

The Encounter between Television News and the Television News Viewer: A Literature Review

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to review literature on the interaction between the television news viewer and the television (hereafter, TV). The paper begins by identifying the key symbols generated at the encounter. Literature on the various types or manifestations at the encounter are then highlighted followed by a review on viewer types and preoccupations. The paper also delves into the literature on the encounter as hypertext. Finally, the emerging issue of news aesthetics is briefly espoused. The review then indicates potential areas of research on the subject.

1. Introduction

Television (TV) today is an important medium of discourse or put in another way, an important medium of societal conversations and symbolic devices of order. Literature explores several activities that take place at the encounter between the TV news viewer and the TV news. While some literature concentrates more on the symbols generated at the point of encounter, some literature delves on the types of encounter; yet more literature explores the types of viewers and their preoccupations. Other emerging areas in the literature on TV news are: hypertext and news aesthetics. These are the issues explored in this review; beginning with the symbols at the encounter.

2. Symbols at the Encounter between TV news and the TV viewer

Baran and Davis (2006) examine the concept of master symbol developed by the political scientist and media scholar Harold Lasswell. He was specifically focusing on communication and media campaigns. Lasswell argued that over time the “audience is conditioned” to possess ideas and images that are strong and emotive in an individual and which quickly “respond to relevant stimuli” (Baran S. & Davis D. 2006,p 83). For him media produces in viewer representative images of reality which the viewer then uses as foreknowledge as he or she meets new pictures of reality brought in by the senses. Lasswell constructs these representative images of reality as master symbols.

While Lasswell was considering the work of communicators in producing the master symbol, another consideration would be that of collaboration in the construction of the master symbol. The result then is not what the communicator disseminated but a product of the message, the viewer’s thoughts and feelings, and the viewer’s world of important others, and then perhaps a synthesis.

This brings out the possibility of two kinds of master symbols along a collaborative viewer and an over-time surrender viewer. What about the other viewer types and the master symbol concept. Is the construction the same for men research partners and for women research partners or is it different? What about for different age categories, a purposive viewer, a community change activist or somebody in a different income area?

The idea of a master symbol brings out its power, a supervisorial kind of power - in regard to reactions or responses upon receiving information and, in terms of the master generator of recognition and analytical tools (an intelligence agency) in the encounter with in-coming messages. This would be a sentinel master symbol (dealing with information) and the other would be a surrealistic master symbol – one containing cumulus emotions. Indeed the sentinel concept is fitting in that it describes these symbols formed in the mind as being alert and of a watch-tower nature. They would be at work as the person scans new reality. It is of note that the word sentinel is very much a military term.

In conceptualising the two dimensions – the sentinel master symbol and the surrealistic master symbol, the study considers the master symbols under the concept of the meta symbol. Perhaps there will be other dimensions, other types of master symbols all of which will help examine if the symbol – construct is influential.

But Lasswell was not the only one to have thought of such constructions in the mind. A further exploration of literature helps in putting together a clear description of the meta symbol, its different layers, and its different sides.

2.1. *The Symbol, the Iconic, the Indexical*

One of the founding fathers of semiotics Charles Peirce developed the concept of three kinds of signs – the symbol, the icon, and the index (Branston G. & Stafford R. 2010, p14). Using these one may argue that pictures and the stories of reality that they elaborate in television news are taken in by the viewer perhaps at two levels, as a sign of a trend or as a depiction of the particular isolated event. As the television journalist quickly tries to capture reality of what is happening, his or her main strategy is to capture that which can represent the essence of what has happened. This would be an iconic sign. Rarely does the news media simultaneously produce for the viewer consequences of what has happened except in spot news such as of an accident or a natural calamity such as flooding or an earthquake. Yet the intellectual discipline of journalism highlights the need for consequences and predictions to be part of the news, in order to create fuller understanding.

Such an in-coming news item would be an indexical sign for the viewer. It would involve coverage of a news event followed by interviews with experts in the particular area. In this connection part of the changes that the internet revolution is bringing is to link newsrooms to universities through profnets (Hoffstetter F. 1997). In this, university professors would be at quick call to provide deeper understanding of a phenomenon and its consequences. In the resulting report, the journalist would be preparing an indexical sign. In Kenya, Moi University launched a national television channel two years ago and now Kenyatta University too has launched its own. They expect to bring this advantage to the country by actively utilising their specialists to analyse and comment on unfolding reality in events and issues while also tapping into high level research insights.

On the other hand another kind of expert in news is somebody who has experienced the phenomenon that has occurred before. Such a person will also be able to present an indexical aspect by stating what will happen next. The research considers it feasible to argue for the construction of iconic or indexical master symbols in viewer, over time, and also to argue for building up of the two master symbols as part of a continuous television news hypertext. If these are master symbols in viewers, the research argues that these at once reveal an additional character of viewer type and provide an insight on the nature of the encounter.

2.2. *Symbolism in Imagined Account*

Meanwhile, in film making and in literature, the story teller relies on the construction of powerful cultural images that would tell his or her story most powerfully. In Xala, Sembene Ousman relies on the imagery of the xala (impotence) to comment on post colonial African leadership (Armes R. 2006 p70). The new African leader has refused to change society and to address the problems facing the people. He has instead taken on the role of the colonial master. He is incapable of giving birth to new life, to a new way of life for the people. In another film, Jaibi and Jaziri co-directing the film, *The Arab*, bemoan the self destructiveness of the inter-Arab fights in the Middle East but also uses the potent imagery of a pregnancy in the midst of tragedy and violence (Armes R. 2006, p 116). Who would be born - a child of violence or a child of difference and change? Even in other cultures, the use of the singular imagery is pursued. James Cameron uses the symbol of the gigantic Titanic – the ship of dreams, to triumph core American values of individualism, individual based freedom, individual based pursuit of happiness, and a genuineness of belief in and integrity in what one does.

Meanwhile, Ogola Margaret in her literary work, *The River and the Source* is according to Mwangi (2003) keen at de-centering the source (Mwangi E. 2003). Her imagery of the river, the river source, and the noisy fish – the name of the main character are powerful images left with the reader. In this examination, the symbolic sign, picturesque in nature is the pregnant crucible of the story teller's account. In the current study, do symbolic pictures construct in the mind as shorthand symbols or potent abstracts of significant phenomenon? The research is keen to examine and understand the process that takes place at the encounter and at the beginning proposes that the symbolic picture in the viewer's mind is a feature to consider.

