From rhetoric it takes the way in which information transaction between the reader and the work of narrative takes place, and from structuralism the scrutinizing of the structure of a text. Many critics have considered the way in which this interaction flows.

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8 Idem, 324
11 Idem, 15
12 The narrative communication mode is a term used by Booth, Chatman, Genette, Leech and Short
13 Seymour Chatman Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980. 147
14 Wake, Narrative and Structuralism, 21
According to Mark Turner, scholar with a cognitive approach on narrativity and author of *The Literary Mind* (1997), telling stories is fundamental to human beings. He states that the story is a basic principle of the mind, and makes everyday life possible.\(^{15}\) In other words: Turner names the human mind a literary one because of its unconscious preoccupation with telling stories, and structuring the world in this way. This process however, is a process that human beings do not notice: it is an on-going activity that is always taking place, and we do not know how the stories work because they are always present.\(^{16}\) No matter what people are doing, they are always busy putting their experiences into stories. For a less radical view media scholar Marie-Lauer Ryan points at Jerome Bruner, who also believes in the power of storytelling, but is slightly more cautious than Turner.

In *Actual Minds, Possible Worlds* Bruner argues that there are two modes of functioning, not just the literary mode that Turner describes.\(^{17}\) On the one hand he agrees with Turner that a literary mode exists, but this exists next to the argumentative mode. This argumentative mode is focused on providing factual information that should convince the reader of its truth, while the literary mode seems to point in the direction of fiction. The modes are complementary, for Bruner believes that a text either tries to convince the reader of the truth (argumentative), or lifelikeness (literary).\(^{18}\) Looking at the specific case of literary journalism, putting this in either of the two categories would be difficult for Bruner, for he implies that a work classified as literary is by definition fiction. The argumentative mode however is one that is used for scientific articles and formulating an argument. Eric Heyne uses the example of an anecdote: If a friend tells an anecdote, there are different ways to respond. If the listener thinks this is a joke, one can respond with a punchline. If the listener believes it to be a true story, one can think of questions to ask in order to receive more information.\(^{19}\) In other words: for every type of story, there is a different reaction suitable. Such reactions are inherent to the type of story, and it is a natural reaction of a human to recognise with what type of story one is dealing. In the light of literary journalism, one could state that literary journalists intentionally used a non-traditional narrative form to evoke the desired reaction from the audience, which is not possible with the traditional, factual journalism.

### 2.2 Building a textual story world: transportation

A lot of research has been conducted in order to explore why the narrative form is believed to be so powerful. The key is immersion, so do communication scholars believe, and immersion is the effect that is created by both the successful creation of a story world, and the successful transportation to the story world.\(^{20}\)

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\(^{16}\) Idem, 13

\(^{17}\) Jerome S. Bruner *Actual Minds, Possible Worlds*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1986. 11

\(^{18}\) Idem, 12

\(^{19}\) Eric Heyne “Toward a Theory of Nonfiction” *Modern Fiction Studies* 33, 1987. 480

\(^{20}\) Amongst these scholars are Busselle (2008), Bildzic (2008), Green (2000) and Brock (2000)
other words: immersion and transportation work together in order to achieve transportation. When a reader is completely immersed in a story, he or she will develop emphatic feelings and thus start interacting with a story.

As Marie-Laure Ryan explains, some texts are more suitable for transportation than others. An important part of that is whether or not a reader takes pleasure in reading a certain text.\(^{21}\) This also goes for whether or not a reader is forced to read it. Previous research among high school students found that the students rated a book they read in their free time significantly higher than books they had to read because those were on their reading list.\(^{22}\) Many attribute the immersive quality of narrative to the aesthetic value that narratives often posses. However, even though this is often the case, aesthetics are not a crucial factor: a valid question to pose would be why poetry is not as immersive, if aesthetics are important. Poetry is high in its aesthetic value and there are many people that take pleasure in reading poetry, but it lacks narrative: its relation to the world is not as easy to pinpoint. In other words: narrative is crucial with regard to feeling immersed in a story. However, there are a few elements needed to achieve this successfully. A narrative should contain a story that raises questions, it should present a certain level of conflict or an incomplete activity and it should contain a character or characters. In addition to that, it should have some kind of story line.\(^{23}\)

The concept of transportation relies on narrativity. Transportation theory states that that intentions and beliefs of a reader can be changed when people lose themselves in a story: a feeling that every person that is familiar with reading, watching movies or listening to music is likely to recognise in some way. This concept was first explained by Victor Nell, who describes it as a feeling of ‘being lost’ in a narrative, because the consumer forgets the notion of time and space.\(^{24}\) He was also the first one to coin the term ‘transportation’. An important note is that a ‘reader’ in the case of Nell refers to a reader of a text, but can refer to a listener (of music) or a viewer (of a film or a play) too. In the case of digital new journalism it even refers to all of it, as digital new journalism aims to be a multimedia form. Even though there are obvious and important differences among media, the term should be interpreted broadly.

The key figures in transportation theory research are Melanie Green and Timothy Brock. In their research *The role of transportation in the persuasiveness of public narratives* published in 2000, Green and Brock conducted four different experiments among a group of 100 readers. The readers were exposed to four different fictional narratives, and Green and Brock found that the beliefs and attitudes

\(^{21}\) Ryan, *Narrative as Virtual Reality*, 94


\(^{23}\) Idem, 701; Bruner,p13

of the participants significantly changed after they read the stories. This underlines the power of narrative, and reinforces that narrative has the ability to change things. This change of attitude has to do with the process of transportation, so do Green and Brock write. Brock and Green based their conceptualization of transportation on Gerrig’s (1993) description:

‘Someone (the traveller) is transported, by some means of transportation, as a result of performing certain actions. The traveller goes some distance from his or her world of origin, which makes some aspects of the world of origin inaccessible. The traveller returns to the world of origin, somewhat changed by the journey’ (Gerrig, pp 10-11)

Richard Gerrig and Victor Nell were the first one to coin the term ‘transportation’ in the work Lost in a Book: The Psychology of Reading for Pleasure (1998) They took the concept as an analogy to physical travel in order to explain the process that occurs when a reader is interacting with a piece of narrative. The word ‘transportation’ points at the process of taking the reader to a geographical, or at least physical location. They describe reading as a role of play, one that so fully absorbs the reader that cognitive changes occur. Green and Brock explain that transportation is a convergent mental process that might occur while and after reading narrative. The components of transportation include emotional reactions, mental imagery, and a loss of access to real-world information. These factors are the core of the belief change that is likely to occur. Moreover, they name three reasons why a narrative text is more persuasive than a non-narrative text. First of all, immersion makes readers less aware of the real world around them and draws them into the story world that appears in the narrative. Therefore, readers are less likely to formulate counter-arguments against the narrative that is told, and they will be less likely to resist attitude change. Second, narrative simulates real-world experiences to which the reader can connect. Finally, transportation is likely to evoke a feeling of empathy towards the story characters, which has an enhanced effect on the beliefs of the reader. This explains why journalists in some cases prefer the narrative form over the factual news story.

When Nell introduced the concept of transportation, he applied the concept to fiction. Since the quantitative research presented in The role of transportation in the

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29 Rick Busselle and Helena Bilandzic Measuring Narrative Engagement’ Media Psychology (2009: 12: 4) Print. 32
30 Brock and Green, 2000, 702
persuasiveness of public narratives a plethora of research into transportation has been conducted. Green and Brook only looked at fiction in their first publication, but over the years a lot of research has been added by both them and many other scholars, and it has been shown that transportation theory can apply to non-fiction as well.\textsuperscript{31} People have looked at transportation in narrative used for educational purposes\textsuperscript{32}, the way that social media uses narrative to transport consumers\textsuperscript{33} or the use of narrative transportation in video games.\textsuperscript{34}

Other academics developed concepts that are similar to the transportation theory by Green and Brock, such as the terms flow feeling or optimal flow\textsuperscript{35}, absorption\textsuperscript{36} or immersion\textsuperscript{37}. These terms are essentially the same, for the shared element is the cognitive mode in which all the attention is drawn to one activity. Yet, there are subtle differences. Flow is a general construct that can apply to activities such as work activity or sports, whereas transportation refers to situations in which empathy and mental imagery play a large role.\textsuperscript{38} Immersion differs from transportation because the former is a construct that mainly applies to images and the construct of aesthetics. Narrative is not necessarily needed, whereas transportation relies on narrative.\textsuperscript{39} For example, immersion can also refer to fine arts. To conclude, absorption refers to a character trait, whereas transportation refers to a very temporary experience.\textsuperscript{40}

So in short, when reading a narrative the reader is very likely to experience the feeling of being lost in time when reading. This is described as a feeling of transportation: the reader is transported to the carefully crafted story world. A key element in transportation is the notion of empathy: the reader is likely to change his

\textsuperscript{31} Melanie Green, Timothy Brock and Geoff Kaufman ‘Understanding Media Enjoyment: the role of Transportation into Narrative Worlds’ \textit{Communication Theory} (2004; 14:4 311)
\textsuperscript{33} Tom Van Laer and Ko de Ruyter “In Stories We Trust: How Narrative Apologies Provide Cover for Competitive Vulnerability after Integrity-Violating Blog Posts,” \textit{International Journal of Research in Marketing}, (2010, 27 (2), 164–74)
\textsuperscript{35} Rick Busselle and Helena Bilandzic Measuring Narrative Engagement’ \textit{Media Psychology} (2009: 12: 4) Print. 32
\textsuperscript{39} Ibidem
\textsuperscript{40} Ibidem
or her real-life beliefs, because of the empathetic feelings that are aroused. Therefore it is also crucial to look at the way in which empathy works.

2.3 Empathy and non-fiction
When a reader feels engaged, he or she feels connected to the story and to the characters: this can be identified as a feeling of empathy. As seen in in the writings of Green and Brock, empathy is evoked deliberately, for using absorption in order to draw the reader into the narrative can be identified as an underlying persuasion mechanism. A clear definition of the concept of empathy is provided by philosophy professor Dr. Amy Coplan. She explains empathy as a way of taking up someone's psychological perspective and imaginatively experience, to some degree or other, what he or she experiences.41

Empathy is an increasingly popular term, especially in relation to technology. Technology is often blamed for the loss of empathy in daily life. As Dr. PJ Manney writes in the article Empathy in times of technology: the two seem to be paradoxical, as well as intrinsically linked. Empathy represents an ability to understand the other, and technology is rather self-centred and is feared to decrease people's understanding of each other.42 Nevertheless, Manney rightly concludes that especially when the world grows more connected and seems to grow smaller because of the greater access to technological means; the world needs empathy more than ever to avoid conflict and misunderstanding. Literary journalism can play a role in this by telling stories that evoke this state. Empathy is especially important for literary journalism because the topics are often related to less-known social issues that focus on the human experience, and work to give the reader a deeper understanding of what is going on. Looking back at Green and Brock, transportation is often used to make people relate to lesser-known topics that do not necessarily appeal to many people.

On a neurological level, empathy was only recently explored. In 1990, Italian professor Giacomo Rizzolatti discovered the existence of mirror neurons, neurons that mirror the behaviour and feelings of someone else. The research was initially conducted by studying the behaviour of monkeys. The discovery of these neurons was the first time that researchers could prove that the brain was not only stimulated when performing an action, but also when watching someone else perform an action. In addition to that, the Italian professor Maro Iacoboni proved that people are also able to recognise intentions, meaning that an action does not necessarily need to be explicit: intended actions and consequences of actions are also recognised and mirrored. As a consequence, these neurons are also able to interpret future actions.43

41 Amy Coplan “Empathic Engagement with Narrative Fictions” Journal of Aesthetics and Arts Criticism, 2004l 143
Previous research by Batson et al. showed for example that empathy for another person can be powerful enough to motivate individuals to forsake justice (2008), and Escalas et al. looked at empathy in television commercials (2003) concluding that when storylines from commercials are well-developed (in contrast to poorly developed), a higher level of empathy is elicited. Only fairly recently scholars started looking at emotional involvement in the field of literature, discovering that the higher the emotional involvement is, the higher the readers enjoyment will be. When looking at digital new journalism, one can argue that authors and design teams make a lot of use of these mirror neurons: the characters play a key role, for they are both shown in text and image. Research shows that when one makes use of an image, as is the case in digital new journalism, these mirror neurons are stimulated.

However, it should be noted that the concept of empathy in literature is most often used in the context of fictional literature. In most research papers, academics seem to assume that non-fiction is never delivered in narrative form and thus always non-narrative. In *Emphatic Engagement with Narrative Fiction* (2008) for example, Amy Copland immediately starts writing about ‘the relationship between readers of fictional narrative and the characters’ but does not discuss any non-fiction, and neither does she explain why she believes that empathic engagement is only possible in fiction. In ‘How Does Fiction Reading Influence Empathy?’ Bal and Veltkamp elaborate on how fiction-readers engage with fictional narrative. Mar et al. look at ‘the link between reading fiction and empathy’ and compare the results (reading fiction increases empathic feelings) to test results gathered after the test group had been exposed to non-fiction. Outcome: reading non-fiction increases feelings of loneliness. However, looking closely one sees that the test group was on one hand exposed to *narrative fiction*, and on the other hand to *non-narrative non-fiction*. Conclusions about non-fiction are thus conclusions about non-narrative literature. Literary or narrative non-fiction is not taken into consideration. Moreover, a crucial note in *Understanding Media Enjoyment: The Role of Transportation into Narrative*

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46 Coplan 'Empathic Engagement with Narrative Fictions' 141
49 Idem, 412
50 Idem, 412
Worlds by Melanie Green et al. is the statement that narrative does not necessarily equal fiction; this statement is shared by Marie-Laure Ryan.\textsuperscript{51}

Ignoring narrative non-fiction as many academics seem to do when looking at empathy and literature dismisses an entire field of understanding how non-fiction can try to reach a similar effect as fiction does: this is the core of literary journalism. Looking at Robert Boynton’s New New Journalists, the word ‘empathy’ is frequently used when the authors that he selected describe their work. For example, journalist Alex Kotlowitz describes his way of working as the ‘journalism of empathy’, explaining that understanding the power of empathy is crucial for a journalist. First of all, this is crucial in order to be able to understand the world of the characters in a story. Secondly, he tries to achieve empathy with the readers and put them in the shoes of the characters or of the narrator.\textsuperscript{52} This shows the way in which non-fiction authors can use empathy consciously to evoke certain feeling with the reader: arguably a practice that is as interesting as looking at empathy in fiction. The fact that authors want to evoke empathic feelings in non-fiction says a great deal about the effect that these authors want to reach: understanding true stories on a different, emotional level.

However, unlike most scholars Emeritus professor of Comparative Literature Anders Pettersson believes that empathy in fiction has no value. He goes even as far as stating that such studies are worthless in fiction: applying terminology such as empathy to literature is a conceptual mistake.\textsuperscript{53} Fictional characters should not be analysed with regard to empathy because they do not exist (‘to be imagined to exist’ is not the same thing as ‘to exist’\textsuperscript{54}). Treating a fictional world the same as a real world has important theoretical implications according to Pettersson, for building a relation with a fictional world gives a reader the feeling that he or she is interacting with a ‘seamless reality’ while in fact everything is made fictional by the author.\textsuperscript{55} In this statement Pettersson points in the same direction as Daniel Lehman, who argues in favour of a different reading for fictional novels than for non-fiction. However, Lehman does not believe that empathy in fiction is a ‘conceptual mistake’ as Pettersson argues, but thinks that it requires a different way of interpretation. To illustrate this: In Reading Non-fiction over the Edge’ he writes that a fictional novel can create an effect that is as powerful, and it can affect the reader in the same way as a non-fiction can.\textsuperscript{56} From a literary point of view the theory of Pettersson seems rather radical and little imaginative; Pettersson does not seem to be interested in the communication that exists between literature and the reader. He acknowledges that

\textsuperscript{51} Green and Brock, Understanding Media Enjoyment: the role of Transportation into Narrative Worlds, 314; Ryan, Narrative as a Virtual Reality, 50
\textsuperscript{52} Robert Boynton, The New New Journalism, 131
\textsuperscript{53} Anders Pettersson The Concept of Literary Application: Readers’ Analogies from Text to Life. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. 93
\textsuperscript{54} Pettersson, The Concept of Literary Application: Readers’ Analogies from Text to Life, 315
\textsuperscript{55} Idem, 97
\textsuperscript{56} Lehman Reading non-fiction over the edge 7
many academics do not make a distinction as radical as he does, but still regards the use of empathy in non-fiction as ‘fatal’ for the concept of empathy in fiction.57

2.4 Empathy, literary journalism and the Internet

Devoting a separate chapter to the way these concepts are used on the Internet emphasises the view that Internet is still something separate, thus not part of the regular narrative on journalism. This might not do justice to the situation; reality is that a large, in some cases the largest part of media consumption takes place on the Internet, and this number is only growing. Data generated among readers of US-magazines shows that already in 2012 the so-called ‘readership tipping point’ was reached, meaning that the digital readership of large magazines such as The Atlantic, ESPN and The Economist had outgrown print readers.58 However, grouping Internet-journalism in a separate paragraph makes it possible to sketch the way in which narratives are consumed online, and in addition to that: it makes it possible to emphasise similarities and contrasts with narratives in print media easily.

