

Capture - Upload - Broadcast

A case study in the gatekeeping
of amateur footage

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Abstract

This thesis explores the transition of amateur footage across three different stages of the news making process. Through a case study of the 'Mardi Gras Police Brutality Video' this thesis tracks and analyses the development, reception and integration of amateur footage. Each stage is marked by a different media environment, firstly, as an eyewitness to the news event, secondly through its development in the online YouTube landscape and finally in its broadcast across TV news networks. In order to analyse each of these media platforms a mixed-method approach has been adopted that utilises both qualitative content analysis and textual analysis. Whilst the thesis is situated in gatekeeping theory it also crosses into other areas of discussion integral to the understanding of the progression of this case study. This includes the concepts of gatewatching, eyewitnessing and participatory journalism.

This thesis is an original contribution to the field of gatekeeping theory by focusing on a unique case study and addressing a new component of gatekeeping processes. What happens to amateur footage as it moves through the gates?

This thesis argues that despite the proliferation of amateur footage and the multiplying of gates across multiple platforms, Australian TV news networks successfully retain their authority as gatekeepers through a process of normalisation. However, as this thesis will demonstrate, participatory journalists and active audiences in sites such as YouTube now have the power to influence and judge what enters through the gates.

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text. I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

Eryk Bagshaw

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Introduction

This thesis explores a unique case study in the transition of amateur footage across online and broadcast platforms. The ‘Mardi Gras Police Brutality’ video from March 4th 2013 offers an insight into the interaction of YouTube users as ‘gatewatchers’ (Bruns, 2005) and Australian television news gatekeepers.

This study is unique in that it addresses the normalisation of amateur footage in a much more domestic case study, where the availability of amateur footage was severely limited and was not a case of disaster or political upheaval. To date I have found no case studies that focus on amateur footage in such a context. It is also unique in that it engages with the audience’s perception of both the uploaded footage and gatekeeping functions in the comment feed attached to the YouTube video. Through this content analysis the thesis seeks to understand how audiences perceive gatekeeping functions and how they partake in gatewatching practices in order to pass through the gates of media producers.

This analysis of gatekeeping theory seeks to comprehend how broadcast news is coming to terms with the implications of an interactive audience, a new base of content producers and multi-directional transmission flows. This shift necessitates a movement away from the gatekeeping approaches of yesteryear that relied heavily on a ‘one way information flow shaped by varying patterns of press-government relations, new technologies offer the potential for multidirectional press-government-citizen gatekeeping relations’ (Bennett, 2004, p.311). Further, this thesis provides an analysis of how ‘the relative stability and centralized control of linear news flows –

which characterized information exchange for the purpose of news making until very recently, are coming to an end'(Ansgard, 2011, p. 67). This is exemplified by the analysis of the YouTube comment feed, which highlights the pushing power of the Internet, as 'a paradigm shift away from industrial style content to the collaborative, iterative and user led production of content by participants in a hybrid user-producer or produser role' (Bruns, 2006, p.275).

The video itself is unique because it exhibits an awareness of news values at the moment of capture. Further, it was propelled online by rapid sharing across major social networking sites. Finally, the video was picked up by all major Australian television news outlets and broadcast nationally. This thesis seeks to analyse how the footage was interacted with at each level of its development, firstly, through its function as an eyewitness to the news event, secondly through its development in the YouTube space and finally through its 'normalisation' in to its broadcast format.

Whilst gatekeeping theory has tackled the process of news stories moving through the channels of distribution, it has not effectively analysed what happens to the stories as they move through those channels. This thesis seeks to address this gap by further exploring the process of 'normalisation' in the transition of the footage from the online to broadcast domains.

The concept of 'normalisation' is drawn from Singer's study of political J-blogger's in mainstream media outlets in the US who have adapted to new media and participatory journalism by 'moulding distinctive online formats to fit and in some ways augment traditional (journalistic) norms and practices' (Singer, 2005, p. 180). This thesis seeks to assess whether such a process of normalisation is also apparent in

the integration of amateur footage into Australian television news. Further, it seeks to ascertain whether that ‘normalisation’ is valued by members of the participatory YouTube community from which it emerged. In doing so, the thesis will demonstrate how the values of online media have been adapted and re-framed by broadcast organisations so as to retain their position as gatekeepers.

This thesis falls largely in the area of gatekeeping theory within new media studies; it draws on the participatory journalism concepts of Steve Paulussen, Ari Heinonen, David Domingo, and Thorsten Quandt (2007); Rosen (2006); Ross (2010); Singer (2005), whilst also engaging with the relationship between gatekeeping and gatewatching theory in a contemporary trans-media environment. Further, it draws on previous studies of amateur footage such as Andén-Papadopoulos and Pantti (2011), Harrison (2010); Williams, Wardle, and Wahl-Jorgensen (2011) Pantti and Bakker (2009). These studies have largely concentrated on the adaptation of amateur footage into news narratives in the context of extreme events or large socio-political upheavals such as the Arab Spring, September 11 or the London Bombings. Gatekeeping theory, and the concepts of eyewitnessing have all been critical tenets of these studies and they hold as much relevance in the context of extreme events as they do in the sphere of less dramatic amateur footage.

Finally, this study addresses whether television news networks actively mitigate the threat to their gatekeeping authority posed by participatory journalism practices through a number of normalising functions.

Significance and Research Question

This case study is significant in that it addresses amateur footage across two different contexts in both its online and broadcast formats. Further, the nature of the case study provides a window into gatewatching practices and the perception of gatekeepers prior to the moment of broadcast. The uploaded video was present online for approximately 24 hours in the lead up to its news broadcast, providing for an environment that is fuelled by an active audience and a perspective that has been called for by researchers such as Lewis, Kaufhold, and Lasrosa (2010); Turner (2009). Similarly, it provides a window into perceptions of gatekeeping and normalisation in the moments during and after broadcast, providing valuable evidence for the perceptions of audiences across these time frames.

Whilst Allan (2013) and Andén-Papadopoulos and Pantti (2011) have widely explored the development of amateur footage through the ‘spontaneous actions of ordinary people – caught up in crisis events transpiring around them’ (Allan, 2013, p. 2) such as the London bombings, this case study is not categorised as a crisis. Further, as there is no current literature on amateur footage in an Australian context and limited literature on amateur footage in the context of a non-extreme event, (Harrison, 2010) this thesis seeks to fill the gaps in both these areas. This unique case study also provides an insight into the transition of amateur footage through gatekeeping processes across the online and broadcast formats and grants the researcher a real-time window into viral gatewatching practices, and the criticism and validation of broadcast news networks by YouTube users as the story passed through the gates of media producers. As a result, the case study provides an access point into the

understanding of gatekeeping practices by members of an online community. This thesis therefore seeks to develop the literature and methodology of studying active audiences in an online environment and their relationship with the gatekeeping practices of traditional media forms, whilst also examining what happens to amateur footage as it moves through the gatekeeping channels of distribution.

In order to assess the implementation and significance of gatekeeping and normalisation practices in the case study, the research was guided by the following research question.

What does this case study demonstrate about the gatekeeping processes involved in the transition of amateur footage from the moment of capture to its upload and into its broadcast in the Australian television news?

Although it would be possible to formulate more specific research questions in response to each section of the thesis, this research question most adequately accounts for the total progression of this unique case study.

Through answering this research question this thesis contributes significantly to an understanding of gatekeeping theory in the context of amateur footage in non-extreme events across online and broadcast platforms.

Chapter Outline

As this thesis crosses multiple media platforms, fields of literature and methodologies the chapters are structured in an unorthodox manner. The methodologies are split according to their relevance to each chapter.

Chapter one, the literature review, examines the theoretical landscape that underpins the research. The four central bodies of the literature review are gatekeeping theory, gatewatching theory, eyewitnessing and participatory journalism. Each of these areas is intertwined as they most adequately account for the progression of this case study from the moment of capture to its eventual broadcast. Through the literature review this thesis seeks to establish how a study of amateur footage can be situated within gatekeeping theory.

Chapter two covers the uploaded footage of the Mardi Gras Police Brutality video on YouTube through textual analysis. This chapter assesses the uploaded footage as the initial gate, its participatory journalistic elements and its position as an eyewitness account.

Chapter three examines the comment feed that flows from the uploaded video through computer aided qualitative content analysis and ascertains the positioning of YouTube users in relation gatekeepers whilst also examining the tactics that are utilized in order to pass through the gates.

Chapter four examines the ‘normalisation’ of the uploaded footage across the news broadcasts through textual analysis, and seeks to analyse how the networks adapt the footage so as to retain their gatekeeping authority.

The conclusion offers a summary of the case study progression through the gates of the media and assesses whether gatekeeping processes have been adapted for this case study in amateur footage.

The appendices including coding matrixes, content and textual analysis templates are contained within this document and can be found in the final section.

Chapter One: Literature Review

This thesis deals with a very contemporary phenomenon, the transition of amateur footage from the moment of capture, through online media channels and into a final broadcast transmission across the national television news. Theoretically, it is also a very contemporary case study. If I had written this thesis in 1990 the technical means of production available to amateur videographers would have been severely limited, and their channels of distribution virtually closed through the oligopoly of major media networks (Garnham, 1990). The distribution of content from one to many through the mass media and the dominance of television news meant that a reinforced alienation from production processes was the dominant experience of many citizens (Garnham, 1990, p. 62). Over two decades those barriers have come down. As this thesis stands, most people are capable of not only being an eyewitness to a news event, but of recording that event on a device that fits in their pocket. Amateur footage is now not only accessible but in demand, as it provides a cost effective and salient mechanism by which networks can engage audiences. Because of the cross-platform, adaptive nature of amateur footage in the contemporary news media, no one theory can adequately account for the enormous changes that have occurred to allow for this change in circumstances.

As this thesis deals with both traditional and new media the theoretical underpinning for the literature review aims to give the best possible grounding in the theories that have influenced my analysis of this case study in its pre-broadcast and broadcast stages. It's pre-broadcast stage is defined by the period between its capture and

upload onto YouTube from the 4th to the 6th of March, while the broadcast period begins at the moment of its transmission across national TV networks from 6 p.m. AEST on the 6th of March, 2013.

The central theory of this thesis is gatekeeping and its more contemporary adaptation, gatewatching. A reliance on this theory alone would not suffice to give an in-depth analysis of this case study. As a result, the literature review will also examine the development of eyewitnessing and citizen journalism in connection with amateur footage to develop a complete contextual picture of how this case study was engaged with in the online sphere and how it was passed through the gates of media organisations and brought to national attention. The theoretical tenets of gatekeeping, gatewatching, eyewitnessing, and participatory journalism will provide the conceptual framework from which to engage with the text.

Each of these theories underpin the value of this case study whilst also expanding upon its worth as an allegory for the implementation of amateur footage across Australian television news media. Previous case studies of amateur footage in broadcast news have had an international focus (Allan, 2013; Andén-Papadopoulos & Pantti, 2011; Harrison, 2010; Pantti & Bakker, 2009). To date I have found no significant qualitative or quantitative research on amateur footage in Australian broadcast news. This thesis aims to contribute to this field by engaging with the amateur footage of the 'Mardi Gras Police Brutality' not only in the televised domain but also across its development in the online sphere of YouTube, where its highest contemporary theoretical value lies. In order to do so, each theoretical perspective

must be engaged with so as to provide the historical tracking of theoretical developments that have led up to this point.

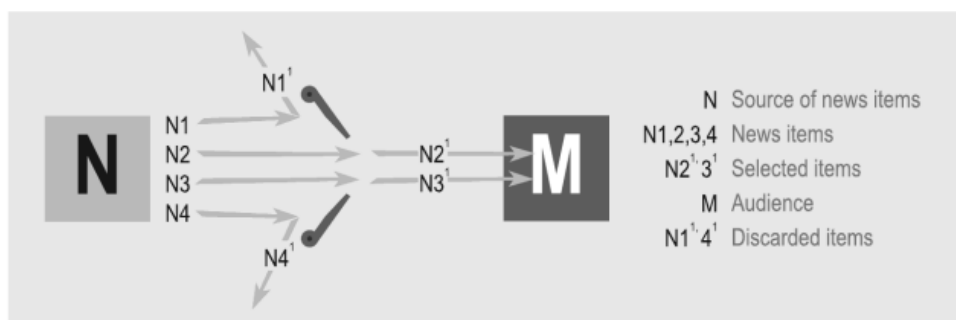
Gatekeeping

For the purposes of this thesis, gatekeeping theory provides the structural mechanism to explain how the amateur footage of the Mardi Gras Police Brutality video transcended its amateur context and was received by major news networks across the country.