2.3. *The Priming and Script Master Symbols*

Other studies refer to the priming nature of television news. Berkowitz (1984) argues that, when people view violence on television, it activates or 'primes' other related thoughts and evaluations. This leads to a greater predisposition to use and engage in violence in interpersonal situations (McQuail D. 2005, p 483). On the other hand another view is noted by Huesmann (1986). Script theory argues that social behaviour is controlled by

'scripts' that indicate how to respond to events. Violence on television creates scripts in the viewer on how to react to real life situations (McQuail D. 2005, p483). Are there scripts and predispositions in viewer which orient the interaction as viewer meets in coming news? What is the nature of this encounter in this regard?

2.4. Mental Image and Mental Model Master Symbols

Meanwhile, the cognitive psychologists explain that people store latent knowledge in mental pictures. These latent pictures come to the visible mind to interact with other similar information (Sternberg R.2006, p 234). In their part Johnson – Laird and Goldvarg(1997) distinguish the mental image from the mental model. The latter is a construction of perception particularly that includes a person's experience and beliefs about the reality involved. The mental image on the other hand is a close to life representation of the reality involved (Sternberg D. 2006, p 255). For the authors, a person constructs a mental model to understand and explain his or her experience. As in all the master symbols proposed, the master symbol proposes three possibilities – what may be potent in viewer as he or she meets in coming news, the very process and nature of interaction, and the possibility that the news itself feeds to this master symbol.

2.5. Warning and Instrumental Surveillance Master Symbols

In a different manner, studies of media as surveillance identify two types of surveillance – warning surveillance and instrumental surveillance (Dominick J.2005. P 33). Dominick defines warning surveillance as the beware kind and the instrumental surveillance as one looking out for useful information for the audience which it can use in what its members are involved in. There is that which the viewer is looking for at the encounter, and there is that which comes in the news. Is the viewer seeking either of these two kinds of information?

2.6. Mental and Emotional Maps Master Symbols

Lastly, the French philosopher Pierre Bourdieu argues that 'people constantly read between the lines and locate particular television content..... in mental and emotional maps.' Such maps he says are crisis crossed by 'multiple lines of knowledge, resonance, and judgement (Curran J.& Gurevitch M. 2000, p14). This again argues in the same vein as the research proposes, that there is a concentration of foreknowledge and a predisposition of such knowledge and emotion in viewer even before he or she encounters the in coming news. The research agrees with Bourdieu that such knowledge and emotion type may either resonate with the meaning of an in coming news account or may trigger dissonance in its reception. The insight that the mental map has an aspect of judgement or assessment is also a good one and it seems it is then such an assessment that links to the emotional map in viewer. These thoughts in Bourdieu's argument are useful to the current study as it sets out to examine a variety of possibilities which will construct at the encounter process during the investigation.

2.7. A Summary of the Master Symbols

So far the master symbol concept has been discussed in regard to the viewer. It is also the case that, it also describes the type of news content that comes to meet the viewer – that which aims to provide information, to engage intellectually, that which judges, alerts, orients and that which will produce a certain emotional impact. In other words, this section is a further examination of the television news viewer as well as of the television news itself, while primarily focusing on the encounter. The concept of the master symbol is a key component of one of the aspects of the third research question focusing on the encounter process.. In the section below, the research explores if the master symbol is linked to another concept involving viewing and viewer preoccupations.

3. The Encounter

Perhaps taking pride of place is the critical thinking about society, its institutions such as media and the diffusion of thought and behaviour. An aspect of this is expressed in Allen (1987) in three ways – that viewers confront the television text, forge and construct its meaning in the casement of imagination; that critical theorists in the larger umbrella of phenomenology are fascinated with the act of reading in which they see "lifeless and pitifully inadequate words on a page" come alive; and that always there can be expected a relationship between reader and text that is either collaborative, of surrender nature, or resistant (Allen R.1987, p 77).

The critical theory proposes an active, involved, engaging, confrontational reader or audience. In Allen above the theory proposes the significance of the action of reading and argues that its process takes the nature of a confrontation in which meaning is constructed in the reader's mind. In the current study, the act of viewing is thought to be important and is conceived of as an encounter so that apart from its meaning of confrontation, the other potential meanings of encounter particularly those associated with communication are examined.

On the other hand the larger theory of phenomenology guides the current research in that this specific area of investigation is the area of consciousness – the place where reality emerges reverie-like or as an act of coming awake as it is quickly re-created with other thought essences within the viewer. Perhaps it would be as noted by social psychologist Myers (2005) that “there is a reality out there, but we always view it through the lens of our beliefs and values,” or that the reality presented in the news is understood by viewer as being subjective and the viewer subconsciously moves to counter or confront it with his or her own subjective state. Perhaps the master symbols proposed earlier work in this sense of the lens through which reported reality is looked at. Perhaps the preoccupations proposed earlier are the ones which act as such lenses. What the lens does is explored later in this section. Whichever the case, the study will ask the viewer to capture and detail the going on in the conscious at the moment of encounter for the study to look at. This will enable the research to satisfy the concerns of the third research question on the nature of the encounter process.

Meanwhile critical theory is applicable to the study’s suggestion that there are important ideological traces that emerge at the encounter. Ideological constructs around modernity, self identity, ethnicity, class, gender will be sought as the nature of the encounter is closely examined. In regard to modernity, there is a critical school position and there is also a liberal democratic structuralist position. Archer (2012) argues that “in late modernity, societies have now reached the juncture at which some mode of reflexivity has become incumbent in all normal people” (Archer M. 2012, p. 11). People think, people reflect. In the case of the television news viewer, it would be expected that he or she engages the pictorial text of reality presented.

3.1. Phenomenology and the encounter process

On the other hand, a key aspect of phenomenology is important to the study. The research assumes that the news viewing is an encounter experience and is guided by the inner dynamics that take place in a human being at the moment of encounter. Husserl in Lindlof and Taylor (2002) argues that “objects are defined in terms of our practical intentions when we encounter them” (Lindlof T & Taylor B. 2002, p 33). In this approach, in coming news brings a new report of reality to the encounter. The viewer becomes alert of what he or she sees and brings it to the encounter arena of consciousness. Three activities happen – viewer intentions surface and come alive.