For a long time media were hesitant to adapt literary journalism to the (computer) screen. People are less willing and less able to read long pieces of text when looking at a screen, for the Internet is a major source of distraction. However, with the growing popularity of the tablet and the e-book, the ‘longread’ gains attention from both readers and publishers. The vice president of Entertainment and Sports Programming Network (ESPN) Digital and Print Media John Korpics explains that something new is needed for the creation of an immersive production that will engage readers in the same way a magazine article can: “The same way you might read a magazine article, you can browse the surface layer of visuals like graphics, captions, and pull quotes, or you can dive deeper. The key is that the user has the choice of how to interact with the story.”59 In other words: Internet does not only offer the possibility for plain text and a few illustrations, but also many visuals such as photographs, videos, infographics, sounds and every other form of multimedia: the way this is combined is crucial for the way in which the readers are drawn into the text.

In The Emergence of Augmented Reality (AR) as a Storytelling Medium in Journalism, John Pavlik and Frank Bridges argue that technology changed journalism in four fundamental ways. Their first two points are not relevant for this debate: the way in which technology influenced the news gathering process and the business model. However, the other two points are more about the reader and article itself. The third point that Pavlik and Bridges make is that technology transformed the reader in a more active consumer of media. Fourthly, and most importantly, technology created

57 Pettersson, The Concept of Literary Application: Readers’ Analogies from Text to Life 97
a fundamental change in news and media content, and storytelling practice. The significance of this change should not be underestimated, so do Pavlik and Bridges argue: it might be the most important change that journalism has faced so far. The use of technology allows for new ways of feeling engaged, and one of these ways is evoking empathy through technology.

First of all, the reading involvement of the audience increased radically. This involvement changed the relationship between reader and author radically. Because of the Internet, the distance between author and reader became smaller than ever: readers can directly contact the author via Twitter, Facebook and e-mail, if they wish. This means that the public sphere as philosopher Jürgen Habermas envisioned it, radically changed. Social media transformed the readers from passive consumers to active consumers, and they are stimulated to discuss what they are reading, and to share what they think about certain articles. Also, social media gives users the possibility to discuss the article with the author if s/he is present on the social networks, making communication and debate easier and more accessible than ever. This is, of course, a highly idealised and simplified representation of the communication streams as those exist, but it is also one that amongst others professor Clay Shirky reinforces. He believes that social media such as Twitter reinvigorate public debate, and expand participation in the public sphere. Moreover, the other way around, these people that use social media are exposed to many different articles that are shared by people that they follow online too. Sharing something with others in print is not possible in such a way. As a consequence, people are exposed to many more different media-outlets than they were before, when articles were released in print only. Digital longreads that look impressive and evoke strong reactions are distributed on Twitter, an important channel that creates appeal for longform stories. The more impressive an production is, the more people will share it.

However, the most important and even central point to this debate is the fourth point that Pavlik and Bridges name: the way in which technology radically changed the way in which journalistic content is presented. This change has everything to do with multimedia: longform texts were suddenly enriched with audio and video. Eventually, this type of journalism exists because of the Internet. The combination of

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63 Ibidem
64 This is about people who are active on social media. As digital new journalism is an online form, it is very likely that a large share of its readers is active on social media.
longform text, sound, video, infographs, interactivity and design had not been used in this way yet. The difference between literary journalism in print and literary journalism online is that online journalism shows many things in photo and video whereas in print the focus is on text. Because digital new journalism is a much more visual form, it appeals to many people in a different way than a text in print does.

As explained, literary journalism is built around an appeal to the readers’ empathy. On a biological level, empathy is evoked through stimulation of mirror neurons, neurons that are stimulated when the reader recognises something human. The comparison between empathy in print texts and multimedia has not been made in research conducted so far. However, it has been proven that the more successfully real life is mimicked, the more powerfully mirror neurons work. The reason for this is that a person interacting with a video is exposed to an environment in which the people depicted seem very real. In other words: the more elements an article takes from real life, such as sound and moving picture, the more ‘real’ the image that the reader gets, is. This is a strong case for interactive, digital longreads that deliberately show the environment that the narrative takes place in, such as the longreads that will be analysed in this thesis.

A next step in evoking empathy in digital journalism would be a step towards virtual reality. This is a virtual world in the digital environment that fully immerses the reader. This is already increasingly seen in education: virtual reality is an increasingly popular tool for hospitals and flight academies to train their students, for it conveniently immerses the reader to situations that students are likely to experience. For example, med-students can practice operations without going to a hospital and practice on actual humans, and aspiring pilots can practice flying in a flight simulator. Many people believe that it will also influence journalism. As far as this very new technique has developed in the field of journalism, virtual reality in journalism resembles a videogame in which the reader witnesses the story that needs to be told. Journalism scholar, reporter and virtual reality-expert/pioneer Nonny de la Peña has fostered debate on virtual reality in journalism. She believes that this ‘immersive journalism’ or ‘full-body journalism’ will be the future of journalism because it can show the audience what news looks like. De la Peña argues that the feeling of ‘being there’ is crucial for feeling empathy in news stories. In digital longreads, the multimedia-elements are supposed to mimic this feeling of ‘being there’. However, de la Peña develops the claim that immersing the reader fully is the best way to evoke empathy, for the reader does not leave the story world at any time.

66 Marco Iacoboni et al Predicting the Future: Mirror Neurons Reflect the Intentions of Others. (2005, PLoS Bio 3:3) 1
68 Ibidem
69 Nonny de la Peña et al., "Immersive Journalism: Immersive Virtual Reality for the First-Person Experience of News." 295
70 Jacobsen et al, The digital animation of literary journalism' 15
Instead of being guided by text, the environment around the reader serves as a guide.\textsuperscript{71} By exposing the reader to the consequences of the events that are often described in media, s/he will be able to build a meaningful connection to the news. Despite the fact the role of a design- and computer team needs to be much larger than they are now, De la Peña argues that the role of the journalist in producing immersive journalism should not be underestimated: the ethical side and narrative value is as large as in a regular longread.\textsuperscript{72}

Examples of projects by de la Peña are productions such \textit{Guantanamo Bay} (2009) in which she used techniques from virtual reality-platform \textit{Second Life}. On the World Economic Forum 2014 a virtual reality-project by de la Peña on Syrian refugees was released: \textit{Project Syria}. The reactions on both projects seemed were overwhelmingly positive: it left a great impression on the audience, and they described the production as having a great impact on the way they perceived the situation in Syria.\textsuperscript{73} This provides confirmatory evidence that it works: leaving a lasting impression is most definitely one of the goals of digital new journalism. On a short term, it does not seem like virtual reality will become a new standard soon. A lot has to change before virtual reality-narrative can become something that regular media consumers can use. For now it seems to be too new, too labour-intensive and expensive to make many of these productions. De la Peña seems to be a true pioneer. But with the development of for example virtual-reality tool Oculus Rift, the costs for productions will plunge, and perhaps more media-titles will be interested in giving it a try.

\textsuperscript{71} Nonny de la Peña et al., "Immersive Journalism: Immersive Virtual Reality for the First-Person Experience of News." 295
CHAPTER THREE: LONGFORM ON THE INTERNET

The analysis of the selected articles will be structured in two parts: ‘Immersion by Narrative’ and ‘Immersion by Enrichment’. The former focuses on on the textual part of the articles, whereas the latter looks at the multimedial elements. So, the first category consists of a short narrative analysis rooted in the study of narrative, literary stylistics and literary studies. The elements that will be analysed are the representation of speech and thought, characterisation and focalization and story opening. The second category Immersion by Enrichment consists of a look at a set of different elements on the different types of enrichment that are used. The elements are story opening, parallax scrolling and the way in which the multimedial elements such as moving images and sound are used to strengthen the presence of characters in longreads. In every category two questions first posed by Dr. Rocco Versaci, author of This Book Contains Graphic Language will be asked. Versaci is an expert in the way in which text and image work together. In his book on comics as literature he speaks about the presence of two different ‘layers of meaning’: a layer of atmosphere and a layer of extra meaning created by the use of images or other additional elements to express ideas.¹

This study draws on the transportation theory research by Melanie Green and Timothy Brock. In order to keep the reader engaged throughout the narrative – an important goal of digital new journalism – the process of transportation is vital. By looking at in which way transportation works, it will be possible to state whether, and in which way the authors and design teams try to establish transportation. Therefore, it is worth looking at the way in which transportation is established, for longform reading on the Internet is seen as potentially problematic, and transportation is the process that makes the reader likely to enjoy and eventually finish the article.² While reading 700 words online is seen as a serious stretch for Internet-readers, longreads are usually up to a few thousand words long. Nevertheless, if the author manages to establish the feeling of being lost in the narrative, this means that the reader is transported to the story world. In digital new journalism this is done in the conventional way that literary authors use – by providing the reader with a story – and in addition to that there are different types of multimedia used. Therefore, both sides will be analysed in separate analyses. Eventually, the two will be brought together in order to reflect on how transportation was used.

3.1 Immersion by Narrative

Text is still the most important way of transmitting a message on the Internet. Transportation depends on immersion, which is a term from the study of literature. Therefore, it is crucial to look at the way that immersion in text is established. A narrative analysis is the most useful vehicle to analyse this. Moreover, those look at the function of stylistic elements present in the text, and how people use stories to interpret the world. After the literary value of article is defined by looking at the study of stylistics, the traditional literary elements of literary scholar Gerard Génette namely voice, mood and time will be scrutinised. In addition to that, the element of ‘characterisation’ will be added, following transportation theory that underlines the importance of interaction with literary characters. Moreover, this is reinforced in the writings of scholar Daniel Lehman Matters of Fact: Reading Nonfiction over the Edge, an important work in which he explores the way in which first of all the author and after that the reader interact with the subject of the text and the text itself. The treatment of characters in his article is important, for Lehman argues that in this respect it matters a lot whether one is reading fiction or non-fiction: the characters of non-fictional literature are actually alive. According to Lehman this is relevant, and even crucial for the way in which a story is read: a reader is not able to ignore the notion that when someone dies in a work of non-fiction, the same person is also dead in the real world. This addition was used earlier in the narrative research of the German scholar Nora Berning, who looked at the narrative frameworks of literary journalism.

First of all, the literary value of the text will be defined by looking at stylistics. Showing the literary value of the selected longreads to be able to state that the texts are indeed works of (digital) literary journalism. And in addition to that: as Green and Brock state, the process of transportation only takes place when a reader is exposed to narrative texts (as opposed to non-narrative). A narrative text claims to possess certain literary features in order to engage the reader. The study of stylistics is vital when trying to reveal these features, for stylistics looks at how people interact with literary works. In this thesis, the introductory paragraph will be analysed as a stylistic element, because this is one of the differences between factual news articles and literature. The factual news article uses a so-called lead that contains answers to the most important questions, whereas a literary introductory paragraph tends to remain more mysterious and tries to draw the reader into the article. This stylistic analysis is

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3 Steph Lawler "Narrative Analysis in Social Research" in Qualitative Research in Action ed. Tim May
4 Green, Brock The role of transportation in the persuasiveness of public narratives. 711
6 Nora Berning Narrative means to journalistic ends: a Narratological analysis of selected journalistic reportages (Springer, 2010) 85
7 Green, Brock The role of transportation in the persuasiveness of public narratives. 710
rooted in Mick Short’s *Exploring the language of poems, play and prose* and Katie Wales’ *Dictionary of Stylistics*.

The narrative analysis will follow the writings of literary theorist Gérard Genette, who pinned three core categories of narrative analysis: *voice*, *mood* and *time*. These categories are present in any work of literature, and make it possible to approach a normative concept as ‘literary value’ scientifically. Therefore, such a traditional narrative analysis has been used many times before. Looking at Génettes categories, the first one is *voice*. This category differentiates between a heterodiegetic and homodiegetic narrator: a homodiegetic narrator is present inside the text whereas a heterodiegetic narrator stands outside the text. A homodiegetic narrator is part of the narrative and can provide the reader with an ‘insiders perspective’, something that will increase the engagement. The second category is ‘mood’, which is another word for focalization. Focalization deals with the amount of information that the characters know as opposed to the narrator. Focalization is split in three categories: zero focalization (omniscient narrator – narrator knows more than characters), internal focalization (narrator as a character) and external focalization (limited narrator – knows less than the characters). Focalization and narration stand close together, and show whether or not the narrator is visibly part of the narrative, and engages in the narrative him- or herself. This will be used in the analysis to see in which way the narrative communicates with the audience: through the eyes of a character that participates in a narrative or in a third-person distant narrator. This is relevant because a distant form of storytelling is less engaging than a narrator who stands close to the characters, and this distant narrator is less likely to create an immersive environment.

Temporal order differentiates between a *chronological* and an *a-chronological order*. A close reading and analysis could take the tenses of the verbs into account as a temporal element, but in this case the focus will be solely on the placement of the events. The analysis of verbs is not relevant in this case, for it would dive too deeply into technicalities and the focus in this particular case is on the ‘bigger picture’. In straightforward, traditional news stories the placement of events is linear, or in other words: in chronological order. In order to make a story more exciting, create suspense and keep the reader interested, the order of the events are often shifted, thus put in a-chronological order. Mark Kramer calls this the ‘mobile stance’ of the [literary journalistic] author, meaning the ability to move away from the story, digress, share background information and eventually lead the reader back to the story: “Good storytellers often digress at moments when especially interesting action is pending.

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8 Gérard Genette, *Frontiers of Narrative*, 112
9 Gérard Genette, 119
11 Gerard Génette, 119
and not at the completion of action." This is a characteristic inherent to literary texts, for a factual news story should not be concerned with creating tension.

As a last point, the use of characterisation will be analysed as described by Daniel Lehman in Matters of Fact. This will be done by looking at whether or not there are characters foregrounded, and how much attention is given to developing the characters into persons with character traits. Tom Wolfe believed characterisation to be vital to a good narrative: the more not-necessary details are provided, the better an author succeeds at showing the interior life of a character. Not-necessary details, so does Wolfe argue, are the very elements that make people human. The more human people appear, the more people can relate to it. In this way, characterisation is a successful way of achieving transportation. Therefore, it is crucial to look at the way that the characters are presented.

3.2 Immersion by Enrichment

The Internet offers much more than only the prose-like nature that is inherent to text. The second part of the analysis tries to look at ways in which enrichment increases the ‘stickiness’ of texts, a term borrowed from the radio world and brought up by Todd Sack in his writings on alternative forms of journalism. ‘Enrichment’ refers to all the non-textual elements that a longread consists of, such as video, audio and (interactive) infographs: everything that a literary journalistic article in print cannot do (except perhaps static factors in print such as photographs. Journalism sticks when people are browsing and decide to focus on one article and read it, preferably to the end. Therefore, the concept of stickiness is very much in line with transportation: both work towards creating an environment in which the user feels engaged and wants to read the story until the end. Videos, sound and images increase the stickiness if those are used purposefully, so does Shack argue, because non-textual elements make readers curious.

The first concept that will be looked at in the analysis of ‘immersion by enrichment’ will be the layers of atmosphere. Media theorist Rocco Versaci argues in his work Comics as Literature that images give journalism more layers of meaning: “Comic journalists achieve layers of meaning inaccessible to prose journalism alone

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13 Daniel Lehman Matters of Fact: Reading Nonfiction over the Edge, 31
16 Ibidem
17 Even though Versaci speaks about images only, his theory is also applicable to video and sound.
because of comics’ graphic language that blends words and images.”\textsuperscript{18} Despite Versaci writing about comics specifically, his general argument is directed towards visual aspects in a broader perspective, aspects which share the ability to strengthen a message that a text wants to communicate. Translating this to longreads, one can think of images that keep following the reader as while scrolling, or even sounds following the reader while reading.\textsuperscript{19} Making a reader read articles on the internet in a focused manner is much more difficult than keeping a magazine-reader interested, and therefore it is vital to look at the immersive environment that is created by the carefully crafted layout and audio / video / photographic enrichment of web-based longreads when studying this phenomenon. Moreover, looking at the layers of atmosphere reveals how multimedia are used: to create a certain atmosphere (layer of atmosphere), or as an integral part of the narrative (layer of content).

Second, the analysis will look at the \textit{story opening}. It is crucial to analyse not only the textual part, but also the multimedia that are used to give the reader a first impression. This is the part that leaves the reader to decide whether or not to continue reading. A look at literature shows that this concept has been extensively scrutinized in narrative already. Moreover, the function of the opening is crucial for establishing the tone and style of the article. Just like the textual analysis draws a comparison between on one hand literary openings which are flourishing and engaging and on the other hand short, factual openings that are used in regular journalism, there are also different ways to open a story in image and sound. This category was to some extent used in the research of Jacobson et al on digital animation of literary journalism\textsuperscript{20}, and will be used as one of the focus elements of this research. The reason for this is that it allows for a comparison between the way an opening is realised in text and multimedia. Moreover, analysing the opening screen or the establishment-screen, a term adapted from the term ‘establishing shot’ as it is used in Film Studies\textsuperscript{21}, can show how the author and design team try to achieve transportation from the very first moment onwards. Video loops have been extensively discussed in the research of Jacobson et al. These are \textit{gif}-like videos that keep repeating themselves, being somewhat more dynamic than regular photographs. In \textit{The Digital Animation of Literary Journalism} Jacobsen names these loops one of the most important elements of multimedia journalism, because she believes that video loops can serve as a literary agent. Video loops communicate time, play and literary character.\textsuperscript{22}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{18} Rocco Versaci \textit{This Book Contains Graphic Language: Comics as Literature}. New York: Continuum, 2007, 111
\item \textsuperscript{19} Joe Sacco is one of the most important ‘graphic journalists’, which means he does not write prose-like articles, but delivers his journalistic content in the form of comics. He won various prizes for his comics on Palestine and the Yugoslav War.
\item \textsuperscript{21} Christopher J. Bowen and Roy Thompson \textit{Grammar of the Shot} Focal, 2011. Print. 14.
\item \textsuperscript{22} Jacobsen et al ‘The digital animation of literary journalism’ 13
\end{itemize}
Next, one of the most characteristic elements of digital New Journalism is the concept of **parallax scrolling**; the technique is often even referred to as **snow falling**. Because parallax scrolling is the most obvious visible change, it is important to look at the way in which this technique is used in the selected longreads. Parallax scrolling means that the background image stays static while the text moves over the background, as opposed to **single page scrolling**, the regular type of scrolling that is used in almost all cases. In this type, the text sticks to the background and the whole package moves at the same pace. It is seen as one of the most radical changes regarding user experience. Research on user interface shows that parallax scrolling is generally experienced as being very immersive, because it is supposed to give the reader a calm reading experience with little distraction. Exploring the way in which parallax scrolling is used will show whether or not it is true that literary longreads make a lot of use of parallax scrolling. If articles happen to use the mix form, it might be possible to point out the advantages and disadvantages.

