

Journalists and the bereaved: constructing a positive approach to the teaching of death reporting

Jackie Newton, Liverpool John Moores University and Sally-
anne Duncan, Strathclyde University

Abstract

The Millie Dowler affair and subsequent Leveson Inquiry have highlighted some of the worst aspects of relations between the news media and the bereaved. It has previously been documented (Duncan and Newton, 2010) that even before the phone hacking revelations reporters generally viewed the death knock negatively and found their role within the tragedy to be ethically dubious. This paper suggests that journalism educators could assume the role of presenting the death knock and subsequent contact with the bereaved in a more holistic, constructive fashion, and considers how the stories that journalists tell about the bereaved become personal narratives of grief. Evidence from journalists, editors and bereaved families is drawn on to support the assertion that death reporting can often be in the best tradition of public service journalism, and should be sited within the more positive, personal aspects of commemorative journalism – ‘a journalism of feeling as well as fact’ (Kitch, 2010). This paper also suggests the relationship between journalists and the bereaved can become much more equitable than current teaching suggests and relates evidence gathered to models of grief and bereavement pioneered in sociology and bereavement counselling.

Key words: death reporting, bereavement, pedagogy, grief narratives, death knock, commemoration

Introduction and method

Journalism educators have found the concept of the death knock challenging and in many cases have struggled to deal with the issue in the classroom, despite demonstrating a willingness to prepare their students for their first experience of this particularly sensitive reporting task (Duncan and Newton, 2010).

In an attempt to re-frame the nature of our academic approach to death reporting and offer a more rounded view of the process, a substantive body of work gathered through our research project was re-examined to identify positive elements and consider whether death reporting can be viewed as commemorative journalism in the public interest. A total of 85 interviews have been carried out as part of a larger death reporting project; 55 with reporters and editors; 10 with journalism educators and 24 with bereaved groups and families. Two focus groups have also been held involving final year Journalism students. Once this data had been reviewed, a further four follow-up interviews were undertaken to clarify opinions and experiences. This evidence was then considered in the light of models or frameworks of bereavement which suggest biography and commemoration as forms of grief resolution. It particularly focuses on the work of sociologist Tony Walter in this area, drawing on the idea that: “When it comes to death, journalists and photographers are in the forefront of psychological ‘instruction’ - something students of both death and the media have failed to notice, let alone research.” (Walter, Littlewood and Pickering, 1995) The work of Graves, a bereavement counsellor who has developed Walter’s theories into a practical framework for therapy, was also examined to provide parallels between grief resolution processes and positive, commemorative death reports.

The context for educators

As Duncan and Newton (2010) acknowledged, lecturers face great difficulties in trying to recreate intrusive situations in the classroom both from the practical and the ethical point of view. In interviews with lecturers a number of differing views were offered on how the issue should be approached pedagogically; whether skills can be taught in any practical manner; and even whether the practice should be condoned at all. (Duncan and Newton, 2010; McKay, 2007) Some of the ambiguity has come from academics finding the practice difficult to justify personally, particularly as none of those interviewed had been given any official newsroom advice or guidance on the death knock in their own journalistic careers. During this research a senior lecturer with experience in both print and broadcast media said of death knocks: “I have always hated them and to a large extent I have seen them as pointless exercises.” It is also fair to say that the academic literature does not currently offer a great deal in the way of good practice or of positive ways to approach the bereaved. Instead, the literature on the ethics of intrusion into grief coupled with codes of conduct offer a safer, less morally ambiguous route – that of a list of “do nots”. It is, therefore, easier to warn students of the dangers of the death knock and continued contact with the bereaved via a checklist of “do nots” than it is to encourage them to actively participate in the act of interviewing and build their efficacy in it, as they would in a more routine story. However this approach can lead reporters to be dangerously ill-prepared for such a traumatic and potentially damaging task. As Duncan told a recent Dart Center Europe seminar: “You would never send out a sports reporter without them knowing the rules of football. So why can we send out journalists and reporters to cover something as sensitive as working with the bereaved without them knowing anything about bereavement?” (Townend, 2012) Although some lecturers interviewed during our research were dismissive of the death knock and con-

cerned about the role of the journalist in death reporting, others were positive about the practice and keen to justify it to students.

“I have concerns about how it is handled but I think it is a legitimate practice to do it. There are an awful lot of people who die in a local area who we want to know about. We want to celebrate their lives. The family want to celebrate their lives and if you can persuade people that that’s why you’re doing it and if that’s the way you treat it then I think that’s entirely appropriate.”