Gatekeeping has long been established as the ‘process of culling and crafting countless bits of information into the limited number of messages that reach people everyday’ (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009, p. 1). Lewin (1949) established gatekeeping theory in an area totally unrelated to mass communication studies. His theory examined the way in which food reached the table of an American family and established that housewives were the key gatekeepers in controlling the channels that allowed food to pass from the supermarket and onto the dinner table. Lewin’s contemporary, (White, 1950) harnessed Lewin’s theory and applied to mass communication studies. He developed upon Lewin’s observation that the theory of gates ‘holds not only for food channels but also for the travelling of a news item through certain communication channels in a group’ (Lewin, 1949, p. 145). White undertook the study by asking a local wire editor, ‘Mr Gates’ to record his decision making process in selecting news for the local paper in a city of a hundred thousand people. White concluded that three tiers of gates would have to be passed through in order for the article to reach the morning news.

The local reporter would make the initial news judgment at the news event, should they decide that the event meets their criteria of newsworthiness it would be passed on to the Associated Press rewrite man who would decide whether to pursue the story. Finally, should the story have been passed through these two gates, the wire editor at the respective paper would determine whether it went to print (White, 1950). White concluded that Mr Gates' decisions were 'highly subjective' (White, 1950, p.386) and that up to 90% of stories received by the wire editor were rejected on the basis that they were not believed to have news merit, were untrue, or that there was simply not enough space to fit them into the broadsheet. In 1966 Paul Snider conducted a reproduction of White's study with the same Mr Gates and found the decisions made in 1949 remained largely the same as in 1966. In this study Mr Gates believed that news was 'the day by day report of events and personalities and comes in a variety which should be presented as much as possible' (Snider, 1967, p. 426). A model of White's original gatekeeping theory with the same approach adopted by Snider (1967) is shown below.

Figure 1: White's Vision of Gatekeeping



Source: (McQuail & Windahl, 1981, p.101)

The model above shows that N is the source of news items, out of which 4 news stories are sent to the gates, N1-N4. Of those items two are discarded at the gate, N1 and N4 whilst N2 and N3 pass through to the audience. Whilst this depiction is relatively simplistic it does offer a useful visual depiction of the process espoused by White (1950). Shoemaker and Voss (2009) argue that it is limited in that it does not recognize that multiple gatekeepers each have their own role, conceptions or positions in shaping gathering and transmitting news items' (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009, p. 39). The most striking element of figure 1 is the lack of an agent before the initial news selection. McNelly (1959) took on this criticism of White's theory and focused on reporters on the scene of events as the initial gate, expanding the gatekeeping process beyond the wire editor. This was the key criticism of Bass (1969) who believed that the wire editor 'was not the key decision maker' (Bass, 1969, p. 71). Bass' (1969) study called for further examination of news gathering techniques over news processing techniques to determine which stories are valued not at the secondary stage, the 'wire editor,' but at the news event itself.

Further studies in gatekeeping concluded that White's original theory 'brought into focus the intuitive notion that not all that happens in the world gets into the news (Reese & Ballinger, 2001, p. 643) and that its 'appeal and plausibility had applications wider than news decisions' (McQuail, 2000, p.277). Fisher (1978) viewed gatekeeping as a 'significant element in much communications research' (Fisher, 1978, p. 120). Additional studies utilised White's approach but applied them to different media forms and focus areas. Bleske (1991) examined how women were represented in the media through gatekeeping practices. Whitney and Becker (1982)

applied the theory to television news and Bissell (2000) examined photographic gatekeeping practices. Geiber (1960) expanded White's study to 16 wire editors and criticized the original theory like Shoemaker & Voss (2009) for not exploring the processes that surrounded the men who were making the decisions. Further, he maintained that organizational influences, such as deadlines, editorial guidelines and workplace structure were ignored by White to the detriment of the theory.

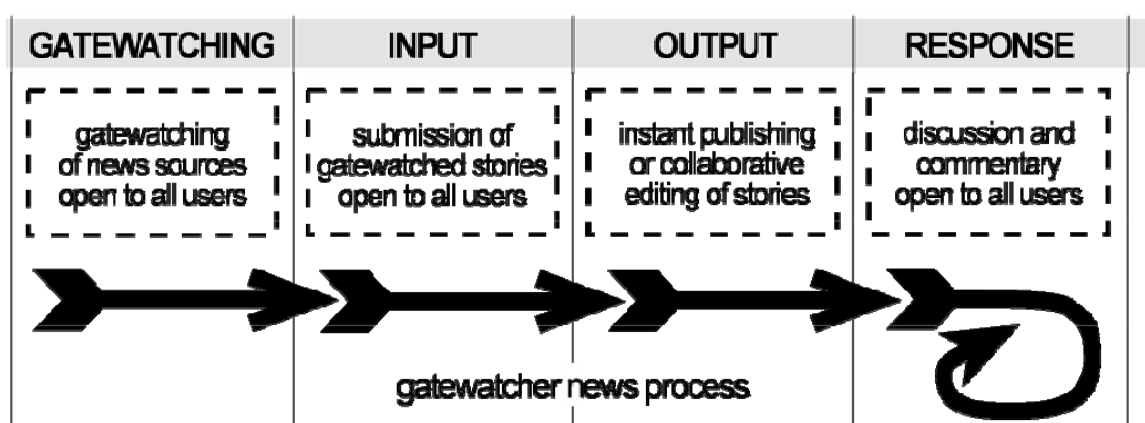
Recently, gatekeeping theory has been used interchangeably and in combination with other mass media theories so as to ascertain how and what news makes it to the daily report. Lasorsa (2002) argues that gatekeeping theory in combination with the study of news semantics and selection criteria allows for a more rounded approach to gatekeeping and news processing theories.

Gatekeeping theory has also had to adapt to changing multi-media environment. The original principles of gatekeeping theory were appropriate in a time when few had access to the resources to be able to produce news. The gates of media producers and editors attempted to ensure that only news in the public interest made it to the morning paper. Participatory media culture and the ability of citizens to access the means of production have fostered a new approach to gatekeeping theory (Chris Atton & Hamilton, 2008; Bruns, 2005, 2008; Harrison, 2010; Shoemaker & Vos, 2009).

Bruns (2005) argues that the three-tier gatekeeping theory outlined by White no longer applies to the new participatory media culture fostered by Web 2.0. Bruns maintains that the era of industrial news organizations having total control over the nature of news consumption through gatekeeping is over. Rather, he coins the term

‘gatewatching’ as a ‘range of systems and practices enabling participants to interact amongst themselves on an equal footing and without significant intervention from editors, moderators, network administrators or other controlling powers’ (Bruns, 2005, p.121). The development of this theory ties in with media democratisation processes that have reduced the editorial authority of traditional gatekeepers as illustrated by figure 2.

Figure 2: ‘Gatewatcher news process’



Source: (Bruns, 2008, p. 13)

Gatewatching

Bruns’ notion of the democratizing nature of the Internet’s interaction with journalism remains consistent with other gatekeeping theorists (C Atton & Hamilton, 2008; S Paulussen, A Heinonen, D Domingo, & T Quandt, 2007; Shoemaker & Vos, 2009). These theorists argue that an increasingly media savvy audience provides journalists with chaotic news flows that challenge the traditional model of one way communication, from a sender to a more or less silent receiver, which is increasingly

being replaced by multidirectional transmission flows (McNair, 2006). The combination of an increased plurality of sources, news items and the ability for citizens to engage in participatory journalism mean that the gates have multiplied to such an extent that the perceived authority of gatekeepers as controllers of information flows has been significantly reduced.

In an environment where ‘the gates have multiplied beyond all control,’ (Bruns, 2011, p. 73) gatewatchers act as publicists of information, pushing information with high degrees of interest in the mass mediated public sphere of the internet until it either loses traction or becomes ‘viral.’ At which point, the critical mass of gatewatchers pushes mainstream media to run with the story. In these instances, gatewatchers set the news agenda, replacing what Paul Levinson calls, ‘the rusted gatekeeper’ (Levinson, 1999, p.iv). Indeed, Bruns’ coining of the term ‘gatewatching’ is suited to the multidirectional transmission flows (McNair, 2006) of the push-pull medium of the internet (Volkmer, 2003, p. 12).

The inherent interactivity of Web 2.0 has fostered another of Bruns’ concepts, ‘produsage’ where users engage in an equipotential environment that positions them as both users and producers or producers, environments such as Wikipedia, YouTube and Twitter are prime examples of such environments. Key to these definitions is belief in the user-led content creation spaces of the Internet as fundamentally informational rather than industrial sites of production. The proliferation of content throughout these environments has brought gatewatching and produsage together, as traditional media organisations grapple with more content and efforts to include it.

Broadcast news in particular is coming to terms with the implications of an interactive audience, a new base of content producers and multi-directional transmission flows. As Paulussen argues, ‘the professional culture of mainstream journalism, which still favours a professional top-down approach, conflicts with the external context that heralds some optimistic promises of an emerging participatory media culture’ (Paulussen et al, 2007, p.146). The dilemma for broadcast organizations, as with print media, is the ‘economic logic of building participatory platforms to attract greater communities of users versus, the professional logic of retaining authority over information flow’ (Lewis et al., 2010, p. 161).

Whilst many stories in the public interest are still ‘broken’ by major media organisations (Bruns, 2012b), what the act of gatewatching does is allow those stories to rise to greater prominence as active audiences fuel interest through sharing links, re-tweeting, commenting and updating information as stories develop. The combination of this effective publicity mechanism with the ability of citizens to break news and create content themselves through produsage has the potential create a ‘multiperspectival’ environment through media democratisation. Recently we have come to see a more productive collaboration between gatewatchers and self-perceived ‘gatekeepers’ in social media spaces such as Twitter and YouTube, ‘journalists embrace of social media to disseminate discuss and expand their coverage of specific stories turns those stories from finished products into unfinished evolving artifacts, common to produsage processes’ (Bruns, 2012a, p. 26). Bruns echoes Shirky’s belief in the ability of that audience to make significant contributions to the public interest (Shirky, 2003). As Volkmer argues, user generated content environments and the act of gatewatching allow users to inject or push stories into the news narrative rather

than waiting to be told what the daily news is (Volkmer, 2003). Should the push be strong enough, particularly via social media, networks have little choice but to incorporate it into the bulletin. This form of crowd-sourced news making undermines all three levels of the gatekeeping theory espoused by White, by making popular demand a central news criteria, elucidating a democratization of news previously unseen.

Chapter Three examines how the practices of gatewatching and produsage have been engaged with in the YouTube comment feed, and analyses how these practices have enabled YouTube users to propel the case study into mainstream news broadcast. In doing so it looks at how YouTube users as ‘producers’ position themselves in relation to the more traditional gatekeeping functions of traditional media producers. Chapter three seeks to contribute directly to an understanding of these theories in the context of amateur footage.

Eyewitnessing

Whilst the adaptation of gatekeeping practices courtesy of an interactive public sphere, technological advances and the breaking down of news production barriers have undoubtedly contributed to a proliferation of amateur footage across news broadcast networks, another factor in the appeal and distribution of such footage has been the historical importance of eyewitness accounts of events. Eyewitnessing not only connotes authenticity but presence, immediacy, live-ness and authority, the very tenets upon which the success of broadcast journalism rest (Burke, 2001; Ellis, 2001). In this case study the eyewitnessing frame was invoked across news networks

as a means of guaranteeing authenticity and authority. A similar pattern was observed in the replication of still images through newspaper coverage during the Rodney King case study (Solomon, 2004).

Since journalism's inception as a professional practice journalists have relied on the practice of eyewitnessing to maintain their authority for reporting, allowing them to provide an account of events beyond the experience of ordinary citizens. As Zelizer argues, 'eyewitnessing helps journalists maintain boundaries around which kinds of practice are appropriate and preferred' (Zelizer, 2007, p. 410). Those boundaries are inherently maintained by perceptions of authenticity, as Carey maintains, 'eyewitness accounts have the feel of truth, because they are quick, subjective and incomplete'(Carey, 1987, p. 48). In this sense, eyewitnessing has never purported to be objective; rather it is its personal, subjective nature that grants it its salience. Contemporary broadcast journalism has harnessed the on-site 'liveness' of the eyewitness, in many cases the reporter themselves, and quite successfully attempted to incorporate both objective reporting with on-site live subjectivity, substituting elements of factual recounting for elements of opinion (Zelizer, 2009). When the reporter acts not only as a reporter, but also as a first hand eyewitness, Carey argues that a sense of 'heightened realism' is achieved (Carey, 1987, p.17). As Zelizer maintains, 'this means that eyewitnessing facilitates broad claims to eyewitness authority while only partly drawing from what has been central to the establishment over time (Zelizer, 2009, p.412).