The last multimedia element that will be analysed is **characterisation in multimedia**. The textual analysis will focus on the importance of the presence of characters in the narrative, and this analysis draws on that observation. Multimedia allows the characters to be livelier and more ‘human’ because the reader sees and sometimes even hears the people involved. For example: research on television commercials shows that commercials with people involved, are much more successful than commercials which do not contain any human beings. This has everything to do with the concept of empathy, which is evoked much more easily when the person exposed to media sees people. This is why it is important to look at which types of multimedia are used to sketch the characters: characters are the very key to literary journalism.

### 3.3 Corpus

Despite everyone realising that the Internet unleashed a whole new era of publishing, the endless possibilities are often not exploited yet: many websites publish longer articles in a text-only format. Because this research looks at the way in which the Internet can be used, all the selected articles are web-specific longreads that (attempt to) explore as many of the possibilities that the Internet holds, or at least claim to do so.

There were several factors taken into consideration. First of all, the articles had to be published in 2013 in order to make sure that the same resources were available at the time that they were created. Second, the articles had to be taken from different sources in order to make the selection as diverse as possible. The longreads preferably had to come from different countries; in this case United States, United Kingdom, Australia, France (in translation) and the Netherlands are included. The selection might still not be as diverse as it could be because three out of five longreads

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24 Suzanne Keen, *A Theory of Narrative Empathy*, 210
are created in Anglophone countries, but while looking for suitable longreads it became clear that by far most longreads are published in English-speaking countries. Next, the range of subjects had to differ at least slightly in order to make sure that the research does not turn into a comparison on how certain subjects are treated. The selection as it is now includes art theft, privacy issues, a threatened mineworker’s town in Australia, the South-China Sea and cycle racing. Lastly, the reception on Twitter and blogs on the Internet was taken into consideration. The five longreads selected were well received and they evoked at least some reaction on social media.


The NSA-Files: Decoded. What the revelations mean for you is an extensive investigative-journalistic story that The Guardian decided to put out in a massive multimedia-project. When it was published it created a massive buzz on social media with people calling it ‘the biggest buzz since Snow Fall was published.’ The motivation to make this story so grand was the subject of this story. As the journalists explain in a ‘behind-the-scenes’ article, privacy is on one hand rather unattractive to write an extensive story about, but on the other hand an extremely important topic. A plain 10,000 word-read about a rather technical subject such as privacy would not appeal to a large audience, so some adjustments had to be made in order to make people feel connected to the story. This story also illustrates the conflict between traditional media and the digital age very well: In an interview one of the authors, Gabriel Dance, explains that The Guardian was planning on making the story into a plain, 5000-word piece, but that the team of editors believed that ‘today’s digital news ecosystem calls for something more immersive and engaging’. Eventually they made the choice to put the story out in a larger and more expensive story, and it instantly became one of the best-read articles of The Guardian-website ever. It is impossible to predict how things would have looked if the story was indeed put out in a plain text-only document, but it is safe to say that it probably wouldn’t have been the best read article on the website of The Guardian.

Foregrounding this human factor is exactly what the goal of New Journalists was. Because this particular narrative contains a great lot of video material, the

25 ‘Good quality’ is normative and therefore impossible to objectify. In this case, I looked at the people twittering and blogging about the articles. Enthusiasm and positive feedback (actually: any feedback) are incredibly important factors for it means that people actually read the articles and find them worth sharing. The fact that they are well-read makes them valuable for analysis.
27 Ibidem
narrative analysis is only focused on the written text, an analysis of how the videos are used follows in the second part of the analysis: a deeper look into enrichment.


A Game of Shark and Minnow is the second multimediial longread produced by the New York Times. Its predecessor was Snowfall, this first large and well-known longread both fascinated people because of the beautiful package and disappointed people for the lack of a substantial story. This was done radically different in A Game of Shark and Minnow, which tells the story of a disputed region in the South-Chinese Sea. The author spent a few days with the staff on a Philippine boat that floats around the islands with the ultimate goal to let the Chinese people know that they are there. According to readers, the visuals are as good as in Snowfall, but the story is much more newsworthy and urgent than the story about the avalanche.30

The geopolitical matter that the longread is about contains a story that traditional media write very little about, probably because it is rather far away and it does not directly influence people who grow up with Western media.31 The narrative is created in a similar way as Snow Fall, but it is much more successful because it pays attention to an urgent, little-known political matter instead of severe weather conditions. Whereas the praise that Snow Fall received was mainly directed towards the impressive visuals, the difference here is that the interesting and complex story drives the article, and the visuals and sounds are used to immerse the reader.32 Together, text and visuals try to achieve the effect of transportation.


This story produced by the Australian news website The Global Mail tells the David versus Goliath-esque story about the 300-people Australian mining town Bulga, and the threat that coalmining puts on the small town.33 Unfortunately, the website The Global Mail is no longer active. It was funded by the ideological philanthropist Graeme Wood, whose dream it was to start a news website that tells stories that are not covered by traditional news organisations. The quality of the website was widely


31 At the moment there is quite some coverage on this matter because US President Barack Obama spoke up about this issue, in defense of the people from the Philippines and against the Chinese aggression.


33 The debate on Bulga and the Rio Tinto coal mine is still ongoing. On March 5 2015 the government of New South Wales, Australia suggested moving the entire town to a new location in order to allow the mine to expand. In: New fight looms in Hunter coal battle’, AAP. 9news.com.au, March 5 2015. Web.
recognised: *The Global Mail* received a variety of awards during the time it was running, and was known for its focus on societal issues and investigative reporting. In 2014, Wood found that there was no longer money available to keep the website running.

*The Town that wouldn’t Disappear* is an example of a story that discusses a societal issue: it deliberately takes a standpoint towards the problems and asks the reader to do the same. The conflict received some attention in Australian newspapers after the town started a court battle against mining company Rio Tinto. This battle took place in April 2013. The story behind this very battle is the subject of the longread in the Australian *The Global Mail*, published some six months after the newspaper articles on the court battle. In other words: this longread can be seen as the human angle to the court battle, the more in-depth, Hunter S. Thompson-like background story to the events taking place in Bulga, which were described rather coldly and distantly in newspapers. During the narrative, the reader meets quite a few of the inhabitants and miners, and with the different sides to the story the he/she is invited to take their own stance.


Journalist Lex Boon investigated the theft of seven paintings by important painters such as Monet, Picasso and Gaugin from the Kunsthall in Rotterdam in October 2012. After an extensive investigation the police officers concluded that it is very likely that these paintings have been burnt in Romania by the mother of one of the thieves, in order to destroy the evidence against her son. Boon travelled to Romania, the country where the thieves were from, to make a reconstruction of what really happened and where this tragic event took place. Reconstructions are a popular type of story for literary journalists. Also, the urge to tell the *whole* story instead of exclusively the news, and the need to zoom in on the faces and personalities behind the news are motivations that would have been applauded by the New Journalists. This extensive reconstruction of one of the largest art thefts of the last decades is delivered in a literary, novel-like story, enriched with sound-clips of news broadcasts, pictures, maps – every multimedial element possible that can be embedded on the internet.


The French sports journalist Jérôme Cazadieu wrote a longread about the sprint stage in the Tour de France, which resulted in an engaging and detailed account of the last part of journey and the mind-set of the cyclists. The story created quite a buzz among readers on Twitter, which is rather impressive bearing in mind that the article was published by a French newspaper with a relatively low number of

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34 “De Kunstwerken zijn waarschijnlijk verbrand” *Volkskrant* 16 juli 2012.
35 Norman Sims *Literary Journalism in the Twentieth Century* 30
paid sales, and a website which is only available in French.\textsuperscript{36} Both sports-fanatics and people who are less into sports and the more into reading a journalistic narrative were enthusiastic about the visually attractive piece of literary journalism.\textsuperscript{37} The layout of the article is rather spectacular, having a ‘finish line’ following the reader as he or she proceeds reading. This article will be analysed in English instead of French, an official translation is available on the website.

\textbf{3.4 Research Questions}

In order to analyse the aforementioned factors some questions are formulated to ensure that the analysis is conducted in a coherent manner. The articles all use their own strategy to achieve a certain level of immersion. The general goal of the research is exploring how text and multimedia work together in order to tell a narrative. Therefore, the following question will be the central question that needs to be answered:

\textit{How do digital new journalists use both literary techniques and multimedia to achieve transportation?}

The two main components needed in order to answer this question are on one hand literary techniques and on the other hand multimedia, therefore the two sub-questions will be:

\textit{Q1: In which way are literary techniques used in the text in order to create transportation?}

The elements that are taken into consideration are:

- Story Opening
- Representation of speech and thought
- Narrative situation
- Literary techniques in relation to characterisation

\textit{Q2: In which way are multimedia used in the longread to create an immersive reading environment?}

The elements that are taken into consideration are:

- Layer of atmosphere and layer of extra meaning

\textsuperscript{36} According to the OJD, the organization which supervises the circulation of newspapers and periodicals in France, the average number of sales per month is 213 955, as published on their website.

\textsuperscript{37} Based on the comments people on Twitter made, and a conversation with Jérôme Cazadieu on January 20 2015.

In a short conversation on January 20 Cazadieu explained that this was the goal of the story: L’Equipe is a sports newspaper, but a story like this should be accessible for everyone. Insight into
- Story opening
- Video loops
- Types of scrolling
- Use of multimedia in order to strengthen characterisation

The analysis will be split in two parts, one part will explore in which way narrative techniques are used in the selected longreads, and the second part will analyse the use of multimedia in the longread. All the sub-sections will be discussed in separate sections of each chapter, in which will be scrutinised how the five selected longreads make use of the selected techniques, working towards an answer on the main question.
CHAPTER FOUR: IMMERSION BY NARRATIVE

Despite the fact that multimedia changed literary journalism forever, the textual part of the narrative forms the core of the longread. A text without the videos and the design would be perfectly able to stand on its own and tell the stories that need to be told. Turning it around would be more problematic: if the multimedial enrichments would stand alone, the narrative value of the article would be very low. Therefore, text is the main carrier of the story that needs to be told. The selected digital new-journalistic longreads stand on the shoulders of the New Journalistic giants from the 1960’s, because these digital new journalists are building on the license that the New Journalists earned in the 1960s: they employ a writing style which has more in common with literature than with plain-written journalism.

In the analysis on narrativity, literary and stylistic characteristics such as the use of deictic words and characterisation will be highlighted, as well as narrative techniques. Important to note is that this part of the analysis has firm roots in literary studies and linguistics. This does not harm the claim that digital New Journalism should be seen as journalism, and not as literature. The literary characteristics are a strength rather than a weakness in storytelling.

4.1 Story Opening

The opening of a narrative is a crucial, arguably even the most important element of a narrative, for it makes readers decide whether or not they want to finish reading the story. If the readers’ attention is not drawn when being exposed to the opening, it is unlikely that the reader will start reading at all. This is radically from introductory paragraphs in regular journalism. Traditional journalistic articles start with a so-called lead, which is supposed to give a short, to-the-point summary aiming inform the reader what the article is about. Since digital new journalism draws inspiration from literature, the openings of the articles have much more in common with literature than with traditional journalism. In literature, the function of the introduction is making the reader curious, and drawing the reader into the story: it is for a reason that beginnings of novels are often remembered, and lists of the ‘best story openings in literary history’ are widely available on the Internet.

Transportation theory is important when looking at the story opening, for the opening is the first impression that an article makes on the reader. The author immediately tries to transport the reader to the story world. Therefore, a look at the techniques used to achieve transportation will show how the author tries to pull the reader in immediately. A comparison between two story openings of literary novels and one of the selected digital longread will show the similarities. The first fragment is

38 Robert Boynton, The New New Journalism, xii
39 Among the best ones, according to a few lists on The Telegraph, Buzzfeed and The Guardian are Jane Austen’s Pride and Prejudice (1813), Leo Tolstoj’s Anna Karenina (1878), Sylvia Plaths The Bell Jar (1963) and Charles Dickens’ A Tale of Two Cities (1859)
derived from literary classic *One flew over the cuckoo’s nest* (1962) by Ken Kesey and the second one by Boris Pasternak’s *Doctor Zhivago* (1957).

A. “They’re out there. Black boys in white suits up before me to commit sex acts in the hall and get it mopped up before I can catch them.”

*One Flew over the Cuckoo’s Nest*

B. “On they went, singing ‘Eternal Memory’, and whenever they stopped, the sound of their feet, the horses and the gusts of wind seemed to carry on their singing”

*Dr Zhivago*

In both cases it is most certainly not possible to guess what is going on: the author deliberately tries to sketch a somewhat mysterious scene, not telling the reader what the situation is. Using literary terminology that dates back to the Classics, it is called an *in medias res*-construction: a construction in which a story starts in the middle of a linear narrative, thus it can be classified as a non-linear narrative. Looking at one of the five selected digital longreads, the same is done in *Human Cannonballs* by Jérôme Cazadieu.

C. “From above it looks like a horde powering towards an imaginary line, their galloping shadows sweeping forward in waves.”

*Human Cannonballs*

Even though the similarity is surely incidental, it is interesting to note how similar the opening paragraphs of *Human Cannonballs* and *Doctor Zhivago* feel: in both cases the author is hovering above the story and describing what is going on below.

A special technique that is often used in literature is the use of deixis, or deictic words, also called ‘pointing expressions’. These are words that point outside the deictic world, the deictic world being the world that is centred around the story told. Examples of such words are *they* or *their* as opposed to *me*/*mine* or *we*/*our*, spatial words such as *there* as opposed to *here* or temporal words such as *then* as opposed to *now*. All these words suggest a contrast to another word that is central to the person

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42 *In medias res* is a very popular narrative technique first coined by the poet Horace (65 B.C.), ever since the classic epics *Iliad* and *Odyssey* the tool has been used. It starts in the middle of a chain of events and supplies additional information in flashbacks.
or persons concerned. Deictic words facilitate transportation, so does Agnieszka Lyons state in *Story World in Text Messages*. She argues that using deictic words forces transportation, for in order to understand what a deictic word refers to, one needs to take the position of the protagonist: only from the deictic centre in the story world those words make sense. In other words: the motivation to be transported to the story world is higher, for otherwise it is impossible to understand what the words are pointing at. A clear example is first part of fragment A from *One flew over the cuckoo’s nest*, the first sentence says: ‘They’re out there’. No one knows who they are or where there is, but the reader is likely to believe that s/he will find out when reading on, and as a consequence, s/he will be caught in the story world. The perspective of this story world is needed to understand the terms that are deictically remote.

Looking at the opening paragraphs shows that this technique is used often. In the aforementioned opening of *Human Cannonballs* an example is visible: in the second line, the author refers to ‘their galloping shadows’, ‘their’ referring to the cyclists, but it is not known to whom these shadows belong. Moreover, the sentence suggests that it is visible from the perspective of the narrator, so soon the reader is forced to take the same perspective.

\[D. \text{ Olga is on her own. Her son is in prison, being held on suspicion of having committed what they are calling on television 'the art theft of the century'}\]

The art of stealing, NRC

In addition to this, there is also the factor of social deixis. This has the same effect, but whereas ‘regular’ deixis looks at distance in time and space, social deixis looks at the way in which social distance is created. Depending on the words used, or the way that characters are addressed, the reader can either feel close or distant to the characters. This is visible in the opening: ‘Olga’ is not introduced, but just appears. Addressing a character by the first name only indicates a certain familiarity, especially when – as is done in *The Art of Stealing* – other characters are introduced by giving both first and last name. The instantly created familiarity draws the reader into the narrative, because he or she will want to find out who this Olga is. In addition to that, the author made the choice to use the definite article instead of the indefinite one. By stating that

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46 Ibidem


48 Lex Boon *The Art of Stealing* 20 October 2013
Olga’s son committed the art theft of the century without explaining which art theft, the author places the reader ‘in the know’, assumes that the reader knows this. The author works from an assumption of given information, while the information might be new to many readers. Using this technique in the introduction of the story increases the involvement of the reader; because there lies a certain feel intimacy in the assumption that the narrator and the reader share knowledge of this event.

Moreover, the author creates a distance between Olga and another group ‘on television’: they. The distance appears to be very large, for referring to news anchors, what Olga probably means, as ‘they are calling on television’ is rather unusual.

E. ‘When Edward Snowden met journalists in his cramped room in Hong Kong’s Mira hotel in June, his mission was ambitious. Amid the clutter of laundry, meal trays and his four laptops, he wanted to start a debate about mass surveillance.’