The research uses a broader thought and calls it preoccupation. Secondly in Husserl’s argument, a dominant activity at the encounter seems to be that the human being then defines what he or she sees and this defining is along ones intentions/preoccupations. Meanwhile, a third activity is an argument of this research. Not all the news reports of reality will be paid attention to by the viewer. However, those that he or she will pay attention to will create a situation in which the encounter is an experiencing site for the viewer – both mentally and emotionally. The study hopes to detail and reflect on sketches and constructs that emerge. Husserl’s argument is a key component of the study and is itself a significant construction of the philosophy of phenomenology which he helped to originate. It is appropriate to acknowledge him in the study as it examines “that which appears” at the conscious.

3.2. A clash of two theories and the encounter process

Another theory is specific to the functionalist theory of media both at the micro and at the macro levels of analysis. While a key focus is on the individual viewer at the encounter, news content theory mainly focuses on the macro level. In the current research, a fragile site is created in which the viewer uses and gratifications needs clash with effects arrows of macro level influences and functions. In this case, two larger theories of functionalism and of effects are considered and are used to examine the findings further. As in the smaller concepts and theories used in this research in which an eclectic strategy is applied, this too is also fruitfully used for the larger theories.

3.3. Modernity, post modernity and the encounter process

On the other hand, post modernism and modernism also seem to be important to the study. One of the three research questions seeks to investigate viewer and news interaction in relation to society change ideologies. McQuail (2005) wrote, “The rise of post modernism furthermore came with the concept of relativism. No culture, lifestyle, mannerism, worldview, body of ideas is superior to the other. The concept of a higher culture, of enlightenment, does not arise” (McQuail D 2005, p59). At the end, the outcome of the study will be examined from the stand-point of this thought. From the findings, it is clear that national and societal change is an all consuming desire in the television news viewer at the encounter. The kind of change desired will help explore this thought on post modernity and to reflect on what really is the current reality and since the century is still young whether to look forward to other new ideas which may help put together new futures.

3.4. *The notion of an invisible ideology and the encounter process*

On the other hand, as the Italian thinker Antonio Gramsci argued, change or static can very well be part of an ideology dominating a people without them being aware. He developed the notion that “ideological domination is invisible because it is all pervasive” (Berger A. 2000, p 74). This is a core insight in his notion of ideological hegemony. In the current study it seems to be the case that the change desired by the television news viewer is part of the dominant global ideology traversing politics, economics, and social thinking.

Is it with the fingerprints of hegemony and if it is, is value judgement to be volunteered in such a conclusion? If the changes desired will be a case of such a hegemonic process or dynamic, then the study will also wish to examine if it fits the exciting construction by Schon (1971) of his proliferation of centres theory (Schon D. 1971, p85). In this study, the television viewer would have been conquered, controlled, and been transformed into a centre of diffusion of the ideology of the originators and would be committed to a desire to create around him or her, a world approximating that of “Rome”. Will this be the case? For example, might modernity be such an invisible ideology?

3.5. *Encounter as an interaction process with consequences*

Meanwhile the current television news study has constructed the moment that the television viewer receives each news item as an encounter site. One of the key things expected to take place in an encounter is interaction. Perhaps every evening there is this interaction. The sociology thinker Anthony Giddens reflects on interactions as follows, “ The fact that from birth to death, we are involved in interactions with others, certainly conditions our personalities, the values we hold, and the behaviour we engage in. Yet socialization is also at the origin of our very individuality and freedom.

In the course of socialization each of us develops a sense of identity and the capacity for independent thought and action.” (Giddens A, Duneier M. & Appelbaum R. 2006, p.73). Do the viewers in the current research think the television news has had an influence in regard to how they look at the country and what is going on? Are these fleeting encounters of interaction of any consequence particularly in regard to this change phenomenon? Giddens conclusion seems to be attractive. Interactions must have consequences. In the case of television news this is one of the limited ways in which the viewer receives information on what is going on in the country.

3.7. *Encounter as site for self-disclosure*

On the other hand, it is also interesting to consider self and preoccupations along a variety of theoretical constructs from different areas of study. Stewart (2002) argues that an individual chooses how he or she wishes to present himself or herself to others. Stewart considers how each interaction activity has a distinct self disclosure component (Stewart J. 2002, p 237). Will this be the case at the encounter? If the news viewer and the news encounter is seen as an interaction site, one may consider this activity of self disclosure at two levels. The triad - of the person in the news, the media’s voice and the viewer – each being involved in self disclosure. A second level is that of the viewer and subsequent action as self disclosure – self expression. For example, the investments mentioned earlier (of coffee, tea, and poultry) and how one carries out his or her social identity roles would be assumed to be part of the person’s self disclosure. A focus of the study would be to examine how viewing speaks to these. In other words what is the study looking out for in this regard? Is it possible that the viewer will expect to quickly recognize the intention and the mind of the person in the news in regard to these? What about the viewer himself or herself? Will it not be that his or her own description and assessment of his or her encounter with the incoming television news will contain aspects of viewer self disclosure , perhaps apprehended by him or her for the first time and which then become an emergent sketch that the viewer and the researcher later construct further? How will this sketch be manifest – will it be through viewer preferences, intellectual response or a sense of un-fulfilment? What about the news channel itself as represented by the invisible voice of the reporter or editor? Does the news viewer discern the self disclosure by the channel in the news items and bulletins?

3.8. *The process and the character of “fleeting encounters”*

On the other hand, the current study has also reflected on the encounter along Simmel’s argument that the encounter is pregnant with cues and traces of a society’s character. For this study, it would then be assumed that activities and processes at the encounter are pregnant with societal and individual codes and cues which may permit exciting constructs. It is from Simmel’s concept of fleeting encounters that the current study forms part of its title. In his conceptualization, the casual fleeting encounters are loaded with cues which profile the character of a society. Drawing from this, the current study hopes that the fleeting encounter between the viewer and the television news if closely examined may yield states, processes and therefore emerging constructs which speak to the viewer and television news scholarship.

3.9. *Naturalism and the encounter*

Another theory considered by the current research is that of naturalism. This is in two ways. First the research traces a surrealistic aesthetic it expects to form at the moment of encounter of a continuous national story with a past, present and moving towards the future, each day at the cliff hanger point of change. The naturalism school of art argues convincingly that real life offers the greatest dramas that story tellers should focus on and that such dramas then offer greatest opportunities for observation and study. But the philosophy of naturalism also seems to have been carefully courted by those who have fashioned the modernity project. The focus on the individual on what is now referred to as bio-economics uses supposed natural traits in the human being of self love, of an aggressive orientation to conquer and establish an empire of influence and self benefit, and to use the mind to harness what he or she sees in nature in terms of principles and processes, replicating them in little slices into technologies and technological devices and innovations. In summary, these theories will walk with this study.