Whilst the act of eyewitnessing has long been maintained as a means of establishing authority, pictorial reproductions by eyewitnesses from painters, photographers and

videographers have been historically esteemed for their perceived authenticity. A painter's authority rested in the expectation of lucidity, 'readers would trust that the image actually represented the event because the artist had been physically present even if only after the fact' (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2001, p. 117). In discussing the early wartime photography of Matthew Brady, Goldberg maintains that the 'power of the photographic witness made vivid and inescapable many harsh sights of war which civilians had previously been spared' (Goldberg, 1991, p. 20). Indeed by World War II when film technology had developed enough for civilians to be shown footage from the battlefield, the grainy, shaky, eyewitness footage came to be seen as the authentic account of the war. 'Faulty and blurred...the recording was the real thing: it included scraps of barely audible conversation, which compared to the glib tones of the narrator were like actuality shots of service men's faces compared to polished Hollywood performances of soldiers' (Short, 1985, p. 22). In its contemporary form, Carew argues that 'just as washed out and sun kissed Super 8 footage now synonymous with lived memory – to the point where memories themselves almost seem to hew the look, rather than the look trying to evoke memories, digital video is now indivisible from reality' (Carew, 2012, p. 52).

The amateurish quality of the WWII recording and indexical qualities of digital videos grant the recordings their salience, an eyewitness account perceived to be untainted by professional production values, unfiltered by news organizations and presented direct to the public in its deceptively most transparent form. The same techniques have been harnessed by contemporary news organizations in their adaptation of amateur footage into the news rundown. As Zelizer argues 'contemporary journalism has dealt with questions about eyewitnessing by out-

sourcing it' (Zelizer, 2009, p.413). One of the most successful methods of this outsourcing is the reliance upon participatory journalists and bystanders with camera capable mobile phones to be where 'contemporary news organizations cannot go, due to time, geography or cost' (Bowman & Willis, 2003, p. 9). What this has achieved is a market mechanism for cheap, realistic, authentic content whose perceived 'liveness' allows for the journalist as narrator to fill in the blanks with minimum journalistic output. As Outing predicts, 'the new eyewitness role will be played by citizen journalists, who will scoop conventional news gatherers just by happening to be on the scene' (Outing, 2005, p. 79). The act of eyewitnessing has moved through a number of different stages, from its most subjective in elaborate over romanticized paintings, to its most realistic in war-photography. Journalism has successfully harnessed the zeitgeist of the eyewitness in each of these stages, retaining an authority that says 'we have been there' or more contemporarily 'we are there.' Now in its most recent stage of adaptation, eyewitnessing has been 'outsourced to unmanned live cameras or non-conventional journalists' argues Zelizer (2009, p.425). As the combination of technology and citizen journalism through produsage has become the 'most strategically useful way to accomplish eyewitnessing, even when it has chipped away at journalism's own centrality' (Zelizer, 2009, p.425)

Indeed, as the analysis of the original uploaded footage in Chapter two will demonstrate, the first person perspective of the eyewitness through this Mardi Gras case study frames the story in a manner which allows for it to pass through the gates and its subsequent normalisation into the news bulletin.

Participatory Journalism & Amateur Video

Amateur video and participatory journalism have been lauded by media scholars for their democratization of the media sphere (Bowman & Willis, 2003; Jenkins, 2008; Steve Paulussen et al., 2007; Singer, 2005). Journalists such as Noguchi (2005) and Waldman (2005) have criticized the movement towards increasing participatory journalism and amateur content as the cult of the amateur, warning against potential inaccuracy, excessive graphicness and lack of verifiability. Despite this Yochai Benkler maintains, 'the capacity to make meaning – to encode and decode humanly meaningful statements and the capacity to communicate one's meaning around the world are held by, or readily available to at least many hundreds of millions of users around the globe' (Benkler, 2006, p. 31). Participatory journalism need not take the form of a large scale, collective participation movement such as the WTO protests in Seattle nor be located in one particular site such as Korean website OhMyNews. Indeed, participatory journalism has now been attached to far more localised events in which citizens are simply on the scene at the time of a newsworthy event and have at their disposal the technological means of recording the event, the recent Texas oil fire and the Mardi Gras police brutality video are both prime examples of this.

The most salient example of how produsage and participatory journalism have impacted upon the mainstream television news media is through amateur video. During the transfer from consumer film to video technologies Nicholas Garnham warned of the 'myth of video' (1990). Amidst claims of the democratizing possibilities of portable video technology through the access to the means of production, Garnham argued that video technology did little if not reinforce alienation

from the wider TV production sphere. Garnham believed that the nature of network television ‘as a distributive activity, whose forms and socioeconomic power rest on the control of the broadcast frequencies,’ (Garnham, 1990, p.64). The Internet however, has brought about not one type of press, but many thousands. The resulting declining importance of the broadcast frequencies for news has been inextricably tied to other online methods of gaining information through avenues such as YouTube which are inherently open to the rise of amateur content and ‘random acts of journalism’ (Lasica, 2003) through produsage. The result for TV networks, as McQuail argues has been ‘increasing pressures for economic efficiency, stemming from the need to minimise cost, reduce conflict and ensure continuity and efficiency of supply’ (McQuail, 2000, p. 295). Amateur footage with its low cost of production, developing technical capabilities and its ready-made format provides a package that meets all of McQuail’s criteria. As Hartley maintains, there has been a shift with ‘the broadcast model of communication to the interactive communication model characterised by the blurring of the boundaries between production and consumption’ (Hartley, 2004, p. 39). Further as Jenkins argues ‘shrewd companies will tap this culture to foster consumer loyalty and generate low-cost content’ (Jenkins, 2008, p. 39). As this thesis will demonstrate in the case of the Mardi Gras police brutality video, this is exactly what occurred.

Garnham maintained that video’s low definition, and the technical skills required to effectively edit video acted as prohibitive functions in the plausibility of widespread video use, and the integration of amateur video into the mainstream media market (Garnham, 1990, p.65). With the development of the technical capabilities of amateur video recording devices over the past decade society has seen camera’s grow smaller,

more technically able and ubiquitous in a generation that thrives off multimedia-enabled devices such as iPhone's and Androids. As Papadopoulos argues 'the public has now come to the forefront of efforts to negotiate, interrogate, memorialise and create the individual and collective experiences of social realities,' (Andén-Papadopoulos & Pantti, 2011, p. 11)

This development has produced technological pressures that set higher technical standards for lower prices, which as McQuail maintains, 'often means more speed, flexibility and capacity, but it establishes norms that put pressure on all media organisations to conform and eventually influences audience expectations about what is most professional and acceptable' (McQuail, 2000, p. 296). In the case of amateur footage, news broadcasts value this negotiated territory because it justifies their use of non-professional images and grants them an authenticity previously unavailable, one that is dim, grainy and shaky but more importantly, that documents an angle to an event as it is actually happening as an effective point of view eyewitness. What this perceived authenticity achieves is a 'connection with a regular person, a student or a homemaker who happens to be caught up in world events' (Andén-Papadopoulos & Pantti, 2011, p. 13). Thus, as amateur footage becomes an increasingly standardised mode of story telling for conventional news organisations because of its low cost of production and its salience, the mystificatory elements of professional video production are reduced. We are now in an era where the growth of amateur content is matching TV news networks desire for it.

The desire to include this type of content within the broadcast has meant that networks have had to develop 'normalising' tactics so as to retain a sense of authority

as gatekeepers. These arguments stem from Singer's (2005) conclusions regarding the 'normalisation' of blogs in mainstream online news sites such as the New York Times. Singer found that journalists are normalising blogs by 'retaining control over the information provided under their names and sticking to their gatekeeping functions even with a format that is explicitly about participatory communication' (Singer, 2005, p.192). Chapter three, the broadcast analysis will examine whether this same pattern is occurring in the 'normalisation' of amateur content in Australian broadcast news through the integration of narrative news techniques. These techniques are designed to bolster the impact of the original footage whilst simultaneously mitigating the authority of the amateur videographer.

The discussion in this chapter of the development of gatekeeping, eyewitnessing and amateur footage in participatory journalism establishes the theoretical framework that positions this thesis in relation to contemporary gatekeeping and amateur video studies. It is only through the development of gatekeeping into gatewatching and the continued importance of eyewitnessing as a valued journalistic tool that amateur footage has flourished in the contemporary media sphere. The adaptation of these theories has provided the ingredients for the increased normalisation of amateur content into news broadcasts. As this thesis will explore, the Mardi Gras Police Brutality case study provides a fusion of all of these factors. Through this analysis the thesis will examine what roles normalisation, eyewitnessing, gatewatching, gatekeeping and participatory journalism played in the rise to prominence of this case study. Ultimately, each of these theories contribute to an understanding of how and why this case study passed through the gates amateur video, into online notoriety and finally into sphere of national television news. This case study therefore provides a

unique insight that will contribute significantly to the understanding of contemporary gatekeeping processes and the development of amateur footage across media platforms in the context of non-extreme events.

Chapter Two: The Mardi Gras Police Brutality Video

This chapter of the thesis examines the changes in gatekeeping practices in the era of amateur footage and social networking sites. It does so through engaging with the Mardi Gras case study as the first gate of the gatekeeping process; as an eyewitness to the actual event. In doing so the analysis seeks to understand how news conventions have impacted amateur footage and how the role of the eyewitness has become integral to contemporary news creation. This chapter utilizes textual analysis in order to engage with the uploaded footage. This approach is necessary in order to understand the textual elements that allowed this footage to be propelled by gatewatchers through the gates of media producers.

The video itself shows 18 year old Jamie Jackson being arrested by police at the Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras on the 4th of March 2013. The video ignited controversy after it showed police using excessive force in arresting Jackson and was the subject of media scrutiny from the 6th of March 2013. The full details of the video will be discussed in the textual analysis.¹

¹ In order to facilitate a better understanding of this case study, I would recommend viewing the uploaded video, "Mardi Gras Police Brutality" (2013) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wxtFtVfAeeE> (Accessed: 18/10/2013).

YouTube as a Source

The Mardi Gras Police Brutality Video is situated within the space of the open media sphere of YouTube. As a social media space YouTube is noteworthy because of its size and scope. YouTube has over 1 billion unique visitors each month, with over 6 billion hours of content watched by users every month of the year and approximately 100 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube each minute ("You Tube Statistics," 2013). YouTube users 'interaction can range from video production to passive video viewing to video commenting or sharing' (Burgess & Katz, 2009).

Previous studies such as Thelwall and Sud (2011) have drawn from large YouTube data samples (65,007 YouTube Videos) in order to identify statistics on where the largest amount of comments emerge from and whether the majority of comments are positive or negative in nature. Other's such as Neymayer (2012) have attempted to qualitatively and quantitatively analyze specific videos or cultural patterns on YouTube by means of narrowing their research to specific datasets. Neymayer's examination of YouTube comments in the context of one anti-fascist protest video in Germany provides a parallel to the case study approach that I have adopted. However, my approach is extended in including an analysis of not only the comments but also the video itself.

This chapter examines the 'Mardi Gras Police Brutality' video from the 4th of March 2013. At the time of writing in October 2013, the video had been viewed 1,905,071 times after a steady increase from its immediate 'viral' stage between the 4th and 6th of March 2013, where it was viewed over one million times in a twenty four hour period

("Mardi Gras Police Brutality ", 2013). In a case of online virility, multi-platform sharing across social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook propelled the rapidly increasing view count (Cha, Kwak, Rodriguez, Ahn, & Moon, 2007).

The chapter analyses the impact of news conventions on the videographers capturing of the event. Further, it marks the first gate in the gatekeeping process, whereby the videographer has assessed the newsworthiness of the event and recorded it accordingly.

Methodology

My assessment of the uploaded footage follows from the methodology espoused by Hartley (1995). His textual analysis of ITN's news broadcast on the 11th of December 1980 (Hartley, 1995, pp. 63-74) provides a useful template for engaging with any video content through textual analysis. The narrative structure of this approach is useful for my method as it provides a practical template from which to begin the analysis and discussion of the text. Appendix 1 demonstrates the full table of textual analysis from which I have drawn specific examples of how the original footage demonstrates knowledge of news selection criteria and news conventions despite its amateur form and apparent spontaneity. My textual analysis of the video is but one possible reading of many, it is neither objective nor based in data but rather draws on 'the underlying ideological and cultural assumptions of the text' (Furisch, 2009, p. 231). In engaging with the Mardi Gras Police Brutality video in its YouTube form this textual analysis 'seeks to evaluate media content in its own right as a creative moment

in the circuit of culture beyond the intentions of the actual producers' (Furisch, 2009, p. 244). In order to do so this analysis has involved a prolonged and repetitive engagement with the text and has utilized a narrative approach to qualitative textual analysis (Real, 1996). Further, I have drawn on some of Philo's criticisms of textual analysis as a method that does not integrate the context of production or audience reactions by engaging with 'mass communication as a totality' (Philo, 2007, p. 194). The next chapter of the thesis seeks to address this through an analysis of the engagement with the video and gatekeeping processes by the audience. Whilst this would ideally also include an engagement with news producers through an ethnographic study or an interview method, this was beyond the scope of this thesis.