This introduction works the opposite way from the in medias res-introductions in the former two examples. The article on Snowden starts rather ab ovo (literally: from the egg) and introduces how everything started. However, the reader does not know why his room (definite pronoun) is a hotel room, but readers familiar with Snowden will know that he only became famous after this interview was given. A debate is deliberately kept indefinite, for the debate will be introduced later. If the author would have used the phrase he wanted to start the debate, a higher level of transportation would have been reached for it would build on the premise of a shared knowledge between narrator and reader. The introduction gives a detailed description of the hotel room, which allows the reader to picture what it looks like. These are not absolutely necessary details that Tom Wolfe spoke about in New Journalism are present: the clutter of Snowden’s laundry and empty meal trays say something about the situation, and make the narrative more vivid.

F. “Ayungin Shoal lies 105 nautical miles from the Philippines. There’s little to commend the spot, apart from its plentiful fish and safe harbor […] In early August, after an overnight journey in a fishing boat that had seen better days, we approached Ayungin from the south and came upon two Chinese Coast Guard cutters stationed at either side of the reef.”

In the second part of the introduction, the definite pronoun we is introduced. Because this is a definite pronoun it is clear that a select group of men among whom the

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49 Mick Short Exploring the language of Poem, Prose and Play 269
50 Gabriel Dance and Ewen Macaskill The NSA Files: Decoded The Guardian, 3 November 2013
51 Tom Wolfe, The New Journalism 46
narrator is meant. However, except for the narrator the reader does not know who is meant: this suggests that the reader is supposed to know this. On the other hand: the exact location of Ayungin Shoal is carefully explained and described by the narrator, so the narrator does not assume that the reader is familiar with the very place. The we introduces a deliberately evoked linguistic conflict that enhances the feeling of transportation.

It is remarkable that the narrator foregrounds himself in this introduction. The personal narrative-element is something that the New Journalists valued highly, but out of the five introductions A Game of Shark and Minnow is the only introductory paragraph where the author introduces himself.

G. ‘Bulga is a weary hamlet on the fringe of the largest wilderness in Australia’s southeast – a grizzled landscape of razor cliffs, plummeting canyons and dark canopy that stretches for nearly a million wild acres. Saddleback Ridge, arched and forested, forms a sliver of green across the farmed lowlands on the settlement’s other side.’

The town that wouldn’t disappear

Just like in the case of Ayungin Shoal in A Game of Shark and Minnow, the narrator does not assume that the reader is aware of the existence of Bulga. This is visible in the opening, in which the topographical location of the town is explained in the very first sentence. The large amount of adjectives gives the reader a vivid sense of what Bulga looks like: the author describes the colours (green, dark), texture (grizzled, arched, forested) wideness (largest, stretches for a million acres) and it seems a truly idyllic place. This great use of adjectives and other descriptive means is a characteristic that would be classified as being truly literary, for from a stylistic point of view it is also often used to describe experiences and other subjective elements.

This introduction serves as an antithesis to the general point of the story: the seemingly idyllic Bulga potentially changing into a dark and dirty coal mine. In this introduction the reader is seduced by the description and gets the chance to develop sympathy for the place that sounds very special and idyllic, in order to be exposed to the conflict that is going on.

4.2 Representation of Speech and Thought

Representing speech and thought is a popular technique to either slow down or speed up a narrative: a thought or a speech act is something that takes more time to read in a narrative than it takes in real life, so automatically gets more emphasis when the author makes the deliberate choice to describe it. However, the use of thought-

54 Katie Wales The Dictionary of Stylistics B
representation in non-fiction is regarded as an action that is somewhat controversial, for the reason that one would assume that an author of non-fiction cannot possibly know what characters believe, feel and think for these are processes that take place in one's mind. Even when the characters would explain their thoughts, there would still be lot of mediation when the author would describe it. As Katie Wales explains in The Dictionary of Stylistics, the first difficulty is that thoughts are usually non-verbal so when mediation of the thought is used, there is always a great influence of the author present. The second problem that follows from the first, is that Wales believes that the reader will recognise this very thought process as being very implausible in real life. Therefore, the credibility of an article will be lower and as a consequence the journalistic value can decrease. Hence, Wales agrees with literary theorist Henry Porter-Aubott, who also states that representation of thought in non-fiction does not help the credibility of a narrative. It should be noted that the representation of feelings is also generally seen as a representation of thought, for this is also information that would usually not be available to the author unless the characters described in the story share it with the author. Still, even in that case it should be represented as a speech act, because otherwise it still seems that the author is aware of the feelings of the characters.

Despite it being an ambiguous practice in non-fiction, both direct and indirect thought representation is being used a lot in the selected longreads. Whether or not that is problematic for the truth claim is ambiguous. It is perfectly possible to argue that making use of this technique is highly unusual for journalists. The reason for this is that as part of their profession, journalists make a truth claim that the reader is aware of when reading a journalistic article, a contract between reader and journalist that the story reported is one consisting of facts. To represent something that is as ambivalent as someone’s thoughts and feelings is taking a risk, because the author can never guarantee that he or she is providing the readers with a true account: the readers have to trust that this is the true account. However, Robert Boynton sees the representation of characters’ feelings as part of this license or contract that New Journalists earned in the 1960s, meaning that he does not see this representation of thought as a threat to the truth claim: the readers are familiar with the form, and will accept the truth claim that this form makes. As John Hellman argues in Fables of Fact: New Journalists always clearly stated that the truth they provide is their version of reality, and believed that embracing subjectivity allowed them to provide a version of reality that was able to move closer to the truth than objectivity ever could.

Looking at the selected digital longreads, it is clear that like the new journalists, the new new journalists and the digital new journalists also use representation of thought as a literary device to give readers insight into the state of

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57 Porter-Aubott The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative 4
58 John Hellman Fables of Fact 21
60 John Hellman Fables of Fact 11
mind of the characters depicted. Three examples of this technique are given below:

A. "He didn’t love being there, but he felt that he knew why it was necessary"\(^{61}\)
A Game of Shark and Minnow

B. “The word ‘stolen’ is not mentioned again, but everyone in the room knows what is going on.”\(^{62}\)
The Art of Stealing

C. “The 500-metre mark is almost upon them – and this sign triggers a chemical reaction in their bodies. Cipollini suddenly goes crazy and enters into a trance.”\(^{63}\)
Human Cannonballs

These three excerpts all suggest knowledge of the inner life of the character. The thoughts are examples of Free Indirect Thought (FIT), a term first coined by stylistician Bally and elaborated upon by stylistician Mick Short.\(^{64}\) It is used in stylistics to determine whose thought act is presented, and whether or not there is a reporting clause that introduces the act.\(^{65}\) Looking at fragment (A) one is exposed to the thoughts of a character present in the narrative. As shown in the analysis on the introductory paragraph, in *A Game of Shark and Minnow* the narrator himself is very present in the article. Because the narrator is also the focalizer (as can be concluded from the introduction), the thoughts represented are not his, but are from a character also present on the boat on the Philippines. Remarkable is that there seems to be a great uncertainty in the thought statement in excerpt A. On one hand there is the clash between ‘he didn’t love it but was sure that it was important’, and in addition to that ‘he felt that he knew why it was necessary’. It was not ‘just necessary’, but it is a feeling that it is necessary. In other words: the FIT suggests a great access to the mind of one of the characters.

In fragment B the narrator claims to know the thoughts of the people present in the room: ‘everyone in the room knows what is going on’ even though it is not discussed what exactly is going on. This subject is the great art heist. According to Short, using propositional attitudes such as *knowing* and *feeling* is a way to refer to speech and thought-acts without drawing too much attention to the act itself.\(^{66}\) However, the fact that these propositional attitudes are used shows that these actions are deliberately not foregrounded, hence operate on the background. In the background they still communicate these thoughts and feelings but not draw a lot of

\(^{61}\) Jeff Himmelman, *A Game of Shark and Minnow*  
^{62} Lex Boon, *The Art of Stealing*  
^{63} Jérôme Cazadieu, *Human Cannonballs*  
^{64} Mick Short, *Exploring the Language of Poems, Plays and Prose*, 295  
^{65} Katie Wales, *A Dictionary of Stylistics*, 164  
^{66} Mick Short *Exploring the Language of Poems, Plays and Prose* 311
attention to the fact that there are thoughts represented: in this way it functions as a subtly 'hidden' way of FIT.\textsuperscript{67}

Fragment C accounts for an extraordinarily vivid insight in the inner life of the cyclists represented in the article. The narrator claims to know that the 500-metre sign triggers a ‘chemical reaction in the body’ and that the cyclist Cippolini enters into a state of trance after ‘going crazy’ because of this chemical reaction. Even though these descriptions are not actual thoughts, the fact that these are processes taking place inside of the body allows for treating these statements the same way. Eventually, no one except for the protagonist is aware of this process happening, which means that giving this information means that the narrator is aware of this. Unlike in A and B, there is no propositional attitude given here. Instead, the processes are presented as facts that the narrator himself witnesses.

In contrast to thought acts, speech acts form a much smaller problem when discussing the journalistic truth claim. Still, there is a difference between the credibility of direct representation of speech (DRS) and indirect representation of speech (IRS). The regular representation of speech is IRS, because it is more convenient for the literary journalists to use. Journalists have more freedom when reporting in indirect form, and there is no need to worry about whether or not a quote literally corresponds with the words spoken. The following two examples show the way in which IRS works:

A. Secrecy, they say, is essential to meet their overriding aim of protecting the public from terrorist attacks.

The NSA Files: Decoded

B. […] A Française des Jeux rider, who admits that he enters the final kilometre with his stomach in knots.

Human Cannonballs

Both of these fragments are mediated quotations: the quotation marks are removed, but the reporting clauses remain. In fragment B, this strategy is very straightforwardly employed by reporting clause + that (who admits that), but also fragment A is an example of an indirect quotation since there are no quotation marks used. However, fragment A shows a different type of indirect speech since it can be recognised as a mixture between direct speech and indirect speech: Free Indirect Speech (FIS).\textsuperscript{68} In FIS there are no quotation marks, but FIS appears to be slightly less passive thus more vivid than regular IRS because the reporting-‘that’ is not used.

Direct quotations, so quotations that are not mediated by an author but immediately written down between quotation marks, are the best option to enhance credibility. These quotations suggest that a conversation is represented in the same

\textsuperscript{67} Ibidem

\textsuperscript{68} Katie Wales \textit{The Dictionary of Stylistics} 164
way as it took place, which gives the reader a feeling of being a witness. Tom Wolfe stated that DRS speech is the ultimate form of dialogue in literary journalism. One of the reasons to believe this was that Wolfe was always on a pursuit for representing people with all of their particular way of speaking and odd habits. In direct speech, it is possible to show the exact way that someone speaks, without any mediation. However, direct speech is a difficult technique to use in articles, for first of all it takes the pace out of a narrative. It stops the story for a little while and spends a few sentences representing a certain conversation without any stylistic devices that the author can choose him- or herself: unmediated speech, as close to the actual speech as possible. Next to that, direct speech in non-fiction is tricky, for the reader will always assume that the conversation as it took place is shown, which is a difficult claim to make.

Out of the selected digital longreads, DRS is only extensively used in one long quotation without interference of the narrator. The moment also illustrates why exactly this moment was chosen consciously. At this instance in The Town that Wouldn’t Disappear the inhabitants of the town of Bulga are confronted with the Tia Rio mining company that wants to take over their town. The author Bernard Lagan chose not to paraphrase the judge and the lawyer, but decided to use a full-quote. The DRS works because at that moment, the reader is a witness of a key moment in the narrative. The direct dialogue deliberately slows down the pace of the narrative and foregrounds the words of the lawyer and the judge.

Government barrister: Yes, but ultimately you’re speaking about tenants
Judge: They’re people
Government barrister: No.
Judge: I’m sorry, they’re not just tenants
Government barrister: No, Your Honor, please let me finish. Please let me finish. You’re talking about tenants [...]  
The Town that Wouldn’t Disappear

DS allows readers to connect with the conversation, because they see the actual words depicted as they were spoken at the moment the event took place. The direct quotation makes the readers believe that these are the words that actually happen. The speaking-style is even more foregrounded by using repetition in the last sentence spoken by the government barrister. By repeating the phrase ‘please let me finish’ the author suggests that no mediation took place at all, for repetition is inherent to speech.

Another, much smaller example of DRS can be found in The Art of Stealing, an article in which almost exclusively indirect speech is used. This fragment is one of the

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70 Bernard Lagan, The Town that Wouldn’t Disappear
71 Katie Wales The Dictionary of Stylistics 218
only instances in which DRS is found, therefore it is likely that the deviation has a purpose.

*He [Eugen] finally showed up the next evening, but then went straight to bed. “Something to do with work.” he’d said.*

_The Art of Stealing_

Because it is one of the only examples of direct speech, it deviates from the standard and as a consequence it automatically draws the attention of the reader. This practice is also recognised by readers on a subconscious level. The reason for putting a direct quotation here is to foreground the fact that this statement is in fact a lie, and an attempt to hide the art theft from his girlfriend. The reason for his strange behaviour did not have anything to do with work, but with the art heist in the Rotterdam Kunsthalle that Eugen committed with his friends. The reader already knows this because the story is told in non-linear order, but the girlfriend was not aware of this yet. This increases the conflict even more, because the reader will notice the discrepancy and will be triggered to keep reading.

### 4.3 Narrative situation: narration and focalisation

The focalizer and narrator together form the narrative situation, so does Mieke Bal state in *Narratology: Introduction to Theory of Narrative*. Literary and rhetorical scholar James Phelan explains in his chapter in the *Companion to Narrative Theory* that this should be seen as an active process, for tellers of a story without exception seek to connect to and engage with the readers and try doing that by employing different kinds of narrative strategies. Imagining the author as holding a camera, the camera often being a helpful metaphor for the focal point, the narrator has the ability to ‘zoom in’ on a particular event in the narration and zoom out again before moving on to something different. In other words: the author can keep changing the point of focalization. In the case of journalism, the narrator usually walks the reader rather invisibly through the narrative, but in some cases the author can access the mind of the characters and showing their thoughts, thus focalizing.

Though intrinsically linked, narrator and focalizer cannot be used interchangeably: the act of focalization is a part of the story that the narrator shares. As Bal describes: ‘the colouring, […], the specific agent of perception, the holder of the point of view’. In other words: whereas narration looks at the person speaking, focalization focuses on the person seeing. This question of perception has great

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72 Lex Boon _The Art of Stealing_
73 Mick Short _Exploring the Language of Poems, Plays and Prose_ 311
75 Mieke Bal _Introduction to the Theory of Narrative_ Toronto: University of Toronto, 1985. Print. 8
psychological consequences for the reader: levels of focalization do not only vary physically (for example, the difference between a close or distant focalizer), but also cognitively (how many knowledge about the story the focalizer possesses). For example: an external focalizer possesses all available information about the story and is able to share it with the reader, but by choosing an internal focalizer with limited knowledge the author is able to create a feeling of tension. In case the focalizer coincides with a character, the reader watches through the eyes of a character and is inclined to accept this vision.\textsuperscript{76} Before the level of focalization can be determined, it is important to first define the narrator.

Gérard Genette makes a distinction between a homodiegetic and a heterodiegetic narrator, asking the question whether there is a narrator set in the story world and participating in the narrative, or one that is hovering above the story and referring to things that he or she did not experience but just witnessed.\textsuperscript{77} The homodiegetic narrator is a form that is used less frequently, but has a more literary feel that allows the reader to connect more easily to the story, such as in literary fiction. The consequence of employing a homodiegetic narrator is that it easily turns into a rather one-sided narrative, especially in journalism this can be seen as problematic. Narrators are rarely completely trustworthy, and when this narrator is very visible the reader will wonder whether or not this narrator can be trusted. This mindset can be traced back to the large influence of the information press: the less personal a story is, the more trustworthy it seems.

The use of the homodiegetic narrator can be seen in \textit{A Game of Shark and Minnow}, as was shown in the paragraph on story openings. Out of the five, this is the only article in which the narrator openly declares to the reader that he takes active part in the narrative. In the fragments, emphasis is added to the pronouns that point at the author being involved:

A. "In early August [...] we approached Ayungin from the south and came upon two Chinese Coast Guard cutters stationed at either side of the reef."\textsuperscript{78}
\textit{A Game of Shark and Minnow}

B. As we approached, we watched through binoculars and a camera viewfinder to see if the Chinese boats would try to head us off. After a few tense moments, it became clear that they were going to stay put and let us pass.\textsuperscript{79}
\textit{A Game of Shark and Minnow}

\textsuperscript{76} Bal, 104.
\textsuperscript{78} Jeff Himmelman, \textit{A Game of Shark and Minnow}
\textsuperscript{79} Ibidem
With the use of personal pronoun *we* it becomes clear that the narrator himself is part of the narrative. Whereas it is always rather ambiguous to state that the narrator and the author are the same person in works of literature, in journalism it can be assumed that this is the case. The author could have easily left himself out of the story by choosing a third-person narrator and state [*...] the group approached...* instead of [*...] we approached, and ‘the watched through’ instead of ‘we watch through’. By choosing to include himself, his participation in the event is foregrounded. This is probably done in order to show that he truly witnessed the events that he describes, therefore he would be classified as a so-called witness-participant narrator following the typology of Susan Lanser in *The Narrative Act: Point of View in Prose Fiction.* A witness-participant narrator adds a feeling of authenticity to a narrative, because the fact that the author was involved himself is foregrounded.