Academic research into the reporting of death and journalists’ contact with the recently-bereaved tends to concentrate on the negative, even when there are positive elements to be noted. (McLellan, 1999; Walsh-Childers, Lewis and Neely, 2011) Even those which do recognise some good practice among journalists have titles which focus on the worst aspects. For example Walsh-Childers, Lewis and Neely’s 2011 study into the coverage of the Virginia Tech shootings has the title “Listeners, not Leeches”, re-inforcing the blood-sucking stereotype of the reporter covering disaster. A further study including survivors of the Port Arthur massacre in Australia in which 35 people were killed by a lone gunman was titled “Fair game or fair go” (McLellan, 1999) and concludes that journalists still “confront victims/survivors in large numbers when they are at their most vulnerable...”. However the same study also looked at the experience of people bereaved by industrial accidents rather than mass tragedy and found that there was more of an appetite among these participants for active engagement with the media. In fact many of the bereaved complained about minimal coverage of their stories, and that the stories used tended to focus on the circumstances of the death rather than the life and achievements of the person killed, suggesting the issues were far more ambiguous than the title suggests. Neither of the cited studies are wholly negative about the role of journalism in fatal tragedies, despite their titles, and McLellan reported: “Many had high praise for compassionate, careful journalists who checked even minor details to ensure accuracy.”

Greater negativity is apparent in articles which veer towards commentary rather than peer-reviewed research as these appear to be even more sceptical of the relationship between reporters and the bereaved. For example,

“Nowhere is the conflict between the professional values of journalists and the values of ordinary people more apparent than in press coverage of families grieving for victims of accidents or crimes” (Tulloch, 2004)

McKay (2007) challenges the lack of serious ethical reflection in practical journalism textbooks, but also suggests: “The justifications for death knocks are spurious, as any journalist knows deep down.”

So why does the practice continue?

It continues because the family are fundamental to the story. The bereaved who were interviewed for this research indicated that the story of their loss belonged to them, not the reporters, and to exclude them from participating in any articles about their dead relative in an attempt to ease their pain was arguably an act of arrogance even if they did seem too distressed to speak. They believed that should be their decision, not the journalists. As one national news reporter observed: “... it is a key part of the newsgathering process. How can you claim to have covered a murder without trying to speak to the victim’s family?” It is also the case that the reporter who does not approach the family, perhaps respecting their privacy, or relies on social media for tributes, risks producing an inaccurate story, a journalistic sin which is documented as adding to the pain of the bereaved. (Newton, 2011; Fullerton and Paterson, 2006) Newton spoke to several families who had had no contact with the media, despite other sources being quoted about their loved ones’ deaths. Some relatives were upset at the “lack of interest” or angry that they had not been offered the chance to appeal to the public for help. Others complained about factual inaccuracies. The mother of a murder victim said:

“What they wrote was totally wrong...nobody at all approached me or anybody in the family. I would have given them the right story at least. I would have thought that someone from the media would have come to me and asked me were these things true. Some said I should have gone to the paper and sorted it out but at that time you really don't want to be bothered with all that. It's too raw. Even now when I read those snippets I just cringe.”

Despite journalists' concerns about intrusion into grief, running a story without input from the family, who are arguably the closest and most reliable story source, is equally problematic.

“It is much better, perhaps, for them to be upset at you initially than for them to be upset at you after you've done the story and it's gone in the paper and you've missed the point completely, or not been accurate or sensationalised it when it didn't need sensationalising.” (Journalism lecturer at a Further Education college)