The textual analysis of the original footage has allowed for an analysis of latent meaning, implicit patterns, assumptions and omissions (Furisch, 2009, p. 241) of the Mardi Gras Police Brutality video whilst also providing an access point into audience engagement to be discussed in the following chapter. In this way my analysis seeks to develop on Philo's (2007) argument that all the elements in the production of this case study 'are understood and studied as part of a total system – rather than in isolation as with studies that remain focused on texts' (Philo, 2007, p. 194). Through the development of the textual analysis in combination with qualitative content analysis across the pre-broadcast and broadcast stages this thesis seeks to provide the perspective outlined by Philo in a case study format.

Textual Analysis of the Uploaded Video

In the coverage of the event by major media organizations across Australia the original footage was frequently referenced as ‘raw,’ ‘eyewitness video’ or ‘amateur vision’ (ABC News, 2013; SBS News, 2013; Seven News, 2013; Nine News, 2013; Ten News, 2013; Levy, 2013; Klein & Young, 2013). The implications of such references were that it was beyond the bounds of media and news conventions. The recording was framed in such a way that the viewer interpreted it as a citizen simply recording an event unfolding before their eyes and the lens of their camera phone. What the analysis of the original recording demonstrates however is that the videographer knew not only of the significance of the event but of its inherent potential to be of interest to newsmakers around Australia. The editorial judgment of the newsworthiness of the event was placed initially at the hands of the videographer, positioning the first gate not at the inbox of news producers but within the actions of the videographer. Throughout this recording he fulfills not only a number of news selection criteria but also actively partakes in the news making process by documenting witnesses accounts and asserting the identities of the victim, Jamie Jackson and the offending officer. He is also fully aware of his rights to record within the public domain, as warnings from police officers to stop filming go repeatedly unheeded. The videographer is therefore not only an active participant in the process of news creation and the applicability of news values but also of the potential for participatory journalism to enact meaningful consequences when distributed across both the online and offline spaces (Andén-Papadopoulos & Pantti, 2011, p. 9). As one witness comments, ‘it’s all on video,’ and as a result, the space is open to trial by social media and later by major news networks.

In order for this trial to occur, the videographer ensures that key news values are adhered to. The uploaded recording opens with Jackson pleading, ‘someone tell me what his name is.... I did nothing wrong....’ The videographer maintains Jackson as the salient image within the frame, surrounded by police, he is weakened and visually under threat. As the pleading continues the camera moves rapidly into a close up on the accused officers badge number, a piece of evidence collected in the hope of further disciplinary action. Understanding the motive of the videographer, the officer asks him to stop filming. Asserting his legal rights to continue filming and aware of the importance of doing so, the videographer continues his recording. A cordon of intimidating fluorescent vested police officers surround Jackson and the videographer, in a mess of colour, shaky camera work and a bedlam of diegetic voices, the perceived ‘rawness’ of the footage is heightened. In this moment a witness agonises over the possibility of the officer getting away with his actions, ‘he won’t be punished because you’ll have an internal inquest,’ highlighting a mistrust of authority, and of the channels to public recognition.

As the fluorescent vests dissipate the defining moment of the recording appears, a slow track in to the cardboard bloodied from the previous altercation dramatically transforms into a full slam of Jackson’s body against concrete. The slow track in and the high angle of the camera combine to obscure the actions of Jackson that lead to the body slam, without a cut the footage appears unedited and Jackson is framed as the hapless victim of a man twice his size. By tracking so low to the ground the videographer took away the motive of the police officer, making for a far more dramatic chain of events than would otherwise have been visualized. As the camera

pans immediately back out to a wide shot the full effect of the body hitting the concrete can be felt, a shot that as will be seen in the broadcast chapter, is used to repetitive dramatic effect by all the television news networks.

Despite the apparent drama of the event, the videographer remains remarkably still; the previously shaky camerawork is replaced by a determination to capture every aspect in vivid clarity. He pans down from a wide of the police officer and into a close up of Jackson, his face under the foot of the officer. As Jackson begins to weep, a second officer approaches the videographer. Pre-empting the officer's stop-filming request the videographer exclaims, 'I know it's not against the law.' The officer, likely aware of the potential implications of the video just captured remains determined, 'stop filming mate!' to which the videographer replies, 'why? ... I'm media, I'm allowed to.'

Despite this proclamation and the fact that all Mardi Gras media go through a registration process, most Australian media organisations unanimously referenced the footage as 'amateur'; its rough, shaky, grainy quality ensuring that it could never be cast as a professional work, aiding its perception as authentic and spontaneous, a frame that media networks invoked in order to garner the greatest emotional response from its audience (Andén-Papadopoulos & Pantti, 2011, p. 84). The videographer's background in media as the press photographer for the parade ("Mardi Gras Police Brutality ", 2013) ensured that he had at his disposal the knowledge to make the most

compelling vision possible, an element that continues throughout his recording.² This element of the video will be discussed further later in this section.

As the recording continues the camera pans to find Jackson once again surrounded by officers, as it tracks in his friend is found crouched beside him and a witness off camera tell the videographer, 'I hope you got everything' to which he replies, 'yeah I did.' Here the evidential nature of video as the eyewitness is once again invoked, with the knowledge that it could now be brought to public attention. As the videographer tracks back from the scene witnesses in the recording come into the fore, recounting the events to the videographer. 'He just slammed his head and there's blood all over the ground,' as another asks 'do you know that guy?' 'No I don't know him at all. I just saw the police officers attack him so that's why I started filming.' The videographer's response is one of civic duty, it echoes the hope that eye witnessing an event through a camera lens will encourage others to investigate later. His first reaction was not to assist Jackson physically but to begin recording the perceived misuse of power by authorities. In the age of the camera-phone the act of recording has become paramount to the act of assistance, an ethical debate that has continued since Sontag (1977) and which has been further discussed by Mortensen (2011) as the camera-phone has become 'the web 2.0. incarnation of the eyewitness' (Mortensen, 2011, p. 61).

This importance is not only acknowledged by the videographer but also those who ask, 'did you get it all.' This is only compounded by Jackson's friend approaching the

² Mardi Gras press photographers are largely recruited on a volunteer basis to cover the parade itself Andén-Papadopoulos and Pantti (2011) The actual professional qualifications of the videographer are unknown.

videographer, 'I just want to know what your Facebook name is so I can get you like...' Immediately, another camera phone wielding citizen approaches the friend, 'I've got a video of it as well, what's his name?' Jamie Jackson, 'I'll find him.' This sequence is particularly interesting because of the implications of the friends approach to the videographer. Video is not mentioned once in the initial exchange, without even asking directly for the evidence the words 'Facebook name' spells it out clearly to the approaching second videographer. The ability for this video to be placed online almost immediately and for the realization of its spread across online communities is pertinent. Thus, not only is the access of Jackson to the evidence ensured, but also to the critical mass of gatewatchers awaiting its arrival on YouTube and its spread across social media sites such as Facebook. Sites such as YouTube and Twitter in effect 'turbo-charge the practices of gatewatching;' argues Bruns, 'as soon as new and newsworthy information is discovered to be passing through the gates, it can be shared with the wider user base...in a thoroughly collaborative exercise' (Bruns, 2012a, p. 19). The connectivity and influence of social media is herein acknowledged, as it not only provides a mechanism for the spread of the evidence before it has even left the camera's memory card, but also provides a direct line to Jackson's personal online account.

The illusion of un-cut raw footage experienced through the single-take by the videographer is finally broken in the last few moments of the footage. At some point prior to upload the footage, he has sliced between the image of Jackson on the ground and the final interviews with witnesses. What this cut effectively dispels is the myth that this video is raw and untampered with, a pure 'eyewitness account' an illusion that gave the video its salience. Indeed, it emerged later that a second video was taken

showing Jackson punching, resisting and provoking the police to the point that it eventually led to his arrest (Levy, 2013). The footage was cut with the full knowledge that an innocent Jackson made for much better news value than Jackson provocateur. The omission of this first section of footage by the videographer is crucial to the video's success not only in the online domain, but also across major media organisations. Throughout this uploaded footage the videographer demonstrates his knowledge of news conventions, narrative structure and news values. Ultimately, an innocent victim of police brutality has historically and will continue to hold high news value and as a result, a significant chance of passing through the gates (Harcup & O'Neil, 2001). Because of the events before him, the videographer was aware of its potential news value and thus made every effort possible to ensure its take-up by the mass media through providing the complete eyewitness package. This is exemplified by his actions following the cut.

After the cut the videographer becomes aware of his role as audience facilitator by offering the first questions to witnesses, 'can you tell me what you saw?' Here once again the narrative role of the video is re-orientated, attempting to explain to the audience in no un-simple terms the progression of events. Unsatisfied with the first witnesses' response he pans along the barrier, 'no...no...but can you tell me what happened?' Finally, the right dramatic answer is given. 'This one here (points at the police officer) grabbed him by the throat and smashed his skull on the pavement.' With that last account, the perfect vox-pop was granted to media networks, a retelling of the story already seen but with the addition of yet another eyewitness to the framing of the story.

It is hard to determine whether this can be categorized as amateur footage despite the insistence of networks to the contrary. The conscious development of news techniques throughout the piece, close ups on dramatic action, framing of the victim and of authority, witness testimonies, vox-pops, subtle editing and the videographers own media background all make a compelling case for this to be classed as something else entirely, the work of a media professional with the full knowledge of news production techniques in the right place at the right time. Yet media networks categorised this as raw, amateur footage, why?

The framing of the footage as a citizen generated, power to the people story makes for compelling reading and watching. As Bignell notes, it's the perfect storm of news values (Bignell, 1997, p. 117). The innocent young teen, thrown violently by the overbearing police officer, surrounded by weeping mascara and a videographer doing his civic duty against an authoritarian police force out to spoil a young person's night out. The news value of this piece not only conforms to a number of Gans's selection criteria, 'rank in government, role reversals, impact on the nation and prefabrication' (Gans, 1979, p. 158) but also to Hall's perception of its most important news value, violence.

'The most salient, operational news value...at the level of deep structure, political violence is unusual though it regularly happens – because it signifies the world of politics as it ought not to be... this breaches expectations precisely because in our society conflict is supposed to be regulated...a society that is, where the legitimacy of the social order rests on the absolute inviolability of the rule of law' (Hall, 1973a, p. 184).

To add undeniable depth, it was all captured ‘raw’, that is un-corrupted by the slow pans of commercial camerawork or the clean cuts of an editor. To an uncritical audience, its gritty, unstable quality has no agenda other than document the event ‘as it happened.’ Most crucially, because of all these technical elements and despite its inherent news values it sits outside the perceived authority of networks that by labeling it as ‘amateur’ only reinforced its otherness. This dichotomy is not only present within the original video but is also inherently prevalent throughout its YouTube comment history. As Andén-Papadopoulos and Pantti (2011) argue, ‘journalists as well as audiences value amateur visuals for their perceived immediacy, authenticity and proximity...they constitute first hand recordings by individuals who witnessed an event as it was actually happening’ (Andén-Papadopoulos & Pantti, 2011, p. 12). This sits in direct contrast to the detached, impersonal approach of professional journalists who are expected to have an objective, formulaic point of view (Williams et al., 2011, p. 86).

Further, the clip’s status as a first-person eyewitness account reinforces its value in both the online and mainstream domains. As Zelizer contends ‘eyewitnessing has moved from a reduction of subjective markers to a seeming absence of such markers and from a broadening of those who could fill the role of eyewitness to an absence of journalists altogether’ (Zelizer, 2007, p. 421). Eyewitnessing’s viability as a key word today rests on a curious combination of technology and nonconventional journalistic presence. In the YouTube comment feed this development and the mainstream media’s facilitating role in perpetuating the value of ‘eyewitness’ amateur footage is further debated and interrogated by YouTube users themselves. What this uploaded footage ultimately reveals is that the videographer not only had an awareness of news conventions but ensured that they were adhered to in order to give the footage the best

chance of success in passing through the multiple gates of the online and broadcast platforms.

Chapter 3: The YouTube Comment Feed

The YouTube comment feed that flows from beneath the video gives an insight into the reactions of YouTube users to the original footage and gatekeeping processes, offering a site for audience interaction of enormous size and scope. To date over 23,000 comments have been made in the feed below the video. This chapter of the thesis analyses how YouTube users in this ‘produsage and gatewatching’ (Bruns, 2005) environment position themselves in relation to gatekeepers and what tactics were utilised by YouTube members in order to pass through the gates of media producers. Ultimately, this analysis gives a unique view of how YouTube users interact with gatekeeping practices.

The analysis of the YouTube commentary was limited to the period between its upload on the 4th of March 2013 and its broadcast on the 6th of March 2013. This period is marked by three different stages; its television pre-broadcast stage between its upload the 4th of March and 5 p.m. on the 6th of March, its broadcast stage between 5 p.m. and 7:30 pm on the 6th of March and its immediate post broadcast stage between 7:30 pm and 11:59 p.m. on the 6th of March, 2013. This is the most relevant period to my thesis as it gives a profound insight into interaction between YouTube users and traditional media forms and therefore the greatest evidence for the interaction and understanding of gatekeeping processes by YouTube users.

