

Insights from the Devolved Post-Covid Newsroom and their Classroom Impact

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Abstract

Ornebring (2010) suggests that “Journalists ascribe great power and independent agency to technology” (p. 1), 12 years on technology has defined journalistic identity in pre-covid and post covid newsrooms and dictates how, where and when we gather and share content. Between 2018-2021 i conducted doctoral studies into MOJO practice around the world and upon viva completion in June of last year i returned to national and regional newsrooms as a one-man band journalist with ITV and ITN in the UK.

Over the past year i have incorporated insights from my reporting for ITV during the pandemic and now into the Ukraine refugee crisis. These news gathering approaches have informed my teaching and post-doctoral studies. These include reflecting on the challenges and opportunities of more autonomy in the field, evaluating editorial decision making and exploring the skills required for cub reporters entering digital newsrooms that are now often just "empty seats" Deuze (2019).

In this presentation paper i will expand on these findings drawing on my three roles of researcher, practitioner and educator and demonstrate how the concerns facing many young reporters are ones we overlook or take for granted including self-confidence building and interpersonal skills developed. Through supporting and mentoring these areas, students develop stronger abilities in the field and can embrace the autonomy offered, verses seeing the independence of the devolved covid newsroom as wholly alienating.

The auto-ethnographical elements including personal reflections from the fieldwork aligns in parts to a new wave of journalism research building on the work of Philo et al, (Murphy, 2020) (Willig, 2012). The short paper will also include video clips and examples of teaching aids to support undergrad and postgraduate media pedagogy.

References:

Ornebring, H (2010) *Technology and journalism as Labour: Historical Perspectives*, Journalism, Sage Publishing

Murphy, E, (2020) *A Guide to Remote Mobile Ethnography*, Indeemo

Deuze, M, (2019) *What Journalism Is (Not)*, Social Media + Society

Willig, I, (2012) *Newsroom ethnography in a field perspective*, Sage Publishing