However, the other four selected texts all use a heterodiegetic narrator: a one that stands outside of the narrative exclusively. This will be shown in the following four fragments from the texts:

A. *Amid the clutter of laundry, meal trays and his four laptops, he [Edward Snowden] wanted to start a debate about mass surveillance.*

The NSA Files: Decoded

B. *The loot is heavier than expected and the three packages are difficult for the two men to carry. Radu calls Eugen and asks him to bring the car a little closer to the Kunsthall.*

The Art of Stealing

C. *Everyone tries to muscle their way into a position in the front rows of the peloton, behind a team-mate if at all possible.*

Human Cannonballs

D. *She feels trapped in the town. Her home is outside the cluster of 20 or so noise-affected houses that still stand to be acquired by the mine if the expansion does, somehow, go ahead.*

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80 In literary studies it is often seen as ‘not done’ to assume that author and narrator are one, since a narrator can hold opinions that an author does not hold (Bressler, 76). Despite the fact that digital new journalism has been classified as journalism, this analysis focuses on the literary quality, and the division between author and narrator is inherent to that. A lot has been written about that by, amongst others, Barthes, Fowles and especially under the influence of Structuralism. Even though in this case the assumption that narrator and author are one, it is important to be aware of this debate.


82 Gabriel Dance and Cage Fielding "The NSA Files: Decoded" *The Guardian*

83 Lex Boon *The Art of Stealing*

84 Jérôme Cazadieu *Human Cannonballs*
The Town that wouldn’t Disappear

In all these four examples the third-person omniscient perspective is visible, for this is the easiest and most conventional tool to use in journalistic articles. The tone of voice has a certain authority that people expect to find in journalism: third person-narration has a certain feel of distance to it, which makes the story told seem reliable. This does not mean that the tone of the narrator is extremely distant: a third-person omniscient narrator also has the quality that he or she has access to the minds of the narrators. This capacity is also visible in the selected quotations. A description such as: ‘Too heavy to carry’ in *The Art of Stealing* implies that the narrator knows what the two men expected, and ‘Amid the clutter of laundry, meal trays and his four laptops’ in *The NSA Files: Decoded* implies that the author had access to the hotel room of Edward Snowden, otherwise he would not have known what at the room looked like. One can conclude that the author can read the minds of the characters and has access to their living areas, thus he could be identified as a third-person omniscient narrator.

This is especially interesting in the cases of *The Art of Theft* and *The Town that Wouldn’t Disappear* because the article share a very strong tension between two parties. In the first-mentioned article the central point of the story is reconstructing the art theft. The author is not so much interested in the heist itself; in fact this very act is a small part of the narrative, but more in *why* the thieves did it and what happened afterwards. The author manages to offer the reader a surprising perspective that one has not seen or read before: it brings the reader to the place where the art heist was prepared and conducted, and it brings the reader to the place where the seven paintings were taken afterwards. In the latter the discussion on a quiet town that is threatened by a coalmine. In this case, the third-person omniscient author makes great use of the ‘mobile stance’ of the narrator as journalism scholar Mark Kramer calls it, pointing at the ability to move away from the story line and the action happening in order to digress, share background information on what took place earlier in the narrative, and eventually leading the reader back to the storyline.

A lot of knowledge is needed to be able to employ the omniscient perspective successfully, and especially in a case like the art heist it is not so easy to collect all the information that is needed. In case of the article on Bulga the author spent months in the town in order to collect all the perspectives and information needed. In both cases there is a rather complex central problem, and the omniscient perspective allows the journalists to show the reader both sides of the story: the rather naïve thieves (“Eugen gets a shock. He wants to leave the country as quickly as possible”) versus the

85 Bernard Lagan *The Town that Wouldn’t Disappear*
86 Schudson, *Discovering the News* 154
88 Lex Boon, *The Art of Stealing*
devastated museum director (“She looks at her telephone which is on mute – seven missed calls, all from members of staff” 89), and the tension between the powerful mining industry versus the frightened inhabitants. Constantly shifting between the two perspectives allows the reader to connect to both sides of the story and gain a deeper understanding of the problem: this is something that a third-person omniscient narrator is perfect for.

After determining the narrator, it is possible to look at the way focalization is employed. Gerard Génette differentiates between three different types of focalization: zero (narrator > character), internal (narrator = character) and external focalization (narrator < character) and strikingly describes the concept of focalization as ‘a restriction of field’.90 Zero focalization is used most often in literary journalism, something that also Nora Bernig concludes in *Narrative Means to Journalistic Ends*. She even argues that zero focalization serves as a ‘quality mark’ for literary journalism, because it possesses a certain authority. 91 Looking back at the fragment from *The Art of Stealing* on direct quotations, one can also find a very clear example of zero focalization:

*B. Andreea doesn’t understand what’s going on. Her boyfriend Eugen didn’t come home the night before last. He finally showed up the next evening but then went straight to bed. “Something to do with work” he’d said.* 92

The narrator knows more than Andreea in this case: the narrator knows that Eugen’s odd behaviour does not have anything to do with work. This knowledge is shared with the reader, but it will take a while before Andreea finds out. Zero focalization is inherent to the use of the third-person omniscient narrator, because the narrator will always know more than the characters in the story do.

### 4.4 Characterisation

According to Tom Wolfe, the presence of vivid characters is the greatest difference between traditional journalism and literary journalism, and also the greatest strength of the latter.93 Even though Tom Wolfe surely did not base this feeling on scientific research but on his gut feeling, he was proven right by research in both psychology and literature: readers need the depiction of people in order to feel connected to the story.94 Mieke Bal also states this: one is compelled to read on because a reader

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89 Ibidem
90 Gérard Genette *Narrative Discourse* 74
91 Nora Bernig *Narrative means to journalistic ends: a Narratological analysis of selected journalistic reportages* (Springer, 2010) 54
92 Lex Boon *The Art of Stealing*
93 Tom Wolf *The New Journalism* 173
94 Amy Coplan *Emphatic engagement with narrative fictions*, 20
cannot help but respond to paper people: whether it is journalism or literature.\textsuperscript{95} Even though most research into literature and its characters is conducted in the study of narrative fiction, the techniques employed in literary journalistic articles are borrowed from fiction and are used to empower these non-fiction works, for characters are the most important force in stories.\textsuperscript{96} This has a great link with empathy, for mirror neurons that are responsible for the feeling of empathy need the depiction of characters in order to be activated and evoke empathic feelings.

However, there is a large difference between character depiction in fiction and non-fiction: the ‘Reading over the Edge’-process introduced by Daniel Lehman, who states that the emotional process that readers go through is radically different for fiction and non-fiction.\textsuperscript{97} Lehman is both a trained journalist and a professor in literature, and literary journalism is of special interest to him. In the case of the five selected articles, all the people brought up in the narrative exist ‘over the edge’ in the real world. Lehman argues that as a consequence the impact is much greater because readers always (indirectly) know about or connect to the events depicted, and the feeling whether something happens to someone real or someone fictive is a large difference for readers.\textsuperscript{98}

The presence of human beings in either fiction or non-fiction also evokes a feeling of empathy, because it allows readers to connect with the human beings represented.\textsuperscript{99} In other words: the reader is much more easily transported into the story world when one sees humans depicted. Wolfe believes that just introducing a human being in a narrative is not enough: the more details that are not essentially necessary are given, the better it is for a story.\textsuperscript{100} This is needed, so does Wolfe argue, because these are the very details that make people human. The quirky details, funny habits or strange haircuts are details that are very recognisable, and details that make people human, and very recognisable. Reading about a character mimics the process of ‘getting to know’ someone, and as a consequence the reader ‘gets to know’ someone in a situation that was previously unknown, for example a small miner’s town in Australia, or even though the reader did not like cycling, it becomes more interesting when the reader ‘knows’ someone in this situation.

A good example of such a detailed description of a person can be found in the story on Bulga. The author describes the inhabitants of Bulga in quite some detail. The descriptions of Mr. Krey, an old man who has been living in Bulga for many years and Paul Burgess, the owner of only pub in town, are good examples of this:

A. [...] a careful, resourceful man whose sparkling eyes and firing wit

\textsuperscript{95} Mieke Bal, 112
\textsuperscript{96} Mieke Bal, 112; Daniel Lehman, 3; Coplan, 4
\textsuperscript{97} Daniel W. Lehman Matters of Fact: Reading Nonfiction over the Edge. 31
\textsuperscript{98} Ibidem
\textsuperscript{100} Ibidem
mask his 72 years’

The Town that Wouldn't Disappear

B. [Paul Burgess] wanted to escape the corporate ladder he’d been on in the advertising business. He has a very young child.”

The Town that Wouldn't Disappear

In just one sentence the author paints a vivid picture of the men who do not even play a big role in the story. In case of Mr Krey, having a slight idea what he looks like, this raises sympathy for the man. Next to that, the author leaves the feeling with the reader that he must have spoken to Mr Krey for quite a while, for otherwise there is no way that he would know about the ‘firing wit’ of Mr Krey. This is an example of what Tom Wolfe meant with ‘unnecessary details’: this wit does not play a role in the narrative, but being aware of this character trait gives the reader a feeling of familiarity. In case of Paul Burgess, the owner of the town pub who “wanted to escape the corporate ladder he’d been on in the advertising business.” There is no need to know about the dreams and wishes of Burgess, but it gives the reader more understanding of Mr Burgess’ background and a better picture of him as a person. The author does not only describe inhabitants from the village, but also people working in the coalmines. In this way, the reader also gains understanding, and maybe even a little sympathy for the ‘Goliath’. Also in The Art of Stealing such remarkable details are given. About one of the thieves, Radu: ‘Nonetheless, the muscular Radu still managed to win over the prettiest girl in the village.’ Or ‘He suggests grabbing a bite at Kapadokya, a kebab shop on the Witte de Withstraat which always stays open until half past five in the morning’. It is not exactly needed to explain what they were eating and where they were eating, but it gives the reader a picture of the characters, because it is not something that everyone would do.

Next, this strategy of foregrounding many different characters is also employed in A Game of Shark and Minnow, the story of the conflict in the South-Chinese Sea. This conflict is relatively unknown despite the fact that it has been going on for a rather long time, and, as the author explains in the introduction, the battlefield has consequences for the entire world. Speaking from the perspective of Western media: the fact that the Spratly Islands are an unknown area and that the Philippines are quite far away make that it is not a very attractive conflict to cover. People in the US and Western Europe have little knowledge of the geo-political relation between China and the Philippines, and it is too far away and too culturally different to grasp

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101 Bernard Lagan, The Town that Wouldn't Disappear
102 Ibidem
103 Lex Boon, The Art of Stealing
104 Ibidem
105 Jeff Himmelman ‘A Game of Shark and Minnow’
peoples attention. Even if people are aware of it, they have a difficult time comprehending the size of the issue. By bringing up characters that seem very sympathetic and normal, the author makes the story look more urgent and compelling. Fishermen Yanto and Loresto for example, from the Philippines:

C. Like Yanto, Loresto was wearing a sleeveless jersey with “MARINES” printed across the front and a section of mesh between the chest and waistline, uniforms for the world’s most exotic basketball team.

A Game of Shark and Minnow

D. In bad weather they [the fishermen] gather in the communications room on the second floor and sing karaoke. (They were all pretty good but Yanto stood out. He nailed George Michael’s Careless Whisperer, down to the vividly emotional hand gestures.)

A Game of Shark and Minnow

In fragment C. the clothing of one of the fishermen is described in detail, the conclusion ‘uniforms for the world’s most exotic baseball team’ is a conclusion by the author, and draws the contrast between the very US-centred term ‘baseball team’ and how far off reality that seems to be on the boat. It sounds like a somewhat tragic and desolate situation, which corresponds with the atmosphere that the author tries to convey. The second fragment sounds little more optimistic, with the men spending their free time singing karaoke. This very specific and not very necessary information; it could have been left out without any consequence for the rest of the story. By sharing this, the reader will surely feel triggered, for karaoke seems to one of the activities that people from any culture enjoy. Moreover, Careless Whisperer is a song that anyone will recognise, and the odds are quite high that the reader also sung the song on karaoke some time. So there might be a link established between the reader and the fisherman. Even though the Philippines are unknown territory for most readers, the author has found a detail that might be universal. The reader can get the feeling that he or she ‘knows’ Yanto, and this makes it much more easy to relate to the Philippine fisherman that the reader previously never heard of.

Like in A Game of Shark and Minnow and The Town that Wouldn’t Disappear, The Art of Theft pays a lot of attention to the way in which the technique of characterisation is employed. Looking at the subject matter, the narrative on the Rotterdam art theft is the best-known theme among the five subjects. Even for people without previous knowledge of this specific art robbery, the concept of an art theft appeals to the imagination, and is without doubt a familiar theme for anyone. The purpose of the author is to show the events prior to the art heist and to show what

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106 The conflict around the Spratley-islands has been in the news again the last few months because the US government was in some way trying to solve it, but at the time that A Game of Shark and Minnow was published, the media wasn’t paying a lot of attention to it.

107 Ibidem
happens after the event. He is not just expanding on the fact that the paintings were stolen, but tries to highlight the people involved in the actions. In other words: the author is foregrounding the human factor. Moreover, the author tries to show why people commit such actions, and what the consequences of such an action are.

Like in *The Town that Wouldn’t Disappear* there are many different characters introduced. As shown in the paragraph on story openings, the first character introduced is Olga:

> F Olga stands in front of the heating stove in the bathroom. A short while ago, she lit the fire then stepped out into the biting cold, making her way to the small graveyard opposite her house where, in the dead of night, she dug up the paintings [...] The works go up like tinder sticks.108

It is immediately clear that Olga is not the central character in the narrative, but it was her son who was responsible for the ‘art theft of the century’109. However, a mother involved in an art theft is somewhat remarkable, and burning the paintings was the tragic outcome of this event. Starting with a detailed description of the act of burning the paintings by the mother of the thief before moving on to the act of stealing raises many questions, and as a consequence this very act is foregrounded.

The thieves are depicted as humanly as possible, rather boys that have no clue what they are doing than professionalised thieves. As the author states in the introduction: what first seemed like a sophisticated burglary by professionals, turned out to be the work of a few small-time Romanian criminals who had no idea what they were getting themselves into.110 The author believed this sense of amateurism to be the most interesting element about the whole situation, and chose to highlight the persons and their lack of a plan. This can be concluded from the following fragments:

> G. Art is worth a lot of money, he’s [Radu] heard, and money is the reason the four Romanian twenty-somethings came to the Netherlands.
> The Art of Stealing

> H. [Eugen] has a shaven head, but his white-blonde hair and pale, chubby face make him look less tough.
> The Art of Stealing

> I. The Matisse is easy. Radu remembers it like the car, the Daewoo Matiz. He doesn’t have a mnemonic for Gaugin so he’s written the names on a piece of paper.
> The Art of Stealing

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108 Lex Boon *The Art of Stealing*
109 Ibidem
110 Ibidem
From all three fragments the fact that the burglars are not very well-prepared speaks. The statement ‘art is worth a lot of money, he’s heard’ for example: by adding the phrase ‘he’s heard’ Boon emphasises that Radu has no idea about the value of art, and would never think of robbing a museum himself. This becomes the central theme that the author wants to discuss by placing emphasis on the robbers themselves. Looking at the third fragment, this statement is illustrated by showing that Radu in fact never heard of the painters or bothered to dive into the painters he stole the paintings of. Even the description of Eugen in the second fragment seems to be humoristic: according to the author, his ‘chubby face’ matches with the not-so-tough nature.

Lastly, there is the Human Cannonballs story on cycling, which does not so much give readers extraordinary details about the persona but the more insight on the minds of the cyclists. Out of the five articles this one focuses most on the psychological liveliness. Many people believe that they are not interested in sports journalism, but the reason why this particular piece of journalism became such a hit on the Internet is the psychological insight that it gives into the minds of cyclists. Readers finally get to see how cyclists experience the mass sprint:

E. “Everything’s calculated, precise and organised. One, two, three. The leaders watch each other, eyes peeled for an attack or some other dirty trick [...] A few more strokes of the pedals and they’ll be at the 250 metre mark.”

Human Cannonballs

F. “The sprinters are pursuing Cipollini. The Italian feels like a grenade that’s been unpinned”

Human Cannonballs

The hectic atmosphere that is inherent to professional sport is very well translated into the text. The One, two, three-phrase mimics the way that the cyclist is counting in his head, so the reader hears the thoughts of the people involved. In contrast to the abovementioned articles we do not get to know a lot about the past, or about the personal life of the cyclists, but we do get insight in their minds. This is also a way in which authors can try to raise awareness for a certain issue: zooming in on a few people that are part of an event and focusing on their inner life, instead of focusing on the race itself, the event that one can see on television, and/or the outcome, as traditional journalism tends to do.

The NSA Files: Decoded is built around ‘talking heads’ that tell the reader about the central issue – privacy – from their own experience. As the editorial team of the article explained in an interview, privacy and the NSA is a rather dry, abstract and unattractive topic to make a longread about, but by enlarging the human factor by

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111 Jérôme Cazadieu Human Cannonballs
112 Ibidem
introducing a great set of characters it becomes more vivid and foregrounds the importance of the topic to humans. The written text is rather factual, but in between every block of text there is a person with a relation to the privacy issue brought up, and he or she shares his/her experience with the reader. As the audio starts playing automatically, the reader has no choice whether or not to start listening to it. In other words: instead of expanding and describing the characters involved in the issue in text, the design team made the deliberate choice to make the text rather distant and factual, and use the characters as a lively contrast provided by multimedia. Since this is exclusively related to multimedia, this practice will be scrutinised in the second part of the analysis. However, interesting to note is that The NSA Files: Decoded is the only longread that deliberately tries to engage the reader by addressing him/her personally:

*Are your details secure?*  
The NSA Files: Decoded

*Your data may not be as secure as you might hope.*  
The NSA Files: Decoded

*How many people are three “hops” from you?*  
The NSA Files: Decoded

By repeatedly asking the reader questions, a technique that can be recognised as the rhetorical device *apostrophe* that is known to be effective in holding a readers attention, or addressing the reader directly in a statement (“your details may...”) it is possible to argue that in fact the reader becomes a participant in the narrative. The authors give the reader the feeling that the unfolding revelations are all centred around him or her, for again and again the reader is forced to think in which way the privacy-issue has to do with him or her. In addition to that, the reader has the possibility to connect his or her Facebook- and Twitteraccount to immediately explore the amount of data that is shared, so the narrative can even be personalised to strengthen the feel of engagement and participation.