This time frame was chosen as the period of analysis for a number of reasons. Firstly, this was the viral period in the video's online existence; over one million views in twenty-four hours propelled this video from YouTube obscurity into the social media consciousness of a large portion of the Australian population ("Mardi Gras Police Brutality ", 2013). It follows then that this is the most significant period of YouTube user commentary, as its perceived importance ensured a greater engagement with the video by YouTube users. Ultimately, multi-platform social media engagement with the video gained the attention of traditional media organisations across the print, radio and television spectrums, with every major Australian media outlet broadcasting or printing the news of Mardi Gras police brutality on the 6th of March 2013 (ABC News, 2013; SBS News, 2013; Seven News, 2013; Nine News, 2013; Ten News, 2013; Levy, 2013; Klein & Young, 2013). As this chapter will show, the commentary beneath the video moved with the stages of broadcast, as YouTube users engaged with traditional media forms in propelling the video across social media platforms and praising or critiquing news networks presentation of the issue. The qualitative data analysis will explore how YouTube members positioned themselves as gatewatchers in relation to the gatekeepers of traditional media organisations. As this chapter will demonstrate, this case study gives a unique and previously inaccessible citizen's perspective on gatekeeping processes and gatewatching practice.

Methodology

Within the comment space YouTube members are invited to comment upon and assess the content before them. It encourages a dialogue between members in much the same way as other social networking sites function (D Boyd & Ellison, 2007); it

provides an outlet for the airing of personal opinions online. Crucially unlike other prominent social networking sites, YouTube is occasionally a site of anonymity. YouTube members identify themselves by their username, whether they link that user name to their real life identity is a matter of personal decision (Kim, 2012, p. 54).

As a researcher, this presents a number of methodological issues. Anonymous comments are difficult to track to an identity, thus questions over the authenticity and applicability of the comments arise (Neymayer, 2012). Despite these methodological challenges, the YouTube comment feed provides a fertile ground for analysis. The opinions voiced in this sphere are, regardless of their anonymity, present in the public domain and valuable insights into the thoughts and processes of YouTube members can be gained from their analysis.

There are currently over 23,000 total comments from YouTube users throughout the comment feed attached to this You Tube video, approximately 6,000 comments were made in the period between its initial upload and the 6th of March, 2013 ("Mardi Gras Police Brutality ", 2013). The methodology outlined below aims to present the most relevant qualitative data analysis of the comments in relation to this particular case study. The mixed methods of qualitative content analysis have allowed traditionally humanities orientated scholars to 'achieve a level of rigor beyond the apparently impressionistic' (Catanzaro, 1988, p. 12) whilst simultaneously maintaining the qualitative values of interpretation, discourse and framing analysis valued across the cultural studies departments. The development of research methods that can adequately quantify the vast data input of an active audience and qualitatively analyse the output of producers in an online space is still very much a work in progress as the calls for further methodological development from Bruns (2008); Bruns and Burgess

(2011); Cotter (2001); Hine (2005) outline. This thesis will attempt to provide a methodological development in a small-scale online environment that may go so some way to answering these calls.

This thesis aims to develop qualitative content analysis techniques that can be applied to this particular case study that contains audience engagement with textual and visual elements. The development of content analysis in combination with textual analysis provides a valuable framework for analyzing the output of producers and an active audience in an online framework. A combination of such techniques may contribute significantly to the understanding of the structure of the networked environment that supersedes the conventional model of a mass mediated public sphere (Bruns, 2008).

As the online media sphere has proliferated, qualitative content analysis of an audience's engagement with texts is necessary in order to gain valuable insights across websites and social media. Whilst some have called on 'virtual ethnography' as a useful mechanism in studying online communities, (Bruns, 2008) and (Hine, 2005) others have explored big data through quantitative analysis (Danna Boyd & Crawford, 2011; Highfield, Harrington, & Bruns, 2013; Lindlof & Taylor, 2010)

By understanding the basis for content analysis techniques and utilising developments in big data technology one can develop research methods in small-scale online media environments that engage with both the quantitative and qualitative elements of web 2.0. As Bruns states, this may provide a 'synchronic as well as diachronic, momentary as well as longitudinal insight into the patterns of interaction, the flows of information and the processes of opinion formation in online environments' (Bruns,

2008, p.10).

According to Shannon and Hsieh 'qualitative content analysis is defined as a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns' (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1278). This process allows for data outcomes and patterns to emerge out of the qualitative text. Once such data is obtained, qualitative content analysis goes beyond merely counting words to examining language intensely for the purpose of classifying large amounts of text into an efficient number of categories that represent similar meanings (Weber, 1990). In order to do so, coding methods are required that aim for objective, empirical data outcomes. In place of manual coding, new media scholars have been aided by the development of computer aided coding software for data big and small, such as Nvivo, Leximancer, Gawk and Gephi. Content analysis of online media sights however can be so flooded with data that drawing meaningful analysis, or more dangerously, avoiding drawing out large generalizations can prove challenging. Computer aided qualitative content analysis can best be applied to small scale data sets, such as a this case study where the opportunity for analysis and drawing out rich examples to apply qualitative analysis and textual analysis to is ripe.

In order to do so units must be standardized and countable regardless of the questions one is trying to answer. For this reason keywords are defined prior to analysis, to 'allow for the interpretation of the context associated with the use of the word or phrase and discovered the range of meanings that a word can have in normal use' (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1285). In the absence of the media studies specific terms 'gatekeeping' or 'gatewatching' throughout this case study, alternative terms had to

be coded for. As a result, keywords within the comment feed referring to broadcast news outlets such as ‘ABC News, Nine News etc.’ were coded for in order position YouTube users in relation to conventional broadcast gatekeepers.³ These references in the comment feed obtained through NviVo computer assisted coding were then gauged through qualitative manual coding as positive, neutral or negative. This template then provided for rich examples, based on positive and negative outcomes, allowing for a summative content analysis to discover underlying meanings of the words or the content in those rich examples (Catanzaro, 1988).

A key criticism of qualitative content analysis is its limitation in that it is only as sophisticated as the categories that the researcher defines, and the inherent subjectivity of selecting those coding categories. McQuail (2000) argues, ‘the usual practice of constructing a category system before applying it involves the risk of an investigator imposing a meaning system rather than discovering it in the content’ (McQuail, 2000, p.314). The inevitable result of such a system cannot be argued to be objective analysis. Ideally, two or more coders would be engaged in the coding process so as to obtain the most rigorous data set. This was however beyond the scope of this thesis.

Whilst content analysis will grant the online researcher sufficient data to produce a rigorous academic assessment, a qualitative analysis will only aid to better understand the contextual and humanistic factors involved in engaging with online media. Such a mixed method approach to qualitative content analysis could involve any number of qualitative methods, however, for the purposes of analyzing text and visual content, textual analysis provides a useful framework for interpretation.

³ The full coding matrix can be found in Appendix 2

This section of the thesis will explore how YouTube members refer to more traditional forms of media such as television news and in contrast how they refer to non-traditional online media channels. Whilst neither 'gatekeeping' nor 'gatewatching' was ever directly referenced, the engagement by YouTube users with online and traditional media forms provides evidence for the understanding of both these practices by YouTube members. How they are engaged with and the implications of this engagement for gatewatching and gatekeeping practices will be discussed through the rich textual analysis in this chapter.

As the data set was limited to comments made between the upload of the video on the 4th of March 2013 and 11:59 pm on the 6th of March 2013 a manageable data set created using Nvivo 10 was created that directly related to this case study. Whilst initial keywords were pre-defined such as a direct reference to an Australian broadcast news organization (e.g. Ten News) other comments were coded for inductively, as words relating to media, media organisations and specific programs arose during the reading of the comments they would be noted down as significant (Shannon & Hsieh, 2008). The full coding matrix can be seen in Appendices (2-4). Through the broadcast references sentiment coding was also applied, which allowed them to be gauged as positive, neutral or negative. Once sentiment was established the terms were further coded for to establish whether they were viewed as authoritative or unreliable sources, this enabled a subjective judgment to be made on whether YouTube users trusted or mistrusted gatekeepers. In the online sphere, terms such as Facebook, Twitter and viral were coded for and sentiment was also assessed in relation to these terms. These terms were further coded for to establish whether they were viewed as a means of accessing media authority and therefore gatekeepers. In

doing so, references to these online sharing tactics provide evidence for gatewatching practices in the YouTube space.

It should be noted that comments not relating to media in any form were omitted, as this would generate an irrelevant and unmanageable data set. As a large portion of the commentary was unrelated to media in any form, but was taken up by arguments between gay-rights advocates and homophobic slander, a manageable data set of comments directly relating to media was produced. An example of such an omitted comment is: ‘that’s what you get for being a fag’ or ‘fuck the cops’ (‘ismisekevin,’ “Mardi Gras Police Brutality” comment, 04/06/2013; ‘the mertrognome,’ “Mardi Gras Police Brutality” comment, 04/03/2013). These types of comments contribute little to the argument and as a result were omitted from the analysis. Further, when the words coded for were found to be only in usernames or links and not in the comments they were removed from the data, more often than not these could be categorised as spam. An example of such an omitted comment is, ‘watch my video www.jimbomedia.com’ (‘jimbojack,’ “Mardi Gras Police Brutality” comment, 04/03/2013).

Acknowledging the Gates

Table 1 illustrates the data results of broad references to news and media in the comment feed. Table 2 shows the results of the coding for more specific broadcast program references.

Table 1: Broad References to News or Media

Word Coded For	News	Media
Frequency	○ 92 References	○ 100 References
Sentiment	○ 69 Positive ○ 9 Neutral ○ 14 Negative	○ 25 Positive ○ 10 Neutral ○ 65 Negative
News/Media as authority	○ 69 references viewed news as an authority	○ 25 references viewed the media as an authority
News/Media as unreliable	○ 14 references viewed news as unreliable source	○ 65 references viewed the media as an unreliable source

Table 2: References to specific media or news outlets

Word Coded For	Specific Channel (ABC, SBS, Seven, Nine, Ten)	Specific Program (Today Tonight, A Current Affair, ACA, Dateline, 7:30 Report, The Project, Sunrise, The Today Show, ABC News, Nine News, SBS News, Ten News)	Other Media (smh, Sydney Morning Herald, Daily Telegraph, The Australian)
Frequency	○ 15 References in total ○ (ABC: 4, SBS: 3, Seven: 3, Nine, 3, Ten, 2)	○ 30 References in total ○ (Today Tonight: 6, The Project: 6, A Current Affair, 5, ABC News: 5, Nine News: 3, Sunrise: 3, Ten News: 2)	○ 3 References in total ○ (smh, The Sydney Morning Herald: 3)

Sentiment	○ 15 Positive references	○ 30 Positive references	○ 3 Positive references
Channel/Program Authoritative source	15 references viewed a specific outlet as an authoritative source	30 references viewed a specific program as an authoritative source	3 references viewed SMH as an authoritative source

Whilst Bruns maintains that the interactive nature of the web allows for a ‘range of systems and practices enabling participants to interact amongst themselves on an equal footing and without significant intervention from editors, moderators, network administrators or other controlling powers’ (Bruns, 2005, p. 121) the majority of YouTuber’s who referenced media organisations did acknowledge the existence of gatekeepers (indirectly) through reference to their controlling powers. Indeed as the story was picked up and passed through the gates it formed an active demonstration of Bruns’ argument on the relationship between gatewatching, producers and professional journalism. ‘Journalists embrace of social media to disseminate discuss and expand their coverage of specific stories turns those stories from finished products into unfinished evolving artefacts, common to produsage processes’ (Bruns, 2012a, p. 26).

What the qualitative data in Tables 1 and 2 reveals is that YouTube members acknowledge the presence of news organizations. During this period 192 references were made to the broader mass media, through the terms ‘media’ and ‘news.’ The term ‘media’ was referenced positively 25 times, neutrally 10 times and negatively 65 times. Of the 25% of comments that referenced the media in a positive light, all of

them saw the 'media' as an authority. Of the 65% of comments referring to media that were negative in nature, 100% of them saw the media as an 'unreliable authority.'

By contrast, the term 'news' was referenced positively 69 times, neutrally 9 times and negatively 14 times. Out of the positive comments, all 69 believed that the 'news' was an authoritative voice, while all 14 negative references to 'news' believed the 'news' was unreliable.

From this analysis we can assume that in this case study, 'news' at 63.5% positive sentiment was viewed far more favorably than 'media,' with 65% negative sentiment. The most pertinent reason for this is that 'news' was referenced most frequently in the period before the broadcast of the video across the mainstream media. Media however was referenced far more frequently in the post-broadcast period. Thus the raw footage was seen as being sent to 'news', while 'media' was seen as the manipulating force behind the reproduction of the raw footage across the mainstream media. This analysis will be examined further through the rich examples later in the chapter.