4. Viewer Types

Baran & Davis (2006) note of two types of viewers identified by cultivation studies – the light viewers and the heavy viewers. The studies conclude that after continuous repetition of images, themes, values and social reality by television over a period of time, television cultivates in heavy viewers these as the social reality in society (Baran S. & Davis D. 2006, p 334). In other words this would be an over-time-surrender viewer.

Perhaps the incidence of mobile television reception through the iphone and through receiving television on the laptop computer produces an even more intense heavy television news viewer – the intense heavy viewer. These technologies are quickly driving a new emerging world of television viewing that the review discusses below under the subtitle ‘The explosive future’. A new generation of young people and professional staff is entering the scene with laptops and iphones as work and companion tools. With television on- line news provision and the habit of the scan culture, viewers interested in news will no longer need to wait for news at a fixed television set.

Soon, news will be watched as people perform their daily work on their computers, search and answer to their personal mail, alternating from one to the other. The increasing incidence of live reports will also be an attraction. It will be prudent in the research to establish if the viewers in this study will be light or heavy viewer categories and if they will be heavy viewers, whether their viewing will demonstrate the insights of the concepts in the research questions.

4.1. *Interacting, Purposive, and Practising Viewer Types*

Another area of research relevant to the focus of the study and the viewer types is the uses and gratification research. Baran and Davis (2006) argue that the new media has brought about a revival of the latter in contemporary research. The new media is utilized by an active person who selects what she or he wants and interacts with initial senders of information (Baran S. & Davis D. 2006, p 269). The authors also argue that the revival has come about with criticism of the limited effects theory, that it only focuses on investigating negative effects and ignores positive effects that a viewer for example may deliberately seek after.

From the two one may consider an interactive viewer type and a purposive viewer type. A key interest in this study is to construct a sketch of the viewer at the encounter and of the encounter process. The nature of the viewer at the encounter would have a bearing on the process of the encounter and its consequence.

These three viewer types – the interactive viewer, the purposive viewer and the practical/utilitarian viewer describe different things at the encounter. The first describes an action prone viewer, the second an intention filled viewer or a seeking viewer, and the third while similar to second specifies information related to core viewer activities. For example, a person involved in managing a private school will be interested in anything happening in regard to a private school. The same with anyone working in the sugarcane farming, in horticulture, or in a specific area of business. Will these three dispositions – the interactive, the purposive, and the utilitarian also not shape the nature of the encounter as manifested in the acts of the viewer?

4.2. *Demographic Viewer Types*

So far the review has focused on the different types of television viewers. Inferred in each is actually also a feature of the encounter – the type of the encounter that constructs or takes its character from the particular activity of the viewer. Meanwhile, it would be wise to categorize the viewers along the demographic types. In this regard, this study prioritizes gender, income, occupations, community change activism, and age among the demographic categories. It explores, whether these have relevance to the focus of the study as different viewer types. In other words will it matter if it is a man or a woman at the encounter? If it will be persons with totally different core occupations? If it will be people involved with change and advocacy for

societal change? And finally, will it matter if at the encounter, it is persons of varying age achievements. The study uses these categories to select the research partners.

The viewer types in the additional categories of media theory types and the demographic viewer types will be compared with information from the findings of the other research questions of the study as in the first category.

4.3. A Summary of Viewer Types

The news viewer types above are collaborative, surrender, resistant, dynamic, over time surrender, heavy, light, intense heavy, interactive, purposive, utilitarian, man or woman, middle aged or youth, community change activist, and different income artery types. As has been noted in a number of times earlier, each type also infers a particular feature of the encounter. Meanwhile, the study proposes that the viewer type is important as one considers the next tentative theme – the incidence and construction of master symbols within viewers, and if these have significance at the encounter.

5. Viewing and Viewer Preoccupations

A different dimension of the viewer as he or she moves into the encounter with the television news is that of the world of viewer preoccupations. Are these relevant at all to the encounter? Are they part of the encounter process?

5.1. Viewer's Information Needs

One main preoccupation that emerges as a main viewer preoccupation is that of viewer motives for watching the news and especially to seek information. One of the motivations for this research is to inquire if television, a multi-sense storytelling, account giving facility, is of relevance to a people desirous of change and advance, however defined. In regard to change, the study expects for example that just as a society or nation plans or plots ahead, the individual needs also to have a plan and to be facilitated with information for the purpose. Lerner (1979) describes five components identified by Harold Lasswell for policy thinking which seem to be relevant even for the individual as follows – (i) setting the goals (ii) identifying the major trends (iii) studying the prevailing conditions (iv) projecting future changes (v) considering alternatives (Lerner D. 1979, p 406).

Lasswell also identified seven main phases of every decision making process as (a) intelligence (exploring the problem) (b) promotion (discussion of alternatives) (c) prescription (choosing one of the alternatives) (d) invocation of the alternative (e) appraisal of the results (f) termination of the decision process (Lerner D. 1979, p 406).

5.2. Defining the Situation

Literature reveals that the viewer is also preoccupied by the state of the country at the national level and that there are also other situational preoccupations. Mayers (2005) writes of the French philosopher and novelist Jean Paul Sartre saying, “the latter would have no problem accepting the Cinderella premise – we humans are first of all beings in a situation. We cannot be distinguished from our situations, for they form us and decide the our possibilities.” (Mayers 2005, p 4). For this research a dimension on priorities and preoccupations is that they may be defined by the situation. Situation surrounding self, his or hers, and they and theirs. The situation may be defined at each of these layers or it may be a crisis cross from each of the three. In other words, the self, the family, the close friends, on one hand and the “other” in the zone of residence, the ethnicity, the society, the nation, ideological thought world - are all definers of the situation as suggested below.

Could it be that the television news is an important definer of the national situation for the viewer? Could it be seen as a portrayal of they or, us or I at the national site? For example, a viewer may feel that since “they” took over the government, “they” don’t care about us, or “their” focus is to enrich themselves, or they are genuinely trying to bring positive changes. The definition of the situation at the national level comes in the news items that come to the viewer. While they report of specific accounts of what has happened, there is an inference of what this means, an evaluation of the situation out there. Sometimes this is unspoken but nevertheless present as an inner voice, as the account giver’s inner voice. Does the viewer watch this un-affected by it or does it play a part emotionally or intellectually as he or she decides on options?