Towards a positive mindset

Previous research has noted that the journalist does not have a clearly defined or socially accepted role when contacting the bereaved at the time of a tragedy, unlike, for instance, the police or the clergy (Duncan, 2005; Duncan and Newton, 2010). Hanusch (2010) cites the death knock as an acknowledged source of secondary trauma for journalists while Browne, Evangeli and Greenberg (2012) describe journalists as a “unique cohort” in times of tragedy or trauma because of the lack of a “direct, helping role”. Their study of 50 journalists found a worrying correlation between PTSD, exposure to trauma and guilt about reporters' involvement in a tragedy and warned that “specific aspects of their job may make journalists more vulnerable to guilt, such as pressure to sensationalise an event or to pressure distressed people to provide an interview”. Given this link, along with reported and anecdotal evidence that the death knock has been cited as a reason for journalists to leave their jobs, educators and editors should be aware that such guilt has the potential to be corrosive and ultimately damaging. Brown, Evangeli and Greenberg add that “ethical dilemmas may result in behaviour perceived as violating moral standards”. They are referring specifically to objectivity, when the moral imperative to offer help in times of disaster clashes with the journalistic duty to record and remain impartial, but this can also relate to issues of privacy and intrusion. Given that journalists consider the death knock interview as an onerous task but not one they would shirk (Duncan and Newton, 2012), then as long as it is seen as a requirement of the job journalism educators and editors have a duty of care to students and novice reporters to support them in the practice. As a first step towards a more positive mindset perhaps journalism educators and editors could offer some explanation as to why the practice continues despite the ethical concerns about intrusion into grief in order to suggest a moral justification of the practice. This justification, explored further in the next section, would point to the journalists' role in recognising the life led, acknowledging the grief, supporting the bereaved families, and informing the community, for example. To do otherwise would leave student journalists and novice reporters in moral conflict. Kitch (2000) suggested that journalists act as “healing spiritual leaders” after celebrity deaths, often conducting “the rite of passage from life to death.” Although this appears a complex role for the individual reporter to fulfil while going about his/her daily duties, there is an argument that perhaps this could be valid within communities when ordinary families are caught up in personal tragedies, and journalists convey their loss to the community through the tribute story or obituary.

“Obituaries connect families, friends, co-workers and neighbours in shared commemoration of not only the deceased, but of his or her love of hometown, church, associations, families, and simple pastimes. In legitimizing (sic) these powerful death stories for a wider audience, obituaries become not only reflective, but instructive as well.” (Hume, 2005)

Re-framing the death knock?

Brown, Evangeli and Greenberg's study into journalists and PTSD makes clear that it can be injurious to journalists' confidence, self-image and even mental health to send them into poten-

tially intrusive situations without defining a public service role for them. Thus, it is evident that journalism educators and editors have a moral responsibility to explain the death knock in terms of public service, the commemoration of the deceased and inclusive journalism centred around the bereaved. A legal magazine editor interviewed for this research was clear on the legitimacy of the death knock as a journalistic practice:

“Yes, undoubtedly, as long as any request for privacy is respected. However bad the news is, the community is entitled to know it, and reporters have a duty to get their information from the closest or best source.”

Despite concerns about intrusion, news journalists and editors interviewed by the authors could see no workable alternative to the death knock and reported many instances when the media were expected by their intended interviewees and invited in. Even in the age of social media, when all manner of information about individuals is available online, journalists still see a visit to the family as important and integral to the story of a tragic death. [It should be noted here that the ethics of “hacking” social media after a death have been discussed at length in Newton and Duncan (2012) but it is important to point out that for many families, grabbing material from social media sites is a more intrusive act than the knock at their door.] In addition to this, many families interviewed understood the role of the journalist in the tragedy and reported positive responses to stories in the media. (Newton, 2011) Those families who had been involved in prolonged legal cases after a death, or had been involved in a campaign of some sort, demonstrated a sophisticated understanding of the media and referred to their continuing relationship with specific journalists. One father of a murder victim said he had come to rely on certain reporters to keep him updated on the perpetrator’s case and subsequent appeal. “I often learned more from the journalists than the police and the lawyers,” he said.

There is also evidence that work produced ethically and sensitively from such encounters can give solace to the grieving. Riches and Dawson (1998) discuss how conversations with bereaved parents were much eased by “the presence of the child in the form of artefacts – snapshots, schoolwork, trophies, artwork, newspaper cuttings and even “preserved bedrooms”. Several bereaved relatives interviewed commented on the media’s role in letting the community know what has happened to them. This can help in a number of ways, the principles being that the community can offer support and that the relatives are spared the constant re-telling of upsetting details if these are made public. Former newspaper editor John Griffith admitted feeling uneasy about the death knock during his journalistic career, but changed his mind when his own son was killed and he was interviewed by the regional press. He described the newspaper stories about his own son’s death as “a great comfort”. The newspapers containing details of the accident were displayed in his home so that visitors could read them. (Griffith, 2004) This was further borne out in interviews for this research when a grandmother of a road victim, who said her family were devastated by the child’s death, explained that they garnered some solace in the response from the local community. “The support I got was brilliant – and that was only through the newspapers. I still get letters.” The reaction described by Griffith and the road victim’s family is a common one, according to a national newspaper journalist who had previously worked on English regional titles. He claimed he had rarely been turned away by grieving families and had developed good and lasting relationships with some of them.