What this data reveals is that in this timeframe of this YouTube videos history there remains an overriding tension between YouTube members who believe that sending it to an authoritative news source will be beneficial for public discourse and those that believe that such media organizations will fail to give an objective account of the events portrayed. Despite this, YouTube members acknowledge that the gates of news organisations exist, and that they must be passed in order for the story to gain traction in public discourse, examples of this acknowledgement will be seen in the textual analysis of rich examples.

Passing the Gates

Table 3: References to Social Media

Word Coded For	Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Google)
Frequency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Facebook: 43 ○ Google: 22 ○ YouTube: 15 ○ Twitter: 3 ○ Social Media: 8
Sentiment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Facebook: 33 Positive references, 10 Negative references ○ Google: 22 Positive references ○ YouTube: 9 positive references, 6 Negative references ○ Social Media: 3 Positive, 5 Negative
Facebook/ YouTube as a means of accessing authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Facebook: 33 ○ YouTube: 8
Facebook/YouTube as a negative space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Facebook: 10 ○ YouTube: 6
Google as an authority in itself	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Google: 22

Table 4: References to Viral

Word Coded For	Viral
Frequency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Viral: 28 references
Sentiment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Positive: 20 ○ Negative: 8
Virility as a means of accessing authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 20 references
Virility as a negative phenomenon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 8 references

In attempting to pass the gates of news networks, You Tube members employ a variety of online sharing tactics, with many believing that virility is the key to passing through the gates. This phenomenon was coded for in order to assess how

gatewatching by YouTube members can be assessed as a mechanism that allows for the passing of the gates. The word 'viral' is employed by YouTube members in this data set 32 times; indeed virility was seen as a means of gaining media attention 20 times and as a negative online phenomenon 8 times. Of those references, 'Facebook' is the favourite associated method of dissemination through virility, with 33 mentions. Social media as a whole is referred to 8 times in direct connection with the importance of virility.

Out of this data set the following conclusions can be drawn. Virility is seen as a positive phenomenon in this time frame of this data set. In order to pass the gates of media producer's virility is a key method of media dissemination. Indeed, whilst not referenced explicitly, Bruns' (2005) notion of gatewatching holds its own in this section of the analysis. As gatewatchers, YouTube members believe they have the power to enter through the more traditional gates of media practitioners and that a critical mass of sharing, 'liking' and other social media dissemination methods will ensure that this video will be shown to a wider public and that therefore meaningful action will be taken. However, this connection is still dependent on the traditional media's willingness to acknowledge the news value of this particular video, YouTube members themselves have already acknowledged its inherent news value and believe that traditional media organizations should too. The following textual analysis of comments reveals a great number of these insights from YouTube members.

Textual Analysis

Whilst YouTube members might not explicitly refer to acts of ‘gatekeeping’ or the ‘gatekeepers’ their references to specific organisations and traditional media as a whole reveals that they are aware of gatekeeping processes despite not knowing the exact terminology. Once the coding revealed an awareness of such processes, specific ‘rich’ examples were chosen for further analysis (Shannon & Hsieh, 2008).

These rich examples are combined with the overall qualitative data analysis to reveal a number of significant factors.

Referencing News & Media in the YouTube Comment Feed

One of the most striking features of the analysis of YouTube commentary are the references to ‘news’ by YouTube members. This section will demonstrate through textual examples how YouTube members actively partake in the act of gatewatching whilst simultaneously acknowledging gatekeepers through their commentary.

In the period between the upload of the video and its broadcast on the 6th of March, 2013, the comment space is marked by the urging of YouTube members such as ‘brightonking69’ to ‘MAKE THIS PUBLIC NEWS PEOPLE, ACTIVISTS AND JOURNALISTS NEED TO HIGHLIGHT THIS TO THE MEDIA [sic],’ (‘brightonking,’ “Mardi Gras Police Brutality” comment, 04/03/2013) or ‘fatpat81’s’ remark to ‘send this into the major news networks, so wrong’ (‘fatpat81’, “Mardi

Gras Police Brutality” comment, 04/03/2013). The overriding belief within comments such as these is that action will be taken against the offending police officer if the ‘major news networks’ pick it up and run with the story. Indeed, username ‘brightonking69s’ comment places activists and journalists on the same playing field, positioning news outlets as an authoritative voice on civil rights issues. By first stipulating that this needs to be made into ‘public news,’ ‘brightonking69’ articulates a separation from the YouTube sphere and the public sphere. What this comment and others infers is that YouTube is its own community and that despite the approximately eight hundred thousand views at the time of his comment (a larger audience than most major media networks), this was still not ‘public news.’ By positioning the YouTube sphere as a separate sphere, users such as ‘brightonking69’ undersell the far reaching political potential of the YouTube space, and rely on the mass broadcast of the news media to ensure the right action is taken. Even when the force of YouTube is acknowledged it remains within the paradigm of reaching a wider audience through traditional media channels, as user ‘okiedokieoner’ comments, ‘with the power of YouTube these days. This shit will be on the news tomorrow’ (‘okiedokieoner,’ “Mardi Gras Police Brutality” comment, 05/03/2013). This is only further re-affirmed by users such as ‘Jackrey91’ who maintains that they hope to ‘see this on the news or the 7pm project or ACA for all Australia to see’ (‘Jackrey91’ “Mardi Gras Police Brutality” comment, 05/03/2013). The use of specific program references across this section of the comment feed is utilized by You Tuber’s as an authoritative voice. 100% of the comments referring to specific outlets, ‘7 News,’ ‘9 News,’ ‘Today Tonight’ are positive, often they are attributed as a source of information, as ‘Explo’ comments, ‘his grandfather told Nine News,’ (‘Explo’ “Mardi Gras Police Brutality” comment, 06/03/2013) or as ‘Cliquez’ tells us ‘ABC news are investigating.’

(‘Cliquez’ “Mardi Gras Police Brutality” comment, 06/03/2013). The majority of these comments come during or directly after the broadcast period, and stands in direct contrast to the negative association of the broader ‘media’ commentary that follows. When referenced directly by some You Tuber’s, specific news organisations are seen as authoritative, trustworthy gatekeepers, whose information is reliable to pass on to other You Tube users.

Across these comments, news organizations are invoked as an authoritative voice, capable of giving a true account of the events and bringing those responsible to justice. In doing so, they indirectly acknowledge the power of gatekeepers as authoritative decision makers, who given the finite air time available to them, will see the news value in the event and move it from the private sphere of YouTube and into the public sphere of mass media discourse.

Despite the aim of some YouTube users to push this beyond the YouTube sphere, 12% of users in this time viewed the term ‘news’ negatively. The comments varied from arguing that the ‘news has a gay agenda’ (‘Cullatang’ “Mardi Gras Police Brutality” comment, 05/03/2013) to the news being poor authority on matters of the public interest. As ‘amelia pegrum’ comments, ‘I know you can’t trust journalists but as the mainstream media hasn’t taken a total stranglehold yet it’s probably the truest (YouTube video) account we’ll get before too much spin is put on it’ (‘amelia pegrum’ “Mardi Gras Police Brutality” comment, 05/03/2013). Within this comment a fundamental mistrust of the news and therefore gatekeepers is revealed, her sentiment not only accuses the news of manipulation and spin, but also invokes YouTube as a space in which raw footage can be seen and judged objectively, placing

the gates of the media in the YouTube arena. Further, by opening with ‘I know,’ she implies a widely held mistrust amongst the YouTube community. ‘MumboAus’ puts it more simply, ‘the news talks shit a lot’ (‘MumboAus’ “Mardi Gras Police Brutality” comment, 06/03/2013). The mistrust of ‘news’ as an authoritative, objective source is only furthered when the coding is applied to the word ‘media.’ As table 1 demonstrates the majority of YouTube users reference the word news positively (65%) the majority of YouTube users reference the word media negatively (64%).

In this case study ‘media’ is the favored term of You Tuber’s when referring to the mass media in any form. It is often referenced as an all-powerful oligopolistic structure that is not only in cahoots with authority but is fundamentally mistrustful and manipulative. Further, all mass media organizations outside of the YouTube space are often referred to as one entity, forming a collective that stands in opposition to the ideals of You Tuber users who referenced media negatively in this case study.

While ‘news’ is the dominant reference to the mainstream media in the period before it was broadcast, ‘media’ becomes the operative term after its broadcast. Comments refer to the story as a media ‘beat up,’ (‘John Citizen’ “Mardi Gras Police Brutality” comment, 06/03/2013), highlighting the notion that the media has taken the story and exaggerated it beyond its value, as ‘Aimeekate559’ reiterates, ‘the media has just exploded this beyond belief.’ (‘Aimeekate559,’ “Mardi Gras Police Brutality” comment, 06/03/2013). Others, such as ‘Ugotta Bekiddingme’ suggest that the entire story has been ‘media fueled’ (‘Ugotta Bekiddingme’ “Mardi Gras Police Brutality” comment, 06/03/2013), while three comments suggest that You Tuber’s calling for

action against the offending police officer have been ‘media brainwashed,’ (thaMCMetalhead, N700NA, megafawa, “Mardi Gras Police Brutality” comment, 06/03/2013) and that ‘the problem is people read media reports’ (‘nobdeagle’, “Mardi Gras Police Brutality” comment, 06/03/2013). Likewise other YouTuber’s implore users to ‘not believe everything you see in the media’ (‘Krishna Ramji,’ “Mardi Gras Police Brutality” comment, 05/03/2013) or to ‘not be consumed by the media’ (‘MrLongbeach,’ “Mardi Gras Police Brutality” comment, 06/03/2013). Within these comments, a fundamental opposition to the mainstream media is revealed, one that like the positive references to news, positions the ‘media’ as outside the YouTube sphere, as the collective other to a YouTuber’s community. The suggestion then follows that gatekeeper’s in their function as selecting and then reporting the news have failed, according to these negative responses, to adequately report the event. Rather, they are aligned as a (singular) conspirator in an overarching power structure. ‘Peter Jackson’ sums up the mood of this group of anti-mainstream YouTuber’s, ‘the media can edit the film only showing you what they want you to see. Enough said’ (‘PeterJackson’ “Mardi Gras Police Brutality” comment, 05/03/2013).

Within this ‘news’ and ‘media’ dialogue in the YouTube comment sphere a divide exists between users who believe that mainstream media will enable greater public awareness of the event and those who believe it will manipulate to suit its own ends or the power structures of the day. Whilst both of these views are commonly held outside the YouTube environment what makes them unique is their placement in real time reacting to a news event as it moves from pre-broadcast to post-broadcast. The data suggests that whilst sending the event to ‘news’ and trying to pass through the

gates is viewed by more You Tuber's as a positive act, the eventual transformation of the event and the output of the 'media' and gatekeepers is a negative one.

Across both sections of comments YouTube is invariably positioned as separate to the mainstream media. The media and news (even if they are a negative force) retain positions of power, as either 'brainwashing' entities or proponents of civil justice. In these cases, YouTuber's acknowledge gatekeeping functions in selecting the news that will be broadcast to the wider public. Thus despite the extremely high view count on this YouTube video, the mainstream media is still positioned as a more powerful force than the YouTube collective, a barrier that You Tuber's aim to break through to via a number of online media tactics.