What the viewer sees the government doing on television may be seen to reflect its priorities and its preoccupation. Would this be an issue as the viewer engages the incoming pictures? Is there a link to his or her own priorities and preoccupations? And would this be viewer expectation – that his or her priorities would be part of government focus? What is his or her inner engine priority? The study will be keen to find out if there will be a core viewer preoccupation, if this is relevant at the encounter and in what sense?

5.3. Viewer content and genre preference

Another preoccupation is on viewer affinity content and genre preference. From another perspective, Lewis and Wahl (2005) link television news and democracy. Specifically focusing on opinion polls, public relations and television, they summarize their analysis of the relationship between media and public opinion as noted by Behr and Lyenger - "although the public often responded to media agendas, the media rarely responded to the public's stated political concerns or priorities" (Stuart A. 2005, p. 101). How then does the viewer respond to this (disregard?). It is argued that audience research helps media to programme in tandem with audience preferences.

5.4. Change and Conflict Preoccupations

Meanwhile, if the viewer is expecting change at national and individual level, the phenomenon of change itself, is perhaps not a straight forward territory but one with conflict at the two levels of the national and the individual as well. Dwivedi (2003) writes of conflict in this manner. "Conflict is a symptom of effective behaviour and forms a prerequisite to change and innovation (Dwivedi R.S 2003, p 519). There are delimitas and predicaments in change options selected. Are these part of viewer preoccupations? it seems to the current study that any expectation of news relevance by viewer would have to consider the aspect of national change.

5.5. News and self-identity preoccupation

On the other hand, part of the argument of this study is that television news is constantly defining the situation for the viewer, particularly the national situation. Such a definition and its constant communication may have either a dynamic interaction or engagement with the viewer or a passive one. The study argues that apart from the account of a particular incident in the news, there is always the unspoken confidant's voice saying – this is how the situation is.

Fiedler (1972) wrote of an aspect in society which offers an interesting way of looking at the concept of the situation and how it may have a bearing on individuals and therefore the viewer. He wrote, 'But to be an American (unlike being British or French..) is precisely to imagine a destiny rather than to inherit it' (Waugh P. 1992, p 39). One perhaps represents a civilization achieved, the other perhaps the value that each generation, each person has a chance to follow a dream. One is proud of a past, the other is proud and confident that the nation or individual can achieve a greater future. One says – yes we have been, yes we are, the other says yes we can. And each society socialises its citizens along a core national psyche or ethic through a number of ways including the media.

Another aspect can be inferred from Held and Thompson (1989). They wrote, 'social actors according to Parsons and Shultz must be knowledgeable in two ways, - are able to discern the significant conditions in situations, and to discern resources which can lead to success' (Held D.& Thompson J. 1989,p 200).Is the viewer aware of such discernment within himself or herself? The state of the national situation is brought to the viewer as accounts of what is happening across the country in the news on a daily basis. An expectation would be that the news itself has been attracted to the significant conditions in situations and make the viewer aware of this aspect. The other expectation is that the viewer has it in himself or herself to discern such significance even if not articulated by the media. Of course, it could be that the media and in this case the television rarely looks for these significant conditions in situations for its news. Meanwhile, the other aspect of Held and Thomson's statement is that one should be able to discern resources which can lead to success. Is the engagement between the viewer and the television news at this useful, practical level?

Another interesting way of looking at self and preoccupations is by organising the preoccupations along two identities of self – social identity and personal identity (Nuneier & Appelbaum 2006).Social identity would refer to:- self and social roles preoccupations, social values preoccupations and social relational preoccupations. Social roles are such as of simultaneously being a father, a husband, a son, a farmer, a cooperative official, a member of a specific community. Each may produce normal preoccupations, but the study focuses on weightier preoccupations identified by their capacity to worry, linger, or quietly inspire. Is social identity an aspect that will be visible in the investigation focusing on the encounter?

Self assessment against these yardsticks could again produce normal preoccupations or the weightier ones. Similarly, the relational values preoccupations are tied to the diffused yardsticks of honesty, loyalty, genuine help and concern, warmth, care. For all the three categories, perhaps there will be evidence of weightier preoccupations or perhaps not. There could be evidence of other kinds of preoccupations and of a different categorization than presented. The study will try to make visible any of these aspects and will then examine

whether they relate to television viewing in any way from the standpoint of the television news viewer and viewer preoccupations.

The personal identity preoccupations focus more on the individual self. These may be centred around the individual's sense of self (Myers D. 2005, p 41) which in turn could be in terms of self- concept and in terms of self- esteem. For example, if the television news defines the national situation in a certain direction, will this affect viewer self concept in any way?

Preoccupations which cross the boundary into weightier category and their possible interaction with news viewing are examined but one may also argue that self is involved in an inner and deeper activity of self presentation, self discovery, self expression, self aesthetics, - in a multi-purpose surge of inner life. Each of these become manifest in the activities that the self gets involved in, particularly those activities which require considerable investment in time, effort and resources – a sacrificial commitment. Is there a way in which news viewing can be conceptualized as an incidence of viewer self expression particularly as one examines viewer behaviour at the encounter?

5.6. Viewer and rising tide of social excitement preoccupation

From a different perspective, Collins and Makowsky (1998) write of Charles Cooley and how the sociologist “saw media as enabling people to experience a rising tide of social excitement which would lead to his or her levels of consciousness.” (Collins & Makowsky 1998, p 166). A rising tide of social excitement would be in individuals and groups. For the study, this is a different category of self preoccupation- a lingering, eruptive, potent, pleasurable inner state, with consequences in individual or in social action. Is there any aspect of this in the encounter?

5.7. Viewer and an overarching thought lens

A different view is the construction of the theory of “human beings without shadows” (Baudrillard & Ritzer 2005, p 52). Shadow-less man makes progress in the absence of or indifferent to any shadowing idea. This is the shadowing as of a powerful spell cast. Ideas being seen as having such powers over individuals – shadowing their attitudes, behaviour and trajectory. What is the case at the encounter? Is the viewer a shadowless man or the opposite? What of the news? Is there a continuous shadowing idea or is it the opposite of it?