“I know people who regretted not speaking to the papers. You can’t blame them for it because they’re so caught up in their grief they can’t see beyond their noses, but in hindsight they wished they’d had a lasting document to their children or mum or dad’s existence. A well-written story can bring a life off a page and make other people care about that lost life, and give some kind of memorial to the person.”

Significant connections exist between memorialisation and death knock narratives, and this offers journalism educators another means of diminishing the negativity of the reporting process. The British sociologist Tony Walter has developed a model of bereavement which challenges the Freudian ideas of “moving on” after a loved one dies. He identifies (Walter, 1996) how survivors “typically want to talk about the deceased and to talk with others who knew him or her” in an attempt to construct a “durable biography” of the deceased which the survivor can then integrate

into their own lives. Walter looks at the “Western” psychological model and contrasts it with the experience of grief in other societies where emotional links with the deceased are much more prolonged, appreciated and explicit. He also cites a study (Marwit and Klass, 1995) which asked a sample of students aged 18 to 54 to write about an important person in their lives who had died, considering whether this person still played a part in their lives. The researchers found the deceased helped in a number of ways: as role models; as guides in specific situations; as clarifying the values of the survivor; as a valued part of the survivor’s biography. Similarities can be seen here to themes in obituaries and death knock stories, which Duncan (2012) describes as providing “reaction to the death, tribute statements and biographical details” as well as emphasising loss of potential, the deceased’s status within the family or community and the gap they have left. Walter also considers journalism as a guide to modern grieving rituals in the Western world. He details how the news media in Britain “home in” on the emotions of the survivors and bereaved rather than merely reporting the circumstances of a tragedy. This may sound a callous criticism, but Walter, Littlewood and Pickering compare this favourably to Geoffrey Gorer’s ‘Pornography of Death’, a theory that suggests violent death in the media is characterised by its exclusion of emotion or humanity, such as in video games, crime thrillers or horror films. While such representations use death as emotionless entertainment, by contrast journalists use emotion to explain the consequences of personal tragedy. Walter et al suggest that in the news media: “...emotion and humanity are there not only in the reports but also in the reporters”, as one of the journalists in this research study noted:

“Even when I was writing for quite dry papers I’d always try to put in something personal out of respect for the people who had let me into their living room and given me a picture.” (National newspaper journalist)

Bereavement councillor Dodie Graves has adapted Walter’s theories on bereavement in her practical guide to fellow professionals, *Talking to Bereaved People*. It is striking that four of her six elements for “structured and sensitive communication” reproduce the obituary/death knock story construction i.e:

There is a story

There is a relationship

There is a life to celebrate

There is a legacy left behind

The “story” Graves refers to as a suitable element of a counsellor’s conversation with a bereaved person is the story of “the deceased’s life, their illness, their death”. The relationship here refers to the relationship the deceased had with the bereaved person, but also with other family and friends. Graves and Walter both note the tendency to want to celebrate the life and achievements of the deceased by recounting their story during the funeral in a spirit of thanksgiving rather than sombre mourning. Graves suggests that this may be enough in itself to help friends, colleagues and distant family members, but suggests that bereavement counsellors should return to the theme as sessions progress.

“By looking at the life of the deceased in constructive ways they might be able to make some choices about how they view the life of their loved one, and their own life.” (Graves, 2009; p94)

While it would be irresponsible and inappropriate to suggest that the journalist is fulfilling any sort of counselling function during the death knock and subsequent contact, it is legitimate to point out the parallels between funeral eulogy, suggestions for therapeutic interaction and the stories told by journalists on behalf of families and disseminated to the rest of the community. Newton (2011) interviewed a number of bereaved families who had not been contacted by the news media about their relatives’ deaths, even though a story had been published or broadcast. Some of these turned to other outlets such as real-life magazines or on-line tribute sites to tell their own stories of their loved ones and their loss. Roberts (2006) found that 91% of bereaved people who had posted online memorials found it had a beneficial effect on their grieving. Telling the story often does help, as this mother of a murder victim who trained as a bereavement counsellor explains:

“I say speak to the press, but always, always ask them to understand the pain that you are going through and be able to say what it is that’s hurting you; tell them about the loved one you’re miss-

ing. Tell them about what kind of a person they were and let that be what people remember.... To me there's always a story behind the headlines and if that story is told in the proper manner with compassion and accuracy between the person with the pen and the person telling the story I think it's a good marriage. It's a good thing to do because it can also help families being able to talk about their loved one."