**Conclusion**  
On a general level, the components are a mix between literary studies and stylistics: literary studies providing elements such as narration, focalization and characterization, and stylistics bringing in techniques such as deixis. Overall, it is safe

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114 Ibidem  
115 Ibidem  
116 Ibidem  
117 Katie Wales *The Dictionary of Stylistics* 27
to conclude that all the selected longreads have a certain literary value that regular news stories do not posses: representation of thoughts for example, or flourishing use of language. News stories also cannot use elements such as mediated thought, because it would grant the author too much freedom to interpret the words and actions of a character. The authors use the technique of deixis, or pointing words, a lot in the story openings. This technique points in and out of the deictic world or story world: the world in which the events take place. Previous research by Agnieszka Lyons proves that the use of these words is a technique that is deliberately used: deixis greatly facilitates transportation. The analysis shows that all the story openings use at least some deictic words, which draws the reader into the story world that is created because of these words. For example: Human Cannonballs opens by saying 'Their galloping shadows...'. The reader does not know yet who this ‘their’ belongs to. The word that these pointing words refer to, is part of the story world that the reader automatically becomes part of.

Whereas the former element works towards creating immersion in the story world by subtly using certain words, characterization and representation of style and thought attempt to transport the reader by appealing to the readers’ empathy. In every selected longread the focus is on the human side of the story: In Human Cannonballs the psychological side of the cyclists is the central subject, in The NSA Files it is all about the reader, A Game of Shark and Minnow it is about the fishermen, The Town that Wouldn’t Disappear tells the reader about the inhabitants of the Bulga and The Art of Stealing tries to show the human side of the art thieves. Foregrounding the human side of the story is one of the key practices for literary journalism, for it allows readers to make a connection with the narrative and feel empathy: the factor that is shown to be crucial in order to achieve transportation. This can also be done by deliberately using a certain narrator. Using a homodiegetic narrator such as in A Game of Shark and Minnow gives a text an extremely authentic character, because it suggests that the reader experiences everything through his or her eyes. However, from the selected longreads A Game of Shark and Minnow is the only one that employs this strategy. The other four all rely on the heterogenic narrator that employs the third-person omniscient perspective, which is more distant in tone. However, this omniscient narrator is made personal by all four authors that use this form. By doing this, they emphasise thoughts, feelings and experiences that a random observer cannot possibly know, and yet the narrator holds the seemingly objective, distant voice.

CHAPTER FIVE: IMMERSION BY ENRICHMENT

All five selected articles make at least in some way use of audio, video, infographics to enrich the textual content. Interpreting digital new journalism as an extension of new journalism, the addition of multimedia can be seen as the greatest difference between the two genres. Seeing that in academic research a lot of attention has been paid to the immersive quality of video games, it is inevitable to conclude that audio and video form important building blocks of this quality. It is worth looking back once again at what Joshua Quittner foresaw as early as 20 years ago in 1995, when imagining what New Journalists could have achieved with the technology that is available today: “Imagine what those new journalists could have done with video and sound, with hypertext links and limitless bandwidth. Yes, a journalism that uses the best devices of the novel – and the movie! and the radio! and the CD-ROM! and networked communications! – to tell stories.” ¹¹⁹

Just juxtaposing text and image would not create the immersive environment as digital new journalism does: text and multimedia work closely together. The teams creating digital longreads make conscious choices with regard to what to show in text and in multimedia. Professor of English and Art History William Mitchell did research on picture theory, and argues that different types of triggers always work together in order to create meaning. Mitchell uses the example of film, and argues that script informs an actor of the text, but the actor interprets the movements, synchronised sounds shape the interaction of a viewer to the screen and the camera angle shapes the environment that a reader is exposed to. ¹²⁰

Because multimedia encompasses a wide variety of different things, all articles are different with regard to multimedia. This is shown by Susan Jacobson, Jacqueline Marino and Rubert E Gutsche Jr, who analysed the use of multimedia in 50 digital longreads published in 2013. Except for text and photographs, there were no elements found that were shared among all 50 productions. ¹²¹ Design teams have a lot of elements to choose from when deciding how to present an article: whereas some focus on video, others exclusively use photographs: this depends on the way in which they want to communicate the story that needs to be told. This is also the case in the five selected articles. Some elements that are interesting to look at, such as the use of the video loop, are not shared amongst all five articles but are still taken into consideration. Just like in the selection of Jacobson et al, in this selection of five longreads photographs is also a shared element. The photographs will not be taken into consideration when discussing the layer of meaning and anchorage/relay,

¹¹⁹ Quittner “Look, you know some things are going to have to change around here”, 1995
because there are many photographs used and the discussion of which one has which function would become too detailed.

5.1 Layers of Meaning

In *This book contains graphic language* Dr. Rocco Versaci discusses the use of visual language in journalism. Even though his work is mainly concerned with comic journalism, he also addresses the general use of multimedia in online journalism. Most importantly, he argues that different layers of meaning are created when other factors than text are used in an article. The reason for this is that visuals create a type of meaning that text cannot achieve, and readers will find different ways of meaning-making in image than in text. Versaci creates a distinction between two different layers that exist in visual language: a layer of extra meaning and a layer of atmosphere. He argues that the layer of extra meaning is created by elements that provide the reader with new information on the subject matter. In other words: information that the reader has not encountered before in text, and is presented in some other way than text. An example could be an embedded excerpt from the news that presents information on the central issue discussed in the narrative. Next to the layer of extra meaning, Versaci presents the layer of atmosphere. This layer consists of elements that enrich the text by translating the atmosphere that belongs to the narrative. This layer does not present any new information, but translates the atmosphere that suits the narrative. It is used to describe all non-narrative elements that are used to strengthen the story and make it more immersive. In other words: elements that essentially can be left out, for the story can do without them.

This is a special quality of online longreads, for before the Internet arose it was unthinkable that it would ever be possible to integrate sound and video in a work of journalism. In terms of elements, one should think of atmospherical sounds on the background, or images that help making the narrative more powerful but do not carry any new information that the reader needs. Looking at transportation theory, these elements described in the atmospheric layer are the elements that surround the reader and transport the reader. These two layers, especially the layer of extra meaning, in some level correspond with the semiotics-theory of Roland Barthes: he makes a distinction between two functions that images can have: *anchorage* and *relay*. If the function of an image is anchorage, the reader is guided in a certain direction of meaning. *Relay* points at images that are complementary: the image should be read as part of the dialogue, so the meaning is already explained in the dialogue. In case of digital longread one can look at whether an element needs to be accompanied by text in order to understand what is depicted (relay) or whether it can create meaning on itself (anchorage). With these two theories the way that multimedia is used can be

123 Ibidem
scrutinised. Anchorage and relay will only be discussed in the layer of extra meaning, for the layer of atmosphere does not contain text, only image.

**Layer of extra meaning: anchorage and relay**

Looking at the five articles, *The Guardian*’s article on the NSA seems to make most use of the layer of extra meaning: text and enrichment work together to create a cohesive story. The article is built in ‘talking head’-style: while reading, the reader encounters small videos of people with some relation to the world of privacy: an ex-chairman from the NSA, a Congresswoman, someone with an encryption company. These statements and experiences are not provided in text. In addition to that, there are many infographics provided on how much privacy one actually has on Facebook, an embedded court order with relation to a privacy issue and so on: all different ways to translate the same general message. The information load without the videos and infographics would be only half of what it is if one would read the text exclusively, so in this layer of extra meaning a lot of information is presented. These videos would count as anchorage for taking the video out of the article would not cause any trouble in the meaning-making process. Both the text and the videos would be perfectly able to function separately. In contrast to that, the court order which is embedded in *The NSA Files: Decoded*, or the infograph in which one can look up with how many people s/he is connected through Facebook, would have a different meaning if those would be taken out of the story: the context of the narrative would lack and as a consequence it would be just a list of facts. Therefore, this would count as relay.

Compared to *The NSA Files: Decoded* with its many videos, *The Art of Stealing* is a relatively sober article. There are four additional visual sources of information used: pictures of the seven paintings that were burnt and three videos: one filmed in the town Mâcin, the birthplace of the two Romanian art thieves, one filmed by the safety-cameras in the museum and one embedded excerpt of the Dutch television program *Opsporing Verzocht*, a program in which viewers can help solving crimes by sharing knowledge. The video shot in the birthplace of two of the art thieves was made by the journalist himself. 125 Out of the three videos, this is the only one that can be seen as part of the atmospheric layer. The video does not contain any information; it only shows a car driving on a bumpy sand-road. Thus, it can be concluded that its only function is to give the reader a sense of from which environment the thieves come: there is no speech, and there is nothing new shown.

Looking at Barthes, he would classify this video as relay. If the context of the article would be taken away, the video showing a driving car would have absolutely no meaning, so the video does not have a function without the text. The *Opsporing Verzocht*-excerpt and the video of the robbery taken by the security camera would function without context, and are therefore classified as anchorage. Another part of enrichment, the pictures of the paintings that were burnt, also count as relay. The

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125 An assumption made because the video was uploaded on YouTube by an account named ‘Lex Boon’, who happens to be the author of the article.
paintings would still have meaning outside the story, but a completely different meaning: if all seven paintings are taken out of the story and viewed in isolation, they do no longer represent the group of paintings that was burnt in Romania: the central issue of this narrative. This is comparable to the photographs of the cyclists in *Human Cannonballs*: the photographs of the cyclists do have meaning outside the story, but in the story they represent the very people who this story is about.

Looking at other elements in *Human Cannonballs*, one sees two large infographics: one about the physical features of cyclist Mark Cavendish, one about the general classification of the sprint stage in the Tour the France past years, one interview with other cyclists such as Eric Zabel on Mark Cavendish and one larger interview with Mark Cavendish. All of these elements contribute to the layer of extra meaning. The infographics count as anchorage for they form a story on their own, and the interview with Mark Cavendish could very well be a part of a television show. In the article those elements serve as an optional 'deeper' layer for people who wish to engage with the article. Optional, because the information is not needed for an understanding of the article. Only the smaller interview on Mark Cavendish would be an example of relay, because it refers to specific events discussed in the article. Taking it out of this context would give it less meaning than it has now.

Looking at the layer of extra information in *The Town that Wouldn’t Disappear*, one finds interviews with inhabitants of the town Bulga, an infographic showing the expansion of the mine and two graphs with regard to coal export. The interviews with the inhabitants of Bulga count as relay, for people without knowledge of the conflict between the inhabitants and the coal mine will not understand what they are speaking about. The two graphs on the growing coal mine industry and the one on the infographic on the expanding mine would count as anchorage. Those are not specifically pointed at Bulga but serve as a way to offer the reader a wider range of knowledge on this issue that is not limited to Bulga. In *A Game of Shark and Minnow* the only element of the layer of extra knowledge is a range of maps that shows the location of the Spratly-islands and the geo-political conflict going on. Maps will always be classified as relay because people will always attribute a meaning to it: maps have to be clear and keep standing outside of the in order for people to understand what is shown. In addition to that, a map is a familiar visual concept that people will interpret it without any help from text.

Layer of atmosphere
This layer is concerned with communicating and strengthening a certain mood that belongs to the narrative. The mood can be set by the text, and subtle use of sound and image can foreground this mood. This layer of atmosphere is also recognisable in film: many experiments have been done with exposing people to horror movies with the

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126 In addition to this, there was one additional Youtube-video embedded. This video was taken offline in the meantime (the article was written in fall 2013), so it cannot be viewed and taken into consideration anymore.
soundtrack muted. The experiences of people participating in this experiment are, without exception, the same: these films are not frightening at all without hearing the music. This means that something more is needed to truly evoke a feeling of fear. In the case of film, it has to be defined by playing music that suits this mood.\textsuperscript{127} The layer of atmosphere is extremely useful to foreground such feelings.

This strategy is very well visible in \textit{The Town that Wouldn’t Disappear}. The author wants to foreground the contrast between the calm, environment-focused nature of the town of Bulga and the aggressive, threatening presence of the ever expanding mine. While reading, the reader is reminded of this sharp contrast by the presence of sounds of on one hand quietly singing birds, and after scrolling the page one hears the harsh and metallic sounds of machinery. On the background, the reader first sees the view from Bulga: peaceful surroundings with trees and mountains, and when scrolling the picture is seamlessly exchanged for a dark picture of a coal train. The sounds correspond with the images: first sounds of nature, than sounds of machinery. By literally surrounding the reader by these sounds and images, immersion is enforced and transportation is stimulated. In addition to that, an extra sense is triggered when there are sounds used. The narrative takes over not only the eyes, but also the ears are taken over.

A similar strategy is used in \textit{A Game of Shark and Minnow}. While reading, the reader is every once in a while exposed to sounds of the sea, as if the author does not want the reader to forget that s/he is engaging with an article that takes place at sea. These two narratives are the only ones that make use of background sounds.

However, this does not mean that the atmospheric layer is not used at all. \textit{Human Cannonballs} and \textit{The Art of Stealing} use background pictures that show the reader scenes from the narrative. No photographs with a necessary information value, but pictures that give the reader a feeling of what is going on at that moment in the narrative. In case of \textit{The Art of Stealing} a loaded room with journalists attending the press conference organised by the direction of the museum and the empty wall where the paintings were, and in \textit{Human Cannonballs} there are constantly photographs of racing cyclists used, corresponding to the stage of the Tour de France, which translates the feeling of hurry and adrenaline onto the reader. The reader is constantly reminded of the feeling of urge, because there is no choice but looking at the background picture.

5.2 Story Opening and video loops

Just like in magazines, books, newspapers and also movies, a front page or first screen is a crucial element of any media outlet, for it is the first thing that a consumer gets to see. An establishing shot, which gives the reader an impression of what one can expect when he or she decides to engage with the media outlet. The term

establishing shot is taken from cinema and defines the opening of a certain scene. In movies this shot is meant to set the tone to what is to come, and it is very consciously composed. In case of digital longreads the term will be used for the opening screen instead of 'opening scene'. This opening leaves the reader to decide whether or not he or she wants to engage with the narrative, so the opening is supposed to translate the feeling of the article to the rest of the subject matter and preferably make the reader somewhat curious. Looking at what the opening screens of the five articles have to offer and comparing the way in which the five selected articles make use of this opening will reveal two different strategies that are employed in order to draw the reader into the narrative. In the first strategy the reader gets a straightforward and clear description of what is going to come, and the other one attempts to keep it more mysterious. In other words: showing the reader what s/he can expect or playing with these expectations. This paragraph will only look at the very first impression that the article gives, so it will not be diving any further into the narrative.

The first strategy of giving a straightforward image is adopted by Human Cannonballs and The Art of Stealing. Human Cannonballs shows a picture of cyclists in the heat of a mass sprint, in black capital letters the title of the article is given. In the bottom of the screen there is a finish line drawn, showing that the cyclists have 250 metres to go at the moment the reader is exposed to them. It is very clear what the subject matter of the article is, and what will be discussed in the narrative. The opening of The Art of Stealing is similar: it shows a large photograph of a stove with the title of the article and the text ‘The tragic fate of the masterpieces stolen from Rotterdam’. On a cognitive level, the reader will automatically link the text to the picture, and will inevitably conclude what this tragic fate must have been; a fruitful interaction between text and image, and one that makes readers curious for one will wonder how paintings end up in a stove. Digital new journalism allows for such an interaction between text and image: there is more room for pictures than in regular new journalism, and in this way not everything has to be explicated in the written text.

Next to that, there are two articles that employ the strategy of slowly pulling the reader into the article and not immediately revealing what the central issue is: both The Town That Wouldn’t Disappear and A Game of Shark and Minnow play with the expectations of the reader. In the first one the reader is exposed to a vast, Australian sight with trees and mountains. One tree is even moving a bit in the wind. In A Game of Shark and Minnow a similar sight is chosen: one sees an opening screen with a vast sea and a man on a boat. Also this image is subtly moving: the boat is floating on the sea. In both cases there are quiet background sounds related to nature playing, respectively sounds of birds and crickets and sounds of waves. Moreover, in both

129 Ibidem
articles the seemingly quiet nature of the place one sees is false and is soon exposed to the reader: The quiet nature of the town of Bulga is threatened by a coalmine, and the sea that seems calm is in fact a battlefield. In both cases this is revealed fast: when one scrolls down in the case of the Philippines one sees the forsaken ship from where this ‘cold war’ between China and the Philippines is fought, and in the case of Bulga the sounds seamlessly become sounds of trains passing by.

An important reason for the different opening strategies is the assumed previous knowledge of the central subjects: the Tour de France and the Rotterdam art heist are both subjects that readers are likely to know about. Moreover, both subjects will attract a large audience for their media coverage has been relatively high. Bulga and the Spratly-island-conflict however, were largely ignored and as a consequence readers who do not live nearby the place where the conflicts are situated are not very likely to start reading. By slowly guiding the readers into the story by foregrounding attractive elements such as quite general (moving) photography and sounds, the attention of readers is slowly grasp. As a consequence, the readers will realise that the central conflict is interesting, very human and worth the read.