5.8. Viewer and the concept of proliferation of centres

The power of the idea is presented in another interesting manner by Schon (1971) in what he describes as the model of proliferation of centres. He notes how ideas have been used to maintain states beyond use of force. An internalization of ideas for a desirable life design, diffused through carefully established centres of conquest, control, diffusion, and example (Schon 1971, p 85). This in particular refers to the modernity project and is applicable to the state of mind of the individual in post colonial Africa and the rest of the third world.. The doctrine of modernity has inculcated a mind set in individuals and this mindset is part of his or her starting point as he or she encounters information. In the view of this study, the television in this context is a key part of the global instruments of diffusion for the doctrine of modernity. Is this the case in the Kenyan viewer's experience?

6. The Concept of Hypertext in the Encounter between TV News and TV News viewer

An interesting observation is from Hillard (2008) who identifies a characteristic in the emerging media audience spearheaded by the new media. Describing what he refers to as the hypertext that is the internet content, Hillard (2008) describes the internet user as a rushed reader who scans and skims the information (Hilliard 2008, p 69). This points to a viewer who chooses what to pay attention to and to engage with. Will this be the case with the television viewer? Will such a model of high selectivity, impatience, moments of intense active interaction, of cross channel navigation be displayed as the viewer engages this varied content? One way of describing chosen content by viewer is to construct the concept of viewer affinity content. The study will examine if this is a relevant concept.

6.1. The montage and the cumulative bulletin message

Meanwhile, there is more to the concept of hypertext than ideology or viewer preoccupations. The Russian film maker Sergei Eisenstein popularized the montage approach to film making. In this unique approach to cinema picture making, unconnected, highly emotive images are shown together in quick succession to describe reality and the human condition (Cook & Bernink 1999, p319). It seems that television news fits very well this montage approach. Very unconnected images of reality flash on the screen one after the other. At the end of the bulletin of many pictures, is there a singular meaning arrived at by the viewer of the reality unfolding and of the human

condition from the apparently unconnected, quick succession, montage - message at the end of the bulletin? In other words, is there a literal message in a news item and an inner message in the same?

More importantly, is there a cumulative message furthermore by the end of the bulletin, a singular message? In another perspective Cook and Bernink argue that the montage cinema aimed at producing a 'discursive cinema' and one that was expected to reorganize society. Is this stream of short bursts of varied news conclusive in meanings arrived at by the viewer? Does it trigger an inner discursive process? Does it trigger an external discursive process? Like the montage cinema, does it have a call for change and societal reorganization as its signature? The research expects this to be significant as it examines the nature of the encounter. It would be important in examining findings in regard to the second research question on the news genre that constructs at the encounter and also the third research question investigating the process at the encounter.

6.2. News and intimatization

Another aspect of the television news is reflected in the observations of Steiner (2005) who states that there is a shift in television news towards 'intimatization'. She elaborates the concept by Zoomen (1991) to mean great attention to human interest stories, a personal mode of address on the part of the news reader, and the treatment of political issues as matters of personality (Allan 2005, p 51). Could it be that through different strategies, the news is made into an intimate sharing of eavesdrop information by a confidant and it is also a transformation of political reality into personality types or human faces? Would the news story be made into an evaluative and emotive account?

On the other hand the human interest story – the feature takes the viewer to the thoughts, feelings, and the private life of the person involved or the person through whom a phenomenon has been experienced. In these two cases, rather than the news coming to the viewer in a remote, distant form, it comes as personalized account or, as a flesh and blood report. Is this intimatization a feature of the encounter? Would this be the case in the television news under the study? Does the television viewer in the study differentiate between the news sub-genres? Reflecting upon each, is the viewer able to articulate differences in their carrying capacity? In summary is news form and its variety a characteristic of any note at the encounter?

6.3. Encounter as a psychological site of creation, reproduction and transformation

Rosenthal G. (2007) notes that in order to understand and explain a psychological phenomenon, one needs to reconstruct its 'genesis' – the process of its 'creation, reproduction, and transformation'. Is there a psychological aspect, process or outcome at the encounter? Would an incoming news item produce any psychological engagement or feelings in the viewer? In addition, does the multiple textured text come to the viewer, and is created, reproduced, and transformed in the foundry of the ember fires of experience and preoccupations? Does it become a new hypertext, the inner hypertext that stands sentinel to future interrogation and interpretation of any unfolding reality? Is this the case? Is the encounter a psychological site of creation, reproduction and transformation of reality texts?

Related to this is another aspect which is brought out by Postman (2001). For him, four research questions are important in television research as follows - what is television? What kinds of conversations does it permit? What are the intellectual tendencies that it encourages? What kind of culture does it produce? (Alexander & Harrison 2001, p 4). The study examines three of these in regard to the television news as hypertext. What kind of conversations does television news permit in this study? What are its topics, its conversation relationships (between viewer, news reporter, and news source – the triad), and its depth – a conversations hypertext. One may regard the encounter therefore as both a sociological as well as an ideological site. The study will consider if these two perspectives would have a place in the findings.

6.4. News and the intellectual component of the hypertext

Meanwhile from the Postman's quotation, another question asks what intellectual tendencies are encouraged by the news as hypertext. Three aspects of this construct provide another attribute of the television news as hypertext. Intellectual tendencies perhaps in relation to human values and systems of thought in development, individual envisioning and strategic thinking, as well as aesthetic decoding of the television news image and its societal inferences – the image and its connotative force. The study conceptualizes this as the intellectual hypertext and like in all the other aspects of the hypertext, they are considered as important in helping to understand the nature of the encounter.

6.5. News as an attacker hypertext

A third question asks what kind of culture is promoted by television. Postman argues that the American television does not promote culture – on the contrary, it attacks it (Postman 2001, p4). For him, the American television trivializes serious issues and deliberately detracts viewers away from being thinking individuals. It is an attacker hypertext. How will the viewer respondents describe the nature of news that constantly come to them? Will it fit this conceptualization?

6.6. News as a hypertext of despair

From a different perspective Allan (2005) laments that the above view has gained much ground as assessment of television news. He notes that “there are narratives of decline in quality and usefulness of news media. They promote cynicism, ignorance, and discouragement” (Allan 2005, p90). This could be described as the hypertext of despair. If this is the case, then one may refer to the text that produces such a result in viewer as the hypertext of despair. It seems clear that the peculiarity of the hypertext would have an influence on the nature of the encounter.