Gatewatching the Gates

In attempting to pass information through the gates into the mainstream media, YouTuber's in this case study who wish for the video to be brought to public attention utilize online sharing tactics. A word that is synonymous with online video sharing is 'viral' and You Tuber's utilize it in order to spread their message. Prior to the spread of social media consumers relied on media organisations who acted 'as the arbiters of taste' in distributing footage they believed would be popular (Broxton, Interian, Vaver, & Wattenhoffer, 2013, p. 242). Now this situation has dramatically altered and consumers are faced with a situation where 'the sheer volume of videos makes it difficult for users to decide what to watch...as a result, people rely on their social networks to provide their viewing choices...videos that become popular through such sharing are known as viral videos' (Broxton et al., 2013, p. 242). Indeed, virility is

seen as a key method in gaining the attention of newsmakers and passing through the gates of media producers. As ‘Prapotolium’ comments, ‘wonder how long this will take to go viral and make the news – share – repost – retweet – send – can’t wait to see some true justice served for this’ (‘Prapotolium,’ “Mardi Gras Police Brutality” comment, 04/03/2013). Prapotolium’s sentiment is shared by other You Tuber’s in pushing the item into the news agenda. In this section, the participant actively engage with gatewatching techniques as ‘Marcus Littlewood’ comments, ‘everyone needs to make this go viral’ (‘Marcus Littlewood,’ “Mardi Gras Police Brutality” comment, 04/03/2013) and ‘2 Cooper’ implores, ‘share this video and make it go viral.’ (‘2 Cooper,’ “Mardi Gras Police Brutality” comment, 05/03/2013). These are just two examples that position You Tuber’s as a collective able to force an item into the news agenda through a critical mass of sharing across online social platforms. Indeed, other comments reveal that virility is seen as an authority in itself, ‘this will go viral around the world’ (‘AJ Smith,’ “Mardi Gras Police Brutality” comment, 05/03/2013). Within this paradigm, the media network is removed from the equation and the virility of the video should be enough for authorities to take notice without necessarily gaining mainstream media coverage. As ‘Vicki Viciouse’ says, ‘clicked like so that it’s more likely to get viewed and passed around, make it viral folks (‘Vicki Viciouse,’ “Mardi Gras Police Brutality” comment, 05/03/2013). An alternative but similar operative term to viral in this case study is ‘sharing’, both are used in tandem as a means of spreading the message, their most common social media partner in this case study, is ‘Facebook.’ In the early hours of the video, ‘Shared on my Facebook’ (clintonnelson42, “Mardi Gras Police Brutality” comment, 04/03/2013) is the oft-repeated comment from You Tuber’s, with some going further, ‘I am going to mirror this video...everyone should be downloading this video and re-upping on your

channel, and sharing the shit out of it all over Facebook' ('Steve Rogers,' "Mardi Gras Police Brutality" comment, 05/03/2013). When the terms viral or sharing is invoked, the authority of the video remains largely within the YouTube frame as an online phenomenon, the act of sharing the video may attract mainstream media attention but that does not take away from its value as an online viral video, that is; as a proponent of civil awareness in its own right.

Despite this, 'virility' is not always seen as a positive outcome by some YouTube users with 31% of YouTube commenters invoking negative sentiment in their use of the term. As 'Marianthi' comments 'you're fighting strongly for a point but I hate it when people conclude something just because of a viral video' ('Marianthi,' "Mardi Gras Police Brutality" comment, 06/03/2013) or as 'Elroy Maloney' suggests, 'what you should do is take this up with the authorities instead of making it go viral for more idiots to spout their hate' ('Elroy Maloney,' "Mardi Gras Police Brutality" comment, 05/03/2013). Here the authority and power of virility is still acknowledged, but sits within much the same frame as the 'media' or 'news' is invoked when referred negatively. Virility, in its negative utterances has a corrupting influence, and according to some You Tuber's, has the capability to make audiences make quick judgments on the basis of its authority as a viral video; a media channel in its own right. In this way, the same negative frame as the references to the mass 'media' and the 'news' is implied, offering a sample of a parallel paradigm shift across two different media platforms, old and new.

As a result, the critical mass of 'gatewatcher's' propelling the video across the online sphere are occasionally inflicted with the same critical disdain by You Tuber's as are

associated with more traditional gatekeeping decisions. The crux of the criticism would appear to be in the act of a large portion of the population watching the same video, whether in the mainstream media or through online channels. The concerns that such a video, with enough of a push behind it would relegate the actual 'facts' of the news story to secondary importance are apparent across both mediums, whether it is taken up virally or propelled through mainstream media channels. In this way, the viral gate positions itself at the news event, to be propagated through social media channels into prominence or to vanish into obscurity. The secondary gate is that of the media network, which can ill afford to ignore a critical mass of viewers but ultimately retains the power of allowing or disallowing the video to pass through the gates, a power that is acknowledged by You Tuber users across both the positive and negative divide.

Through the analysis of the comment feed that accompanies the uploaded video a number of significant observations can be made about how YouTube users interact with gatekeeping processes. Firstly, it is evident that YouTube members are aware of the authoritative nature of gatekeepers. Whilst some mistrust this authority as an unreliable source, others seek it out in an attempt to push items into the news agenda. In doing so, YouTube members engage with and actively promote gatewatching practices through sharing the uploaded footage across social networking sites. In this way, this act of participatory journalism was brought to the attention of the gatekeepers in Australian television news networks. As the footage was broadcast, YouTube members also engaged in a dialogue over the criticism and validation of the broadcast product. In this process, those who referenced media organisations directly validated their normalisation of the footage to suit journalistic conventions by citing

them as an authoritative source in their comments to other members. In this way, the cycle of participatory journalism to a normalised mainstream product re-affirms the position of news networks as authoritative gatekeepers. Chapter four will explore how each network normalised the amateur footage so as to achieve such a result.

Chapter Four: Broadcast - Police Brutality or Rough Justice?

This chapter moves the analysis of this case study into its next stage of development, its broadcast across Australian television news. Through this chapter the analysis engages with each broadcast individually so as to assess how the uploaded footage was normalised by gatekeepers to fit journalistic conventions. Whilst gatekeeping theory has tackled the process of news stories moving through the channels of distribution, it has not effectively analysed what happens to the stories as they move through those channels. This chapter seeks to address this gap by further exploring the process of 'normalisation' in the transition of the footage from the online to broadcast domains. As chapter one has argued, the uploaded Mardi Gras Police brutality video already contains embedded journalistic values and thus provides almost the complete package for what Sjøvaag calls the 'embellished' integration of amateur footage into the news narrative (Sjøvaag, 2011).

In his study of the amateur footage of the London bombings and the assassination of Benazir Bhutto, Sjøvaag argues that in the 'embellished' paradigm, the amateur footage is placed at 'the top of the inverted pyramid, signalling their relevance to the story, they are used to demonstrate the effect of events or serve as evidence to claims made by parties to the story' (2011, p.57). The continued repetition of the footage

and the reliance upon it to provide the bulk of the coverage also conforms at Sjoavaag's argument that in these situations 'they are used to demonstrate the effect of event or serve as evidence for the story (2011, p.58). Typically, argues Sojvaag, in such cases of 'embellishing' the source of the amateur footage is acknowledged and separated from the institution as means of demonstrating that 'there is no professional account of the event, thereby positioning itself as the necessary and trustworthy gatekeeper of amateur sources' (2011, p.63). Across these broadcasts however, the source of the amateur footage is rarely acknowledged, leaving the gatekeepers as the only trustworthy authority over information flows as a whole.

In the case of this incident, the footage itself provided a ready-made narrative and as this chapter will argue, its journalistic qualities were harnessed and exploited across the networks. Through 'embelleshing' the footage into the news narrative the networks effectively normalised it to retain their authority as gatekeepers over information flows despite its origins in the online domain.

Methodology

This chapter will examine the broadcasts of the 'Mardi Gras Police Brutality Video' between 5 p.m. and 7:30 pm on the 6th of March 2013 by offering a textual analysis of how the amateur footage of Jamie Jackson's arrest was incorporated into the news narrative by public broadcasters the ABC and SBS and commercial broadcasters Seven, Nine and Ten. The clips have been drawn from each of the channels flagship prime-time news bulletins as they deal with the issue in most detail and therefore warrant the concentration of my textual analysis. The texts will be dealt with

individually through close reading and then brought together at the end of my analysis in order to gauge significant patterns of adaptation. In analysing the clips I have adopted the same method utilised for the uploaded YouTube footage in the previous chapter. Hartley's textual analysis of ITN's news broadcast on the 11th of December 1980 (Hartley, 1995, pp. 63-74) provides a useful template for engaging with video content through textual analysis. As Hartley maintains such an analysis examines 'the ideological closure of an event as it is meant to be understood' (Hartley, 1995, pp. 63-74) or in the words of Hall 'a preferred reading' (1977, p.341). This chapter analyses how a preferred reading of these texts normalises amateur footage into the news discourse through engaging with the texts implicit patterns, omissions, assumptions and latent meaning (Furisch, 2009). In this way it examines the process of normalisation as 'a complex structure in dominance, sustained through the articulation of connected practice' in television production' (Hall, 1973b, p. 128). Further, this news event, just as any other in the history of broadcast, is 'subject to all the complex formal rules by which language signifies' (Hall, 1973b, p.129). These rules have a normative function in the broadcast of news, which as this chapter will demonstrate undermines the authority of those amateurs outside televisions communicative circuit. The process of creating a story before it can become a communicative event guides the normalisation process of this amateur footage, where 'the sub-rules of discourse are in dominance' (Hall, 1973b, p.129) and help to engender the authority of the gatekeeper.

The texts are engaged with as mini-analyses of preferred readings, as a concentrated analysis on the news packages of one or two broadcasters alone would not suffice to give a complete picture of how this footage was normalised across the Australian

broadcast news spectrum. Further, each broadcaster adopts a variety of differing normalising techniques that are essential to the coverage of this chapter. The broadcast analysis is separated by the title of each broadcast at the top of each section. Appendices 6-8 demonstrate a breakdown of each of the news packages from which rich textual examples of the normalisation of amateur footage were drawn. The results of these preferred readings ascertain how news values, normalisation and gatekeeping practices were utilized in order perpetuate broadcast news's position as an authority.

This analysis of the news broadcasts was combined with a formal analysis of the uploaded footage so as to adequately provide an evaluation across the networks to assess which segments of the original footage were utilized by the networks in order to gauge the most salient elements of the uploaded footage. The result of this analysis can be seen in Appendix 5 and will be integrated throughout the analysis in order to bolster this chapter's conclusions. Unfortunately, time and resources have not allowed for an engagement with audience responses outside of the YouTube comment feed to the news packages or with the news producers themselves, which would have been beneficial for this study as Gay, Hall, Janes, Mackay, and Negus (1997) suggest, 'the circuit of culture' needs to explore all the elements of 'representation, identity, production, consumption and regulation' (Gay et al., 1997, p. 3). This could be further explored as an avenue for further research.

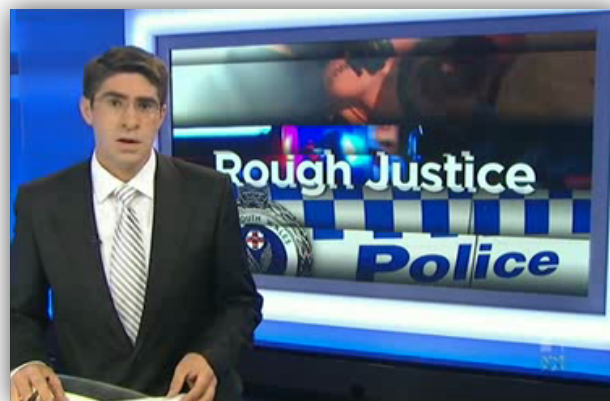
ABC News: Rough Justice

The first preferred reading in this textual analysis is the ABC broadcast from 7 p.m. on the 6th of March 2013. As the analysis will demonstrate, the ABC normalised the

footage into the news package by ‘embellishing’ it in order to retain its authority as a gatekeeper over information flows. It effectively combines the prepared contexts of newsreaders and interview talent with the evidential nature of the amateur footage in order to create a preferred reading of violent disorder, a reading that is both familiar to audiences and positions the ABC as an authoritative gatekeeper.

The broadcast of the Mardi Gras incident entitled, ‘Rough Justice’ opens with the presenter David Cunrow, reading from the studio in front of a plasma screen. The words ‘Rough Justice’ are emblazoned over NSW police tape with a screen grab from Jackson’s arrest running across the top of the plasma.

Figure 3: ABC News Opening Graphic



Source: (ABC News, 2013)

Within figure 3 alone there are several intersecting elements that are significant in terms of the integration of the amateur footage into the news narrative. The most striking component is the use of the term ‘Rough Justice’ (a term used to varying degrees across all the broadcasts) in combination with the screen shot of Jackson surrounded by police. Here, the ABC was able to justify its use of the term ‘Rough Justice’ through the presence of the amateur visual evidence. By utilising the term it is

directly accusing the NSW police force of unnecessary force, 'rough' being defined as 'acting with or characterised by violence' or 'having or causing sudden, violent movements' (Merriam & Webster, 2013). The very presence of the witnesses to the incident, and the emergence and acceptance of the amateur video as factual, effectively allowed the ABC to accuse the police of breaking the grounds of justice through their use of 'rough' tactics. This particular accusation would never have been made so overtly without the amateur vision as evidence, pointing to the ability of gatekeepers in this situation to put the subjects on public trial. As Corner argues, when amateur footage 'contains images and sequences of a strongly evidential character or of a strongly affective kind, the broadly demonstrative function of news becomes more particularised and intense, radically altering the image/word balance and the grounding of news truth telling' (Corner, 1995, p. 61). Further as Andén-Papadopoulos and Pantti (2011) argue, 'such imagery serves the function of witness – a function with an inherent proximity to the facts that are so central to the legitimacy of journalism' (Andén-Papadopoulos & Pantti, 2011, p. 84). This evidential nature of the images and the resulting accusation is not only reflected in the overt title but also in the visual elements of the plasma screen of the background.