The way in which the opening of The NSA Files: Decoded works is somewhere in between the two strategies. The reader is welcomed by the text ‘What the revelations mean for you’: a direct address to the reader. This text is accompanied by a large video that starts playing immediately, so the reader does not have the choice whether or not to be exposed to it. One sees a man explaining why people who are even a little bit concerned with privacy should not trust products with any tie to the US. This will most probably go for all the readers of the article: people who do not own any products with ties to the US are extremely hard to find, or among the people who get to read the article probably even non-existent. In other words: this statement should be interpreted as a direct appeal to the reader to start reading the article. The subject matter is immediately clear so the reader knows what to expect, but it is not exactly clear what will be revealed.

The moving pictures that are used in the opening screen of The Town that Wouldn’t Disappear and A Game of Shark and Minnow are the so-called video loops. These are repetitive, gif-like images that are put on the background and show a certain movement that keeps repeating itself. One of the most important elements that literary journalists in general are concerned with is creating authenticity, so does Jack Hart argue in Telling true stories: A Nonfiction Writers Guide. Literary journalism is much more suitable for that than the distant journalism, for Hart argues - rather logically - that the more personal the story is, the more it communicates a feeling of authenticity. According to Jacobson et al, the so-called video loop is a popular way of adding authenticity in longreads. Amongst the 50 digital longreads

132 Ibidem
analysed the video loop turned out to be one of the most important types of enrichment: it was used by almost forty percent of the analysed digital longreads. Jacobsen believes that this video loop is popular because it is a subtle way to add authenticity; she even describes these video loops as a literary agent because it is a great way to give the reader a sense of the time, place and character. This conclusion is reinforced by the transportation theory by Green et al. Transportation theory takes place when people ‘feel lost’ in a narrative, and experience mental imagery. When the reader is exposed to a moving image of a certain place, the reader might be in the transportation process because of the text, and this effect might be even stronger. A moving image is even easier to relate to than a photograph because it is more realistic: movement mimics the truth more closely than a still image. It is easier for people to image being at a place when the image is moving than when it is still. The loops are therefore a great way to take the reader to the location where the story takes place. Out of the five analysed longreads, two make frequent use of video loops and three do not use those at all at all. The Town that Wouldn’t Disappear, A Game of Shark and Minnow use it, and The Art of Stealing, Human Cannonballs and The NSA Files: decoded do not use it. Still, it is relevant to discuss in which way it is used because Jacobsen shows that it is a frequently used tool in longreads.

The article that represents it best is also the one which uses it most: A Game of Shark and Minnow. It opens with a video loop of people being at sea, and one hears the sound of the sea and sees a boat floating. One sees it through the eyes of the journalist that was on board, so the reader is almost being taken on board and being tossed by the waves as well. It becomes immediately clear that the situation is not very safe. One clearly sees the effect of verisimilitude here, which is a consequence of the increase of authenticity. Looking through the eyes of the author, the subjectivity of the person narrating the story is inevitably present. Moreover, one cannot help but being exposed to the experience of the person who is filming this. This was a deliberate choice, clearly linked to the way in which New Journalists saw reporting: ‘not only reporting on society, but enacting the social.’ Not just reporting on something from a distance, but engaging with the things one is reporting on and showing this to the audience. This opening scene is not the only point in which the loops are used. Throughout the narrative the loops function as ‘intermissions’, short breaks in the text. In every loop there is some kind of action shown that should represent the life of the Philippine people on the boats: fishing, hammering or watching out for the Chinese boats. In this way, the reader can easily image what life on the boat is like: a

134 Idem, 13
process of understanding that is achieved through empathy. It is more engaging than a photograph because it mimics human behaviour more closely than a static picture, and one is almost forced to watch it for it starts moving immediately without having to press a start button.

In *The Town that Wouldn’t Disappear* it is used in a similar way. Like in *A Game of Shark and Minnow* the opening screen is a video loop: one sees a small house, the peaceful nature surrounding and hears the sounds of birds. By doing this, the author tries to give the reader a feeling of what it is like to live in Bulga. In one of the video loops the local pub is shown, and one hears the sounds of people speaking and laughing: also the sounds of people have the ability to stimulate the feeling of empathy. The contrast feels somewhat threatening, from the bright, peaceful house in the nature to dark scenery with a freight train. Only the sounds would be enough to explicit which contrast the author tries to show to the reader. And not only show: the author tries to communicate the feeling of what is going on by using two contrasting video loops right after the other. In these video loops there are no people visible, but the focus seems to be more on changing atmosphere and the contrast between the two: the colour coding, the type of sounds (peaceful vs. harsh), nature vs. industry. As Jacobsen argues: in this type of video loop one the power of personal association speaks: the author does not need to explain in words what is going on, but the reader makes the link between the two video loops himself.

5.3 Parallax scrolling

The most visible difference between longreads on the Internet without a sophisticated layout and the ones to whose layout is paid more attention might be the way that the article makes uses of scrolling. After *Snow Fall*, the type of scrolling that this article employed has almost become a synonym to longreads, therefore it is inevitable to discuss this phenomenon. A different way of scrolling creates a completely different reading experience. In the case of ‘parallax scrolling’ this is an effect that was seldom seen before on the Internet: the background image stays static while the text moves over the background in a different pace. ‘A hypnotic reading experience’, as it is described in *Ux Magazine*, a leading magazine in the field of user experience. This *parallax scrolling* (as opposed to the traditional ‘single-page scrolling’ in which the text sticks to the background) is supposed to create an illusion of depth on a web site, by splitting the image in two layers and make both layers move at a different pace. Some people hold a rather sceptical stance towards this way of scrolling, for they find

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141 Frederick M. Dede The Effects Of Parallax Scrolling On User Experience And Preference In Web Design (Purdue University, 8-03-2013) 27
it a relatively easy way to make an article seem sophisticated and believe that it might
distract the attention from an article’s (poor) quality. Some people even believe that
the explosion of websites using the technique can be traced back to Snow Fall.
However, as this is a fairly recent development, little academic research has been
conducted in this field so far.

D.M. Frederick from Purdue University did look into it from the angle of
consumer experience, and asked users what they expect from websites that employ
this technique. He found that people expect these websites to be ‘more fun’, and ‘more
informative’ in comparison to websites that do not use parallax scrolling. Jacobson
equals the rise of parallax scrolling to the rise (or rather: the comeback) of linear
narrative: the stories presented seem to be rather straightforward, in contrast to the
multi-linear narratives that seemed to dominate the internet. Linear narrative, one in
which the sequential order is followed, was dominant in journalism before the rise of
the Internet.142 Journalists understood its limitations, but print was most suitable for
linear representations because it ‘emphasises the capacity of language to form a linear
stream of text that moves unrelentingly forward’.143 However, the rise of the Internet
changed this view: people started discovering the concept of hypertexts: linking to
other narratives. This changed a lot, because suddenly it was not needed anymore to
give all the information in one narrative but it became possible to easily refer to other
texts. As a consequence the articles became shorter, multi-linear (as opposed to
linear) and interlinked with other stories.144 According to George P. Landow, it even
challenged all the ideas on literary plot or story that was previously known. Not only
the reading process is different, also the meaning-making process changed: whereas a
linear narrative stimulates the reader to create meaning out of a text, hypertextuality
focuses on small bits of meaning that are all combined by the reader. Now the parallax
scrolling returned, the stories started focusing on linearity again, so does Jacobson
argue.145 Looking at the developments in digital journalism, this observation seems to
be one that is indeed visible. Parallax scrolling is a development that is only visible
with long text (also because there isn’t anything to scroll when a text is short), also
because it is supposed to give the reader a calm reading experience with as little
distraction as possible. This motivation is in line with the shift from the intensively
hyperlinked, multi-linear texts that George P. Landow describes to the longreads that
offer as little hyperlinks as possible, for the goal is to keep the reader in the text and
hyperlinks invite the reader to click on a word and start reading on a different
website. Parallax scrolling is a perfect tool for that. It suggests a flow that is never
broken in the narrative, so it gives the reader a clear sense of linearity.

Looking at the five selected longreads, not one of the narratives apply
hypertextuality: they are all completely focused on the linear narrative in the story.

142 George P. Landow Hypertext 3.0: Critical Theory and New Media in an Era of Globalization.
Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press. 2006. 186
143 Idem, 182
144 Ibidem
145 Jacobsen, ‘The digital animation of literary journalism’ 14
However, not all five longreads use parallax scrolling: *Human Cannonballs, A Game of Shark and Minnow* and *The Town that Wouldn’t Disappear* use it. *The Art of Stealing* only uses it at a few occasions *The Guardian’s* article on the NSA does not use it at all. *Human Cannonballs* makes the most obvious use of parallax scrolling: the entire article is employed in this style. The design team even made an extra layer with a ‘finish line’, which progresses as the reader keeps reading. This has two functions: on one hand the reader can see how much s/he progressed reading and how much there is left, on the other hand it also connects to the cyclists and how far they progressed in the race that is depicted, which would count as an immersive experience. The combination of the static image on the background and the text that moves over the image has an immersive function: pictures, if meaningful in relation to the text, enhance the connection one feels with a story. In the case of *Human Cannonballs* the pictures and text definitely correspond. As the text progresses the photograph on the background also shows a next stage in the race, taking the reader along with the race and perhaps trying to motivate the reader to finish reading the entire article. In other words: the reader is seamlessly led through the race: without noticing it the background changes in line with the stage the cyclists is in. The scrolling happens extremely smoothly: the reader does not see the page changing but while the reader keeps reading, only the background picture is replaced by a new one.

The article on art theft and the NSA do not make use of parallax scrolling at all, which is a choice that has been made consciously. In case of *The Guardian* there is such a high amount of multimedial features used that it probably would have even been too much, for the blocks of written text are rather small already and using parallax scrolling would be rather complicated. In case of the article on *The Art of Stealing* this was a very conscious choice made by the author and the design team: the article was supposed to foreground the information, not multimedial elements like was done in *Snow Fall* and *Firestorm*. It was supposed to look good, but had to communicate the feeling that the story was primarily based on text so no extraordinarily good-looking article should be made.

Another possible strategy is combining parallax scrolling with the single-page scrolling, as is done in *A Game of Shark and Minnow* and *The Town that Wouldn’t Disappear*. Remarkably, both texts use mixing of both ways of scrolling in the very same way: longer pieces of text are presented on a rather plain background in single-page scrolling style, while the parallax-scrolling is employed very specifically at certain moments, with video loops and pull-out quotes put on appealing pictures that translate a certain atmosphere. Their function seems to be more of a ‘wake-up-call’ in between the longer narrative. In this way an article does not become too flashy, but

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148 Author Lex Boon explained this in a short e-mail interview, april 2015.
still makes use of the presumption that (background) images enhance the reading experience and empathic feelings.\footnote{Ibidem}

So out of the five selected texts, only one article fully relies on parallax scrolling. The reason for that could be that it indeed might have ‘suffered’ a bit from the intense popularity, and later the criticism that journalism should still be about the content, and not about the looks.\footnote{Eric Jaffe “Snow Fail: Do readers really prefer parallax web design?” \textit{FastCoDesign} December 19 2013. Web. June 15 2015.} It does offer an immersive, linear narrative that definitely has the potential to make a reader finish the story. After \textit{Snow Fall} was published many newspapers and news websites jumped on the trend in order to make a production too, which eventually resulted also in a lot of mockery. A local newspaper, \textit{De Bredase Gezinsbode}, even published a ‘snow fall’ about a 15-year old girl who stole a t-shirt from the H&M, to show how anything can look good in parallax-scrolling style. The website opens by saying: ‘Now The Guardian, The New York Times and the Washington Post do it, we cannot stay behind.’\footnote{Daan Windhorst “Winkeldief (1E5) opgepakt in Breda” \textit{De Bredase Gezinsbode} Juni 2013. Web.} So perhaps the way that the \textit{New York Times} moved on from \textit{Snow Fall} to \textit{A Game of Shark and Minnow} shows how the two techniques can be combined in a powerful narrative.

\section*{5.4 Characterisation and multimedia}

Throughout the entire article audio and video are used to strengthen the characters that appear in the narratives. Speaking in terms of the layers that Rocco Versaci brought up, this usually happens in the layer of additional meaning, for it is mostly new information that that is added. Tom Wolfe already focused on the importance of characters in a narrative, arguing that they translate a feeling of liveliness and evoke a feeling of empathy.\footnote{Tom Wolfe \textit{The New Journalism}, 90} Introducing characters as human beings instead of just quoting them adds greatly to this vividness. In addition to that, the factor on ‘reading over the edge’ that Lehman brought up, being aware of the fact that the people in the non-fiction narrative are actually ‘real people’, is maximally exploited by using this strategy.\footnote{Daniel W. Lehman \textit{Matters of Fact: Reading Nonfiction over the Edge}. 31} By showing videos, sound clips and photographs of the people involved, the reader can see the people involved instead of just read about them, and as a consequence the impact is much greater. One is constantly reminded that these people are people who are out in the actual world, which exploits the feeling of empathy: they are not just characters in fiction.

Witnessing another’s emotional state is crucial in evoking empathy, for by seeing someone one can mirror his or her emotional state.\footnote{Suzanne Keen, \textit{A Theory of Narrative Empathy}, 210} Television commercials depend on that. It is safe to say that in nine out of ten television commercials people are introduced because of this very factor that people need someone to relate to, and feel much more related to the product that is being sold when they see other people
Out of the five analysed longreads, the best example of this is the narrative on the NSA, which is crammed with people sharing their story with the reader. On 28 different occasions in the narrative there is someone sharing his or her story on privacy with the reader. These are all types of people: for example people from the congress, people from the tech-world and people from the NSA, and present their views on certain issues.

One of the first persons depicted is Zoë Lofgren, as can be seen in the screenshot added. It is as if a real human being is talking to the reader. When the reader passes the image while scrolling, the people depicted start speaking. In other words: one cannot choose not whether or not he or she wants to be exposed to it. Such video images, almost like holograms, work towards achieving a higher feeling of empathy with the reader. Research into the feeling of empathy and how this is triggered has shown many times that empathic feelings develop faster when one is exposed to an image that depicts a human being than when exposed to a text that describes a human being. This is exactly what the narrative is trying to do: making privacy a more human issue. The interesting thing here is that these people that are brought up share stories that could have been used in textual form in the narrative. They are nothing more than 30-second monologues about their relation to privacy. However, the design team chose to put those stories out as an experience that is told by a person, according to researches the most powerful means to evoke empathy, and it is so important that the reader just has to hear it. This has to do with the story itself, but also with features that are visible in the facial expressions of the one talking, and the hand gestures that people use. Also the fact that that the ‘holograms’ in The NSA Files: Decoded are almost looking the reader in the eye mimics the feeling that the reader is part of a conversation rather than someone reading a story on a screen: when seeing a person, one feels an instant connection.

The Guardian is not the only narrative that uses this: all five stories use audio and video to foreground the humans in the story, evoke empathy and as a

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155 Ibidem
156 Ibidem
158 Ibidem
consequence transport the reader into the story world. In *The Town that Wouldn’t Disappear* there are many photographs and videos used to illustrate the people that live in Bulga. Not only the people battling against the mine get the change to share their story, but also people whose lives depend on their mining job. In this respect the author did a great job showing all aspects of human beings related to the El Tinto mine. On one hand there are people losing a lot of the quality of their living conditions, but on the other hand people find a job because of the expansion. The text and audio and video are used on next to the other, the story can be understood without, but it offers something extra:

Figure 2: The Town that Wouldn’t Disappear. By Ella Rubeli (photographer) (2013).

One reads about Mr. Krey, and in case the reader wants to know more, he or she can listen to the audio file that is included. Krey tells additional information on what author Bernard Lagan just wrote. In this way, the narrative becomes livelier because instead of plain information given by the author the story becomes a personal experience that is shared by someone in the story (over the edge) instead of a story mediated by an author who does not have anything to do with Bulga personally. After Mr. Krey shared his experience, there is another audio file that the reader can also listen to. In this way, more perspectives are provided. Moreover, this is also used at another point in the story when the narrative reaches the point of the law suit of the inhabitants of Bulga versus the Rio Tinto mine. Here, the reader can listen to the judge and to the lawyers. Looking at other longreads, this strategy seems to be similar to the strategy of *The NSA Files: Decoded*, in which the personal story is also foregrounded.

In both cases it seems like the reader is addressed directly, which increases the personal involvement and increases the feeling of empathy. A difference between the story on Bulga and the story on the NSA is that Lagan chose not to use any videos in the digital journalistic production (except for the video loops) but uses audio exclusively. In the NSA-story the holograms are what makes the digital longread vivid

159 Amy Coplan “Empathic Engagement with Narrative Fictions” *Journal of Aesthetics and Arts Criticism* (2004) 143
and human, *The Town that wouldn’t Disappear* has other ways of adding this feature and chose to use audio.

The article on the NRC-website is the only one that makes use of illustrations to show the characters: in *The Art of Stealing* the short written biographies of the thieves are accompanied by a watercolour-like illustration. It is probably not possible to use their photos because the men still need to be convicted, but this is an excellent way to still give the reader a picture of what they look like.