6.7. Summary of news as hypertext

In summary, the categories of the ‘rising tide of social excitement hypertext, the shadowing hypertext, ideological hypertext, the montage hypertext, the discursive hypertext, the intimatized hypertext, the conversations carrier hypertext, the intellectual hypertext, the attacker hypertext and lastly, the hypertext of despair, are identified. What kind of text will construct at the encounter in regard to incoming news? The theoretical categories above may or may not be the ones that the viewers in the study will describe. What hypertext will they construct together? On the other hand, what does the very fact that the news is a hypertext mean to the nature of the encounter? Meanwhile another aspect of incoming news could be the form and genre which delivers it. The study argues that this could also be an aspect of the hypertext of significance.

7. TV News Aesthetics

An interesting construct in TV news is the question of the news aesthetics at the encounter. The need to examine this component is from the appreciation that perhaps the viewer responds differently to different forms appearing in a news bulletin. A particular pattern of response will also give a specific feature to the nature of the encounter. The following literature is about some aspects which may consciously or unconsciously be of note to the viewer.

7.1. Pictorial composition aesthetics

Mamer (2006) notes that a camera shot is a perspective by the director on specific information, characters, action, and dialogue. It is a perspective over an event, an issue, a phenomenon. The director invites us to ‘come and see something’, in terms of news, something unusual but from his or her own perspective. It is the director’s gaze, at something, it is the news producer’s gaze. Will the viewer comment on how pictures have been taken? Is there enough time to concentrate on the pictures and the perspectives shown as the news item quickly unfolds? Is the craft and the aesthetic of composition and presentation not expected in the television news and is it expected to be part of the meaning creation as is the case with the other pictorial genres? For the research this may be described as the pictorial composition aesthetic.

7.2. Epic, montage aesthetic

Part of the news aesthetic noted earlier is the reality epic aesthetic. If at the end of each bulletin, there is a cumulative gestalt of effect and meaning achieved through a montage of different, un-connected but extremely emotive item accounts, then this too – the montage - would be another aesthetic of the television news. Lastly, the type of shots or perspectives may not quickly be observable or of significance to the viewer, but is there anything in this craft at all that could be?

7.3. Shot composition and the aesthetic text

Rabiger (2008) focuses on aspects in a moving picture which attract the eye. He summarizes qualities in a picture which quickly attract the human eye as the brightest point in the shot, the darkest point, the strong colours of red or blue or green, the intersection lines along the rule of the thirds, the sightlines either along actual lines (a fence) or inferred lines (an outstretched arm), energy lines or lines of intense activity (eg the Virgin’s eyes on the child) and finally along compositional patterns within a shot (Rabiger M. 2008, p 66). He notes that the eye is also attracted to symmetry either vertical or diagonal, to strong verticals within the frame or strong diagonals, and to texture.

These are interesting qualities. Each has suggested aesthetic implications. For example, brightest may be in terms of lighting or colour. In conventional cinematography, it matches with feelings of warmth, celebration, or

joy. Strong light on a person may however match the sense of exposure, a tableau of the condemned. But the brightest lit is the centre of focus for the eye and therefore the place reserved for the central person, the significant person. Others in less lit parts of the shot are of less significance and they and those in the darkest parts of the frame may be invisible to the inner eye in the fast moving shots in the news. As noted earlier in regard to the montage, the research argues that the eye selects one shot in a notable news item that becomes a tableau in the mind – a symbolic representative of what has just happened. Again, if the spectacle is brightly lit with those suggestions of warmth and celebration and yet for the viewer, it is a moment of betrayal, that construction is itself disturbing and accentuates the outrage. Or does it? Is there enough time for the viewer to register all this in the fast moving encounter? It will be difficult to ask research participants to remember and answer questions on these compositional aspects.

7.4. Dramatic shots for the eye

Zettl (2006) emphasises that television is a visual medium and that the best production is achieved when “we show rather than tell”. He urges that it is important to look for visuals which help to reduce verbal information (Zettl H. 2006, p 181). From a different perspective some scholars have argued that television news is keen to bring to the screen that which is dramatic to the eye and this way ends up bringing even that which is not important in terms of viewer information. It is however possible that such content has its own different place in the viewer. If it will be the case that some of the news items broadcast are not directly relevant to the life of the viewer in a utilitarian sense, could it be that the viewer finds them useful in some other un-described way? More importantly, Zettl advises that the television worker should look for “visuals that may reveal character, shots that show how skilfully a person handles tools of their work, how people behave in a relationship” (Zettl H. 2006, p181).

With an eye on news as part of this television production, is this partly the way that the news will appear? Are these indeed partly what the viewer is consciously or unconsciously looking out for? The revelation of character in the news context, the person/leader’s skill (e.g. in leadership, in competitive politics, as a professional), and how persons behave in political or developmental relationships. Will this be an empty layer in the viewer description and interpretation of his or her news viewing?

7.5. Voyeurism and news genre

Easthope (1993) focusing on film theory notes that “film provides pleasure not only at the level of theme, by dramatizing a narrative, but also through the very experience of sitting in the dark to watch moving pictures projected on the screen, a kind of voyeurism” (Easthope A. 1993, p 16). A number of film scholars have noted that from the very beginning, the film had the sense of peeping on others while they did not see you. Indeed, the first film making cameras were known as the pin-hole cameras acquiring their name from the early film exhibitions. Alfred Hitchcock, one of the key fathers of modern film produced a movie in the 1960s dramatizing this concept of voyeurism but focusing on investigative news production in his film *The Rear Window*. In television news, the camera brings the news source to the viewer’s presence. The source is not aware of the individual’s eyes on him or her or what they are looking at. The news source cannot see their faces. For the research, does the viewer get any inner pleasure as he or she watches news? Is there an aspect of such voyeurism? Watching the image, the presence, the energy, the pitiableness, the vulnerability.....?

7.6. News and the spirit of the machine

A different thought is triggered by Cook and Bernink’s (1999) description of what they identify as the spirit of modernity. It is the spirit of “speed and shock, of no regard to past and present but only that which regards the future.... Of subversion and rapture” (Cook P& Bernink M. 1999, p 114). For the authors, the machine, the new technology moves in, in this manner. They describe this as the spirit of modernity, and argue that this spirit has been deliberately picked up and used by a number of notable film makers especially in the category usually referred to as the alternative film. How about the television news? Is it propelled by this same spirit? These short, dramatic, un-backgrounded, shocking, rapturing accounts.....the very sense of discontentment with the present? Is news then a friend to those seeking change? The research will want to establish the kind of construct which emerges of the television news at the encounter and the kind of content genre in which it is delivered. In this the study will investigate along the second research question which sought to construct the news aesthetics that emerge at the encounter.