Similarly, Duncan's concept of the tribute-driven story and the action-as-memorial story (Duncan, 2012) would seem to fit the bereaved's desire to understand the deceased's legacy and celebrate their lives, as documented by Graves. The tribute-driven story concentrates on the family's loss and leads with positive affirmations of the deceased's character and achievements, relegating the manner of death to a secondary theme. The action-as-memorial story explores the legacy of the deceased through the bereaved's efforts to launch campaigns, raise money for causes or memorialise their loved one in some other way. Duncan (2012) argues that telling the story of the deceased in the context of his or her relationships and legacy gives the grieving an element of control in a situation where their powerlessness is distressing.

"The bereaved acknowledge that they cannot keep their loved one alive in reality but they do have some control over their commemoration. They are able to frame the perception of the deceased by the expressions of grief they make at different stages in the news reporting process." (Duncan, 2012; p600)

The value of the media story as an acknowledgement of grief and loss is underlined by a relative of a road victim who makes a point of contacting her local paper every year to get them to do an anniversary story or cover a memorial event. Although she could use the "In Memoriam" columns, she believes a story written by a journalist is a much stronger reminder of her loved one and a better public acknowledgement of her loss. There is also a public interest motive in these poignant recollections, she feels.

"It's a reminder to people that they should drive a bit slower; they should be more responsible. They see a picture of a child who's been killed and maybe they think I'm going down that road now I'll go a bit slower."

Conclusions

While the issue of intrusion is vital and ever-present, it must not be the only frame for the death knock. Death reporting is not always a negative activity, and indeed at some stages beyond the initial event it can be a cathartic expectation of the bereaved. The anniversary and action-as-memorial stories where the deceased are remembered fondly, albeit with sadness, can assist in the family's acceptance and on some occasions, the community's healing. For example, some reporting of large scale tragedies such as the Dunblane massacre can be perceived as poignant, sensitive and redemptive (Linklater, 1996).

Thus, by emphasising the benefits of reporting the bereaved it may be possible for journalism educators to reduce the "fear factor" in novice reporters' perceptions of the task. This could be done by deconstructing the process, examining the elements that make up the death knock story and by emphasising its similarities to other forms of story-telling. Of course, the main difference is that the interviewee has had a traumatic experience. However, if journalism educators could emphasise that the fact the journalist is face-to-face with their interviewee under such circumstances indicates that the bereaved are willing participants then this may influence the novice reporter's perception of the constructive aspects of the death knock. Many new reporters are fearful of "upsetting" the bereaved in these circumstances but if they can conduct their interview in an honest fashion where they make clear any limitations on their reporting, such as editorial constraints, and where they empower their interviewees by acknowledging their consent and control over their personal story then the "fear" might dissipate.

However, "guilt" over this issue is an important factor and can lead to mental distress. Journalism

educators should recognise that some students and novice reporters will be concerned about the legitimacy of interviewing the bereaved. Exploring students' anxieties through critical reflection may assist in opening up specific issues. Of course, students may not have the experience of death reporting to reflect on their own actions but examination of case studies or inviting experienced reporters to share their practice, both good and bad, may act as a catalyst for discussion.

This process of reflection might be enhanced by journalism educators providing a level of moral justification drawn from academic research into the reactions of bereaved families, the psychology/sociology of grief, the position of the death knock in commemorative journalism, and evidence from the growing number of online tributes. Newton (2011) found that much distress can be caused to families who feel "left out" of the stories of their own tragedy and this was confirmed by further research for this study. This "neglect" of a family's wishes is potentially as ethically challenging as the issue of intrusion into grief. By contrast, there is strong evidence that a sensitive story can help acknowledge the family's grief, inform the community and provide a memorial or tribute that may provide solace for to the bereaved for years to come. The "biography" theories from the areas of sociology and bereavement counselling arguably help explain why such stories are helpful and support the importance of the tribute story in the process of grieving and acceptance. Therefore a level of moral justification could be achieved by clarifying the ethical purpose of the journalist in this type of story and removing ambiguity about their role. For example, their function is to tell the story, to inform the public, to reflect what happens in a community but it is important that journalism educators also encourage their students to strive for excellence, to be aware of the need to treat people fairly with dignity and respect and to minimize harm. Equally, making students more aware of the process of bereavement through academic study of grief or inviting representatives from bereavement groups to talk to students might demystify the situation and reduce the "fear factor". Indeed, previous research has indicated that journalists who had experienced a bereavement of a close family member felt it helped them when interviewing the bereaved (Duncan, 2005). Although this might not be applicable to all students it is likely that discussion of the process and characteristics of bereavement would assist in presenting a more positive perception of the death knock.