![Illustration from The Art of Stealing](image)

**Figure 3 Illustration from The Art of Stealing. Aloys Oosterwijk (illustrator) (2013) The Art of Stealing, NRC**

It gives Radu and his friends a more human appearance than when they would have been described without showing what they look like. This is exactly the effect that Tom Wolfe meant with the statement on giving details that make people human.\(^{160}\) In addition to this, their entire lives are shown in photographs throughout the narrative. As mentioned earlier, the journalist went to their hometown to shoot a video of the place where they come from, and the story opens with the oven where Radu’s mother burnt the paintings. Also a picture of their apartment in Rotterdam is included in the production. Even though these seem to be details, these small sketches all work together to create a rather detailed picture of who these people are. This is also what journalist Lex Boon wanted to achieve: in a short interview he explained that the immersive multimedia-production was meant to find the story and the people behind this tragedy for the art world.\(^{161}\)

**Conclusion**

The second part of the analysis looked the way in which enrichment is implemented in longreads in order to make the narrative more immersive, and as a consequence make the transportation process easier. There are many new tools available for journalists: never before it was possible to use moving images, or choose to which sound the reader is exposed while reading. These multimedial elements are all things that not only improve the aesthetic value of the article, but also give the article a higher immersive value. The factors analysed were the layers of meaning, story opening and video loops, parallax scrolling and characterisation in multimedia. Looking at the layers of meaning as defined by Rocco Versaci, it becomes clear that the

\(^{160}\) Tom Wolfe *The New Journalism* 73

\(^{161}\) Author Lex Boon explained this in a short e-mail interview, april 2015.
Multimedial elements have a function: they are not merely included to support the narrative told in text.\textsuperscript{162} In \textit{Human Cannonballs} there is a video interview with one of the cyclists as part of the narrative that belongs to the so-called layer of extra meaning, and on the other hand there are photographs of the cyclists that follow the reader while reading, which is part of the layer of atmosphere. This distinction is important to understand the different functions that multimedia have: it can both actively contribute to the narrative and just add atmosphere by transferring a certain feeling or emotion.

Being exposed to sounds and pictures makes a reader extra sensitive to transportation, as is stated in previous research by amongst others Nonny de la Peña.\textsuperscript{163} This is very visible in \textit{The Town that wouldn’t Disappear}, where reader hears the sound of birds when the idyllic town is introduced, and when the situation with the ever-expanding mine is introduced one hears the sound of heavy trains. This tells the reader something about the atmosphere surrounding the story. Characterisation is also an important part of where enrichment is used for. Image and sound can almost make a character look alive, and can give the reader the feeling that he or she knows the person who is depicted. This has proven to work in television commercials: commercials in which people were depicted are more successful than ones in which this does not happen. The key is empathy, and empathy is also one of the crucial elements needed to make transportation theory work.\textsuperscript{164} In \textit{The Art of Stealing} author Lex Boon tries to sketch the human side of the act of stealing by embedding a video that shows the hometown of the Romanian thieves, and in \textit{A Game of Shark and Minnow} there are many video loops used which show the fishermen that the narrative is about. Those video loops are named one of the most important types of multimedia by Susan Jacobsen et al, who interprets it as a literary agent that can transfer the notion of time, play and character.\textsuperscript{165}

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{163} Nonny de la Peña et al, "Immersive Journalism: Immersive Virtual Reality for the First-Person Experience of News." 295
\bibitem{164} Melanie C. Green and Timothy Brock “The role of transportation in the persuasiveness of public narratives.” \textit{Journal of Personality and Social Psychology} 79 (2000) 701
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CHAPTER SIX Conclusion

This thesis aimed to explore how digital new journalists implement the concept of transportation in their longreads, and identified different methods that creators of digital longreads use in both narrative strategy and use of multimedia, to do so. Therefore, the central research question was: How do digital new journalists use both literary techniques and multimedia to achieve transportation? Various elements that facilitate transportation, such as characterisation and certain types of narrators, were pointed out. Traditional New Journalists practice journalism by writing texts exclusively, and they use techniques that have been proven to be captivating and immersive by many predecessors. However, digital new journalism only recently emerged as a mix form between multimedia and literary journalism. In this research the creators of this genre are named ‘digital new journalists’, a term that combines their digital nature with the fact that this movement obviously has its roots in the New Journalism of the 1960s. Whereas traditional New Journalism was hailed for its immersive quality and a lot of research into this topic has been conducted over the years, these digital new journalists did not receive a lot of attention in journalism studies yet. The literature available on this subject is inconclusive on the similar strategy that New Journalists and digital new journalists employ, whereas the connection between the two is obvious. In order to point this out, this study aimed to answer the following two questions:

Q1: In which way are literary techniques used in the text in order to create an immersive reading experience?

Q2: In which way are multimedia used in the longread to create an immersive environment for the reader?

In order to answer the central question, a two-fold analysis covering on one hand narrative aspects and on the other hand multimedia aspects (‘enrichment’) has been conducted using five longreads: The Town that wouldn’t Disappear by Bernard Lagan, The NSA Files: Revealed, The Art of Stealing by Gabriel Dance and Cage Fielding, Human Cannonballs by Jerome Cazadieu and A Game of Shark and Minnow by Jeff Himmelmann– all five from media outlets from different countries, and discussing different topics.

6.1 Discussion

The five selected longreads are without exception examples of digital new journalism in which narrative and multimedia work together in order to create one, unified immersive article. The narrative still has the upper hand, for it would be possible to read these stories in isolation, whereas the multimedia does not contain a narrative on itself. However, multimedia plays such a large role that it would not do justice to
the production to regard them as an extra feature: the digital longread is a form that relies on multimedia. The research was based on the concept of transportation, as defined by Melanie Green and Timothy Brock, who were the first ones to conduct major research in this field. The most important circumstance needed in order to achieve transportation is an immersive environment. In digital new journalism, the effect of transportation is even stronger than in the text-based research by Green and Brock, because the reader is triggered and pulled into the narrative in many different ways. The ultimate goal of transportation is achieving change in belief and behaviour, thus making impact on the reader, and an analysis of the five longreads shows that the immersive quality as a result of literary and multimedia strategy is best visible in the way that the introduction and characterisation are rolled out. Looking at these two aspects will show how the different elements come together and work towards transportation.

Introduction
As the reader will base the decision whether or not to keep reading on the introduction, one of the most important analyses is the one looking at the way that the story opening works. Looking at the introductions, the analysis shows that there are different literary techniques used in order to draw the reader into the production: the conscious use of deixis, pointing words, that help creating a story world, flourishing language that makes the reader curious and a first paragraph that in all cases does not give all the information away yet: all ways in which the reader is stimulated to keep reading. The concept of deixis in relation to transportation theory was introduced by Agnieszka Lyon.166 She sees it as a way of creating a story world that immerses the reader, and it is indeed a powerful tool: all the selected longreads use this strategy. In *The NSA Files: Decoded* the author speaks of ‘the hotelroom’ and ‘the clutter of laundry’ – all terms that deliberately point to the inside, and subtly immerse the reader into their story world.

Another technique in multimedia that is important when trying to establish immersion is parallax scrolling. This is also often seen in the introductory paragraph of longreads that were analysed. Except for *The NSA Files: Decoded* all the digital longreads use the technique of parallax scrolling in the opening screen. This does not only have an immersive function, but research into user experience shows that users value it highly on an aesthetic level. In addition that, parallax scrolling is experienced as rather immersive because it seems to be a solution to the distracting reading nature of the Internet, used is a great addition to the narrative. By strategically placing it in the introduction, together with using deixis the reader will be likely to keep reading.

Looking at the bigger picture, *The Art of Stealing* and *Human Cannonballs* the opening is fairly straightforward: in both cases there is a large image shown that depicts the scenery. It is interesting to note that these two narratives both start with an *in medias res*-opening: *The Art of Stealing* starts by sketching how the mother of the art thieves is burning the paintings, and *Human Cannonballs* opens in the middle of a sprint. Combining such an opening with an image employed in the visually attractive parallax scrolling-style. *Human Cannonballs* shows the cyclists from above, and *The Art of Stealing* shows the stove with the paintings. This example shows how text and visuals work together to create an immersive start of the story: whereas the text is somewhat mysterious, multimedia clarifies the situation a little bit by showing what it looks like.

Next, the narratives *The Town that wouldn’t Disappear* and *A Game of Shark and Minnow* try something different. Looking at the literary openings of the two articles, both start by giving a description of the location where the narrative takes place (*Ayungin Shoal lies 105 nautical miles from...*167, *Bulga is a weary hamlet on the fringe of the largest wilderness in...*168). Looking at the way in which multimedia is used, it is visible that these two story openings employ the same strategy: they try to capture an atmosphere and play with the expectations of the reader by using video loops, and by letting atmospheric sounds play. In other words: in both cases text and multimedia seem to work together to create an immersive environment.

**Characterisation**

Another important point is the focus on characterisation in both narrative and multimedia. As Daniel Lehman already pointed out, characterisation may be even more important for non-fiction than for fiction, because it matters to readers that the people they are reading about actually exist (or existed) in the outside world. As a consequence, the impact of non-fiction will be higher. This also influences transportation theory. As previously stated, when interacting with characters, the reader temporarily *becomes* the character. This is an important motive for literary journalists as well, which is why the use of characters is an important part of literary journalism and more specifically New Journalism, for New Journalism explicitly formulated the goal of achieving at least some belief change. The rise of digital new journalism radically increased the possibilities for making people as ‘real’ as possible. In text this is visible by a variety of narrative strategies that are known from literature: representation of thought makes the characters appear more human because thoughts are a reflection of the characters’ inner state. The article that uses this most is *The Art of Stealing*. The phrase *‘The Matisse is easy. Radu remembers it like the car, the Daewoo Matiz’*169 is an example of this. The characters from *The Art of Stealing* are surprisingly sympathetic: the author made the choice to share a large

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169 Lex Boon *The Art of Stealing*
amount of information on their background, character and looks. In multimedia, these main characters are all drawn in a cartoon-like manner, in order to show their face.

This is a strategy also used in *The Town that wouldn’t Disappear* and *Human Cannonballs*. The picture painted in the narrative is not as complete as in *The Art of Stealing*, but in contrast to that longread there is a lot of multimedia used: the inhabitants of the town of Bulga are shown in audio, video and picture. In other words: they seem at least as vivid, and for readers it is at least as easily possible to identify with them. In *The NSA Files: Decoded* the reader is turned into the main character of the story. For example: in the narrative there are many direct references to the reader (*‘How safe are you?’*). However, the aspects that mainly cause transportation lie in multimedia, for these are used to create an immersive environment. By using Facebook, or entering personal data, the readers can apply the information provided in the narrative to themselves. In addition to that, there are many experts included who share their experiences on privacy as a ‘talking head’. This choice shows the significance of multimedia: the deliberate choice is made to explain the dry, rather unappealing background of privacy in text, and the multimedia is used as a chance to make it personal. The design team explains that this was a deliberate choice: they were struggling with finding a way to make such a subject personal and appealing.

In *A Game of Shark and Minnow* this is somewhat different. As pointed out, this digital longread tries to add authenticity by using the first-person narrative: the reader sees everything through the eyes of the narrator. However, the readers do get a very colourful picture of the fishermen that the author meets on the boat by the descriptions given. For example: he describes their clothes (*‘Baseball shirts’*) and their favourite karaoke song (*‘Careless Whisperer’*). In this case, the characters are a way to make the ongoing conflict that is likely to be unknown to the reader, more human. The multimedia shows the fisherman ‘in action’: more than any other longread, this one uses video loops, the repetitive moving image, to show the people in motion. In addition to that, the loops are accompanied by a repetitive sound, and an appealing pull-out quote. These parts of the article are employed in parallax-scrolling style. By foregrounding the images of the fishermen with sounds and an appealing lay out, those are emphasised and extra appealing. This is a clear example of how text and multimedia work together in order to strengthen a certain aspect; in this case the characters. These are vital for literary journalism, and by strategically highlighting them they become even more powerful.

**6.2 Literature**

Because digital new journalism combines the power of narrative with the immersive qualities of multimedia, it has great potential to deliver the most powerful stories. As shown, in both the narrative as the enrichment there are many different ways in which the author and design team together try to achieve transportation. The

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170 Nora Bernig *Narrative means to journalistic ends: a Narratological analysis of selected journalistic reportages* (Springer, 2010) 85
notion of transportation comes from social psychology and is the process that makes consumers of media lose the notion of time and space because they are caught up in the narrative. The first ones to conduct major research in that field were Melanie Green and Timothy Brock. They believed that belief-change is something that can occur by exposing people to narrative. Because belief-change is a concept that lies at a core of digital new journalism, the central question in this thesis was the way that narrative and multimedia work together to achieve transportation theory.

These selected techniques are a combination of observations from various sources. For a narrative analysis there is a lot of literature available because such an analysis has been employed many times before, most importantly following the method of Gérard Genette. However, some contemporary writings have been added: drawing onto Agnieszka Lyons’ observation on how the strategic use of deixis facilitates transportation by creating a story world, and the analysis of characterisation is based on Daniel Lehman’s Reading Over the Edge in which he explains why characters in non-fiction are on a cognitive level more important than in fiction. However, an analysis into transportation in digital new journalism has not been conducted many times before. Therefore, the research of most importantly Susan Jacobson on multimedia, Nora Bernig on early examples of literary journalism on the Internet and Fredrick Dede on parallax scrolling were used to determine important categories in the world of digital journalism.

This thesis showed how literary journalism tries to adapt to the Internet and how it tries to find its own way. Looking at the past years, it is safe to say that the emergence of the form is not just a trend, but rather a way in which literary journalists try to find their place on the Internet. New Journalists are remembered for the way in which they, maybe driven by an almost naïve type of idealism, tried to change the world, or at least the beliefs of the people who read their stories. This idealism might not be as apparent in the narratives of today’s digital New Journalists, but looking at the topics most stories do operate out of an urge to tell people how important the topics are: a conflict in A Game of Shark and Minnow and The Town that Wouldn’t Disappear, and the issue of privacy in NSA Files: Decoded. The remaining stories try to give the reader a certain psychological understanding of on one hand art thieves, and on the other hand professional cyclists.

This urge to tell stories that are so clearly rooted in society shows that the authors wish to make a certain impact on the reader, which is why it is crucial that transportation theory in digital media and multimedia is scrutinised. A lot of research has been devoted to looking at the way in which this works in narrative fiction, and to a much lesser extent in non-fiction. However, sufficient research has not been devoted

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172 Nora Bernig Narrative means to journalistic ends: a Narratological analysis of selected journalistic reportages Springer, 2010. 85
173 Frederick M. Dede The Effects Of Parallax Scrolling On User Experience And Preference In Web Design (Purdue University, 8-03-2013) 27
yet to how transportation can achieve this effect too, while the presence of literary journalism on the Internet is growing. By combining aspects of literature with aspects of multimedia that one can find in digital journalism in an analysis, it becomes visible that there are many ways in which immersion and transportation can be achieved, and that literature and multimedia are also complementary when looking at the layer of extra content\textsuperscript{174}: in a story which is rather theoretical and dry such as *The NSA Files: Decoded* the personal and immersive is provided by multimedia.

6.3 Limitations and suggestions for further research
This research only looked at a sample of five digital longreads, which by no means cover all the possibilities of this topic. Moreover, the digital journalism-industry is one that is developing very rapidly, for new possibilities and new applications for the Internet are developed on a daily basis. Therefore, since these longreads were published in 2013, it is very well possible that the situation has changed a bit already. In addition to that, this qualitative research merely looked at certain phenomenon apparent in digital New Journalism and how this says something about the genre and about the way that this genre works. Additional quantitative research would to make it possible to make more conclusive arguments, and this would make allow one to sketch a picture on what the state of digital new journalism really is. This would give an understanding of the state of digital new journalism on an entirely different level.

In general, further research on this development would be extremely useful to conduct for digital new journalism is clearly a genre that is growing, and it is one of the first genres ‘born’ on the Internet. For example: one could also think of conducting research on what people actually enjoy seeing in a longread. It is generally assumed that people like engaging with audio and video, and that they like interactivity because it allows people to do something, but no one knows if this assumption is actually correct. As Jill Abrams from the New York Times explained: the only thing that is measured is the number of visits, and the time that people spend engaging with an article. However, what people do on a website has never been measured. Large-scale eye-tracking research could show whether people actually make use of all the possibilities that are included in a multimedia longread, or that they maybe, contrary to all beliefs, prefer reading the text. Another, more cognitive type of research could measure whether a longread with multimedia-tools indeed evokes more empathy than the plain-text story. This would be of great use for the future of journalism, and for large newspapers it would help deciding whether or not to spend money in order to create multimedia longreads.

All in all, there is a lot to discover in this dynamic field. As the New Journalists in the sixties were pioneers with regard to writing longform, literary and socially aware journalistic articles, todays digital new journalists can be seen as online pioneers

\textsuperscript{174} As defined by Rocco Versaci in ‘*This book contains graphic language: comics as literature*’
doing the same. They are the first ones to do the same thing on the Internet. What changed is that it is not only about the text anymore: a team of designers has taken a role that is almost as important. Without reading the text, by browsing through the article the reader can get a feeling of the circumstances and atmosphere that the story will communicate. Of course it did not start with Snow Fall. There has been a lot of experimentation in the years before that longread was published, but it still took the publication of Snow Fall to shake up the journalistic world and let them know that something new had started. Over the years, the form has matured, and journalists have learnt from the ‘form over story’-criticism: the small sample that was used here shows that the use of multimedia and the layout is most definitely not used as cover-up for the fact that the story might not be very interesting or urgent. On the contrary: these are stories that show, highlight or offer another perspective on topics that readers otherwise would not come across.
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