7.7. News as a futuristic genre

Meanwhile, it is interesting that journalism has for long referred to news accounts as stories. This is in the sense that they are accounts or narratives of something interesting that has happened. Something to be recounted to others, a story to be told to someone or to others. Rabiger (2008) distinguishes between two kinds of dramatic stories by story tellers – character driven stories and plot driven stories. He writes, “When a piece is character driven, the storyteller’s vision will be made through the experience of the point of view character or characters. When the piece is plot driven, the story teller’s vision will probably hinge more on settings, situations and the idiosyncrasies of the plot...” (Rabiger M.2008, p29).

Rabiger mentions “the story teller’s vision”. This may be seen in two ways. The immediate perspective given to the situation or character. It may also be the crafting of rafters towards the final conclusion, the final vision of the story teller. In the dramatic happenings in real life that are constructed as news, journalism talks of the news angle – the perspective that the journalist captures and highlights as what has happened. Consciously or unconsciously, it too has the immediate perspective and the final vision perspective and the viewer would be quickly aware of both at the encounter. The study suggests that the future that is suggested by the storyteller’s vision in the television news is a major cause of emotions generated in the viewer.

7.8. News as a continuous emotive account

Rabiger makes another point on dramatic story telling. He argues that a good story teller makes the audience wait. The story teller “raises questions, anticipations, hopes and fears in the audience” but does not resolve them quickly. Rabiger quotes Wilkie Collins whom he describes as the father of the mystery novel, and his statement – “make them laugh, make them cry, but make them wait” (Michael R. 2008, p34). It seems that in this way, the story teller amplifies the effects of the questions being raised, the anticipations, the hopes and the fears in the audiences continuously towards breaking point. The study argues that the same seems to happen in the Kenyan society static and change story before the television viewer. In most cases, it seems the vision of the story teller – the media, is that nothing is changing. The past repeats in the present, the hope in the viewer is not fulfilled but is kept in waiting, in doubt. The research suggests that this too is another force that generates an emotion at the encounter between the news viewer and the incoming television news.

7.9. The action news genre

Langford (1998) in his book on advanced photography makes some useful advice in taking action pictures. He points out that “the main aim is to capture participants’ skill, anguish and tension.” The study brings this in for two purposes. It considers that news whether in terms of spectacle action type typical of breaking news or utterances by key personalities are all action news sought out by journalism. The first is of physical action and the second is of an invisible movement directed at current situation in order to change it, or to anchor it, or to attack other forces threatening the status quo. Both are sought out by journalism. The first is particularly endearing to television news as television is a visual medium. But the implied action in the utterance type is also prioritized by journalism. What does the viewer think of these two types? On the other hand are they the only types that he or she can identify? What is the viewer really looking for in the news? What genre is typical at the encounter?

8. Literature Review Summary and Potential Research on TV News

It could be the case that, when constructed, the master symbol then becomes the lens or the filter through which incoming news on the same phenomenon is received, is quickly interrogated, is judged and recognized. It seems like a normal way of the mind to simplify the process of recognition and quick response to stimuli by using existing master symbols.

These are several clusters of viewer types: the collaborative, surrender, resistant, dynamic types. Simultaneously, each of these could be said to indicate power relations, type of encounter, degree of closeness or distance between viewer and in coming news, degree of fleeting-ness of the encounter, and mutual contribution to collaboration, surrender, or resistance of viewer and the incoming news. A second cluster is in regard to seriousness of viewing and the literature review identifies the type of viewer along the light viewer and the heavy viewer types upon the criteria of duration of viewing, intensity of viewing – i.e in remembering details of an item, depth of viewing – i.e in connecting the item to other texts. A third cluster was along the degree of interactivity. A construction of this viewer type cluster would be along viewer action towards the time of the encounter and during the time of the encounter, viewer participation in encounter comments, viewer and break-out of emotions.

A fourth cluster is constructed along purposefulness of viewing. There is the purposive viewer type with such characteristics as - is deliberate, interprets news along relevance to core preoccupations, is a viewer type who links news viewing with practice – who seeks content relevant to core career - for example farming or business. Lastly, there is the demographic cluster of viewer type defined along gender, ethnicity, political affiliation, occupation, social change activism, and age viewer type.

The literature review has examined and limited the concept of preoccupations as follows:- First the situation preoccupations – personal, community, and national situation preoccupations. Part of the investigation is to understand if incoming news seems to define the situation in the eyes of the viewer. It is also to examine if such a definition is seen as having relevance to the viewer's own situation or world. While viewer preoccupations will be expected, the study will prioritize those that worry or linger in the mind or inspire. The study will examine if the definition of the national or societal situation has any active interaction to any of such preoccupations. Secondly, the study examines income preoccupations as a stand-alone preoccupation. It examines whether incoming news speak to or is quiet to self-income activities, concerns, or plans. Thirdly, another preoccupation to consider is the encounter preoccupation if at all there will be any. This could be such as perceived inadequacies of the news, perceived inadequacies around the setting, or perhaps ones inability to understand clearly what is being broadcast.

Furthermore, the review has highlighted TV news as hypertext made up of the following: ideological traces in news on class, gender, ethnicity, nationality, religion, any other; news as montage; news as a societal change genre; intimatization; news genres consisting of news, news features, investigative reports, live reports, eye witness reports, analytical news - and the carrying capacity of each; and either the conceptualization of news as the attacker hypertext or the conversation hypertext.

Overall, the literature review and its summary above highlight aspects to consider and to think about as potential research areas. One potential area to investigate is the nature of the encounter between the television news viewer and the television news in a particular socio-political context. Marx (1997) identifies the following as sources of research questions – intellectual puzzles and contradictions, the existing literature, replication, structures and functions, opposition, a social problem (from a theoretical perspective), gaps between official versions of reality and the facts on the ground, the counter-intuitive, empirical examples that trigger amazement, new methods and theories, new social and technical developments and social trends, and finally personal experience (Bryman A. 2012, p 86).

The above literature develops research leads in a multi-directional investigation. It is expected that this will be examined and explored in the highly concentrated incidence of viewer and news encounter. But Marx refers to the intellectual puzzle. A potential study focus is the encounter between the viewer and the television news. Its nature as investigated by the viewer will answer the puzzle emerging from the literature - what is to be made of the viewer and the television news encounter from a viewer's perspective? What is the nature of this encounter? These and more potential questions arising from the paper could generate interesting research questions in Media studies in general and TV studies in particular.

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