"I look at it from the point of view of the tribute. Some people can be very cynical about it, but I used to say: 'Is your child's life not worth celebrating in some way?' Celebrities rise to the top and we know all about them, but why are they more important than anyone else's sons and daughters? It's right that their passing should be recognised if that's what the family want." UK national newspaper journalist.

References

- Browne, T., Evangelini, M. and Greenberg, N. (2012) Trauma-related guilt and posttraumatic stress among journalists. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, Apr, 25(2), pp.201-10.
- Duncan, S., 2012. Sadly Missed: The death knock news story as a personal narrative of grief. *Journalism*, 13(5), pp. 589-603.
- Duncan, S. 2005. "An analysis of intrusive press reporting and journalism practice". PhD thesis, Glasgow Caledonian University.
- Duncan, S. and Newton, J., 2010. How do you feel? Preparing novice reporters for the death knock, an exploration of attitudes and approaches. *Journalism Practice*, 4(4), pp. 439-453.
- Graves, D. 2009. *Talking with bereaved people: An approach for structured and sensitive communication*. London: JKP.
- Griffith, J. 2004. Private Grief, Public Kindness. *Insight Magazine*, Winter 2004, p.37.
- Hanusch, F. 2010. *Representing death in the media: Journalism, media and mortality*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hume, J. 2005. Life and death in a small town: Cultural values and memory in community newspaper obituaries. *Grassroots Editor*, 46(4), pp.1-8.

- Kitch, C. 2000. A news of feeling as well as fact: Mourning and memorial in American newsmagazines. *Journalism*, 1(2), pp. 171-195.
- Kitch, C. 2009. The afterlife of print. *Journalism*, 10(3), pp. 340-342.
- Linklater, M. 1996. Why Dunblane was different, *British Journalism Review*, 7(2), pp.15-19.
- McKay, J. 2007. Preparing journalism students for the Blameless Bugle and the Guilty Gazette. *Ethical Space*, 4(4), pp. 51-53.
- McLellan, T. 1999. Fair Game or Fair Go? Impact of news reporting on victims and survivors of traumatic events. *Asia Pacific Media Educator*, 7, pp. 53-73.
- Newton, J. 2011. The knock at the door: considering bereaved families' varying responses to news media intrusion. *Ethical Space*, 8(3-4), pp.7-13.
- Newton, J. and Duncan, S. 2012. **Hacking into tragedy**: exploring the ethics of death reporting in the social media age. In: R. L. Keeble and J. Mair, eds. *The Phone Hacking Scandal: Journalism on Trial*. Bury St. Edmunds: Abramis, pp.208-219.
- Riches, G. and Dawson, P. 1998. Spoiled memories: problems of grief resolution in families bereaved through murder. *Mortality*, 3(2), pp.143-159.
- Roberts, P. 2006. From My Space to Our Space: The functions of web memorial in bereavement. *The Forum*, 32 (4), pp.1-4.
- Townend, J (2012) A Journalist Calls: Reporting Death in a post-Leveson climate, Dart Center. <http://dartcenter.org/content/journalist-calls-reporting-death-in-post-leveson-climate>
- Tulloch, J. 2004. What moral universe are you from? Everyday tragedies and the ethics of press intrusion into grief. *Ethical Space*, 1(3), pp.25-30.
- Walsh-Childers, K., Lewis, N. P., and Neely, J., 2011. Listeners, not leeches: what Virginia Tech survivors needed from journalists. *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 26(3), pp. 191-205.
- Walter, T. 1996. A new model of grief: bereavement and biography. *Mortality*, 1(1), pp.7-25.
- Walter, T., Littlewood, J., and Pickering, M., 1995. Death in the news: the public invigilation of private emotion. *Sociology*, 29(4), pp. 579-596.

Jackie Newton, Liverpool John Moores University j.newton1@ljmu.ac.uk and Dr Sallyanne Duncan University of Strathclyde sallyanne.duncan@strath.ac.uk