The plasma screen depicts Jackson's head being bowed as the leather hand of a uniformed officer grasps his shoulder; the high-visibility jacket of the officer simultaneously emits a white light that figuratively pushes Jackson down into the police lights of the banner below. Here, traditional notions of police as protective agents are undermined, their strength, symbolised by banners, badges and lights is not rendered as a defensive agency but rather as one that is oppressive, heavy handed and unjustified. The intersecting lines that criss-cross the page do not aid perceptions of a

gatekeeper's role of journalistic objectivity, as they enable graphic drama through unequal lines that refer directly to the 'broken ground' of 'Rough Justice.'

The significance of a public broadcaster such as the ABC taking such an overt, accusatory stance on a matter of public interest cannot be underestimated. Within this frame in particular, there is neither room for balance nor any attempt to acknowledge extraneous circumstance, the traditionally objective gatekeeping roles of public broadcasters have been undermined by the visual resonance of the amateur footage. As a result, the ABC is indirectly acknowledging the power that amateur footage has over editorial decisions, the very fact that footage exists of the incident was enough, in the ABC's mind, to reproduce it as fact, symbolised by the visual framing of this brief introductory package.

Despite the overt accusatory visual framing of the plasma screen, David Cunrow's presentation tells a very different story in normalisation. Cunrow is positioned in front of the plasma making him the dominant figure in the frame, connoting not only authority but also figurative ownership of the story. Further, as Bignell argues a news presenters clothing and neutral vocal delivery are signs 'that connote the mythic objectivity of the presenter and the news institution he or she presents' (1997, p.118) and that these cultural cues are constructed from 'other aspects of social life and not only the codes of television' (1997, p.114). Thus Cunrow's lead in begins in a neutral, yet mythic tone that is read largely by viewers as containing authoritative impartiality. 'NSW police are investigating two separate allegations of excessive force at the last weekends Mardi Gras by officers at the Sydney Mardi Gras.' In an interesting juxtaposition, the script attempts to balance the accusatory tone of the visual elements

in the background. The effective implementation of police public relations speak, highlighted by the terms, 'investigating, allegations, excessive force' into the script contrasts completely with 'Rough Justice.' Here the decoding of the discursive aspect is that the police are effectively fixing the problem and that incident is not one of 'brutality' or 'rough justice', but the less significant allegation of 'excessive force.' This framing of the story through the voice over draws parallels with Hartley's analysis of protests where despite the visual cues, the story '*sounds* like a story about threatened disruption...translated into *violent disorder*' (1995, p. 73) a mode of address and narrative arc that viewers are historically familiar with being delivered by gatekeepers.

As Cunrow's voice over continues the overlay of the incident is faded in, 'This video posted on the Internet last night shows 18 year old Jamie Jackson being thrown to the ground and stomped on by a police officer.' The reference to the 'internet' is the only vague mention of a source given by the ABC, in this way the ABC re-positions itself as a gatekeeper of distributed information from the online sphere, a technique that is adopted by every one of the other networks.

As the coverage continues the voice over becomes descriptive as the images show the oft-repeated footage of a rapid pan from the blood on the cardboard on the pavement to the body slam of Jackson by a police officer. This angle was repeated up to three times in the broadcast of this segment by other networks (See Appendix 5) and is the most popular visual element of the entire story across the news packages.

Figure's 4 & 5: "Mardi Gras Police Brutality" – Body Slam



Source: (ABC News, 2013)

What is it that makes this particular sequence of so much interest that it warrants such repetition? It is undeniably dramatic; the police officer hurls Jackson onto the concrete with such force that a traumatic diegetic snap is heard as his head hits the concrete. But the reason that it is so effective is that it gives the impression of total spontaneity. The jerking, unstable pan of the cameraman is timed perfectly so as to show first, the blood (or at least the impression of blood) on the cardboard, symbolising prior injury and violence whilst also omitting any footage of Jackson provoking the police officer into such a dramatic use of force. Most importantly, this repeated sequence justifies the opening visual cues from the ABC; it is integrated for its evidential nature as 'rough justice.' When the shaky camera pans up, all that the audience is left with is the apparently unwarranted use of force upon the handcuffed Jamie. As the cries of 'woahh!' echo out from shocked witnesses the full impact of the spontaneous amateur vision is realised. It is the perceived 'rawness' of the footage, its grainy, indexical quality that makes it appear so true and un-manipulated. As Puustinen argues in relation to amateur news photographs, 'spontaneity, coincidental snapshot quality and unskilled photography practice are articulated to

support the trustworthiness of amateur images' (Puustinen & Seppanen, 2011, p. 153). It is this rawness that allows the ABC to lead with title, 'Rough Justice,' and further, allows for the justification of this angles repetition by gatekeepers across all the networks.

The ABC then moves the story in the direction of another alleged victim of assault during Mardi Gras, Bryn Hutchinson, by other NSW police. Here the amateur vision is normalised through the standardised journalistic technique of a walk-up by the alleged victim. Self-taken images of the injuries to Hutchinson are cross-faded, bruising and cuts fill the frame as the voice over reads, 'Bryn Hutchinson says he was repeatedly kicked for trying to cross Oxford St, both men were charged with assaulting police.' The combination of the amateur footage of Jackson's arrest with the amateur images of Hutchinson's injuries now turns the story into a pattern of police brutality giving credibility to both parties and the accusations of news networks. This is a pattern that is replicated across the coverage of all the other networks.

Following Hutchinson's accusations the coverage cuts to the press conference of Sydney Independent MP, Alex Greenwich, which acts in a similar encoding discourse routine as the walk-up from Bryn Hutchinson. Greenwich is seen in a 'prepared context' (Hartley, 1995, p.73) with neutral, steady framing contrasting against the inherent shakiness of the amateur vision. Here authority is granted to the matter at hand and further propels the issue into not one of individual incidents, but a pattern of police using excessive force, as Greenwich maintains, 'My office and I know others have been overwhelmed with the emails of other situations which are of great concern

to me.’ Greenwich doesn’t offer any specificity; rather, he provides the crucial, broad sweeping grab that lends credence to the aforementioned amateur footage. This is only emphasised further by a cut to the original footage of Jackson showing police forcing a boot down on his back, the drama is mitigated by the voice over of Cunrow emphasising that ‘police say the incidents were isolated’ and the rapid cut to another press conference in a ‘prepared context’ with the Assistant Police Commissioner, Mark Murdoch, ‘in the scheme of things we don’t have a super big problem,’ effectively undermining the evidential nature of the amateur footage. Here the ABC closes with yet another juxtaposition of voice and image, as Jamie Jackson returns to the centre of focus, handcuffed and surrounded by officers and the diegetic sounds of onlooker’s desperation, the white light of the frame diminishes his power, a reflective quality that only the low quality grain and noise of amateur footage could produce.

In many ways, the scripting and visual evidence are at odds with each other throughout this story. The ABC has attempted to balance the graphicness of the amateur footage with a voice over that mitigates its authority. Simultaneously, it has normalised the footage into the news narrative by attempting to strike such a balance through the implementation of prepared contexts that stand in direct contrast to the amateur footage. Through this process, the ABC frames ‘the constitution of the programme through its production structure’ (Hall, 1973, p.129). The effective result of this combination of techniques is a re-positioning of the ABC as a source of information, as opposed to only being a distributor, reaffirming their position as an authoritative gatekeeper.

SBS News: Police Brutality?

SBS's coverage of the video opens with Janice Peterson presenting from the studio, 'NSW Police have launched two separate investigation into allegations of police brutality at Sydney's Mardi Gras Parade...a video posted online shows a policeman throwing a handcuffed 18 year old to the ground and putting a foot to his back.'

Here, as in the case with the ABC, a descriptor of the video is seen as necessary, pushing the emergence of the video as news in itself, rather than news as the criterion event. Similarly, the origin of the video is acknowledged broadly as 'online,' much like the ABC's reference to the 'Internet,' here connotations of an interaction between old and new media abound, positioning SBS as a broadcaster that acknowledges the emergence and proliferation of online content without acknowledging the direct source. What this initially helps to achieve is a repositioning of SBS as a distributor of information, a gatekeeper of the online sphere that picks out significant content for the broadcast orientated masses. As Niekamp argues this positioning of television news as an authoritative distributor of amateur content is a pattern likely to continue, 'amateur video, regardless of its deficiencies in artistic quality, will likely show up on the mainstream news outlets more often, as the image becomes the overriding criterion of the gatekeeper' (Niekamp, 2011, p. 92) Following the brief mention of the 'online' origins of the broadcast, the coverage turns to normalising the footage through 'embellishing' the video by placing it at the top of the inverted pyramid as direct evidence of the events that transpired.

The reporter's voice over from Manny Tsigas adds further details and 'focuses' the topic (Bignell, 1997, p. 120). 'This amateur vision shows a man struggling with

police just off Oxford St at Saturday night's Mardi Gras.' Tsigas' acknowledgement of the video as amateur allows the reporter to effectively separate his professional reportage from the original footage whilst simultaneously encoding perceptions of raw, unedited content. This observation is only heightened when combined with imagery that accompanies the voice over, as SBS includes the diegetic moans of Jackson 'what's his name? I didn't do anything wrong'? That accompanies the footage of Jackson struggling whilst being surrounded by Police. The footage then cuts to the ABC's lead vision of the blood on the cardboard followed by the Police officers body slam, the standard pattern across the broadcasts.

Where SBS deviates from the pattern of other networks is in its acknowledgment of citizens filming the content for the public interest, as Tsigas' voice over comments, 'after the man is thrown to the ground shocked onlookers are told to stop filming, they refuse.' In this sentence, those who refuse to stop filming are elevated with the broadcaster acknowledging the power of not only an informed public but also one that has access to the means of production, a brief acknowledgement of the potential and rights of participatory journalism.

This brief acknowledgement of participatory journalism practices is abruptly cut to the highly staged professional process of an interview with Jackson on Seven News. The combination of the raw footage and the crisp imagery of the interview highlight the process of normalisation. The edgy, raw material, is seen at its most effective when it is combined with the polished techniques of broadcast news, increasing notions of the normalisation of raw content with broadcast professionalism as an effective mechanism for retaining the authority of the gatekeeper.

Tsigas' report then turns to the news value of the 'footage posted last night going viral.' In an acknowledgement of the popular spread of the footage across the online environment and in particular social media sites, Tsigas invokes perceptions that the incident is not only significant but also newsworthy because it has been seen by a substantial number of people prior to appearing in the broadcasters bulletin. This positions SBS's broadcast of the incident not as a news source, but as a distributor of contextual information that may contribute to the original viral footage. The contextual information that SBS contributes takes the form not only of charges laid against accused but also of police responses to the incident such as Assistant Commissioner Mark Murdoch's observation at a press conference utilised by all the networks, 'the gentleman's in handcuffs for a reason I would suggest, but again we just need to see what the investigation discloses.' As in the ABC broadcast, the use of this press conference as an official source of information frames the original amateur footage in a manner that implies impartiality whilst also integrating journalistic conventions so as to comply with professional norms. In this way the topic is again 'focused via an institutional voice' (Hartley, 1995, p. 110) In the same vein, Tsigas conducts an interview with Mardi Gras organiser, Michael Rolik, where he opens with a wide shot that places him and the interviewee within the frame of the story. As the idle chatter is played out silently, Tsigas' voice over reads, 'Mardi Gras organisers agree the vision is distressing on a number of levels.' What is most pertinent about this statement is that Tsigas refers not to the event itself but the vision of the event as 'distressing.' Thus the framing of the interview turns from one that condemns the police's use of excessive force not through their individual actions, but rather, through being caught in the act by the amateur videographer. As Rolik responds 'it actually

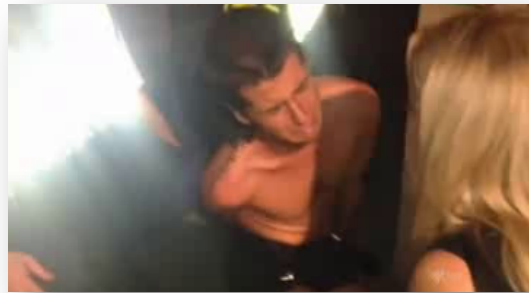
brought a tear to my eye....’ The use of the word ‘it’ refers not to the event, but to the capturing of the event, thus the video becomes the encoded centre of emotional brevity as opposed to the incident itself.

Following the interview, SBS integrates the widely used cross-faded photos of the injuries to Bryn Hutchinson, but is the only broadcaster to acknowledge the online source of the photos, samesame.com.au. This is significant as promotes the Internet as a second source of information; the omission of an attribution from the other networks implies that the photos were sourced directly from the victim himself, placing them as the source rather than the distributor of information. Whilst four out of the five networks did not acknowledge the source of the online photos, SBS acknowledgement draws parallels with Andén-Papadopoulos & Pantti’s study of CNN and the BBC’s coverage of amateur footage during the Iranian protests, they found that transparency through attribution bolstered viewers trustworthiness of the images and the gatekeeping processes networks in question (2011, p.82).

Tsigas’ coverage then cuts to the standardised broadcast technique of a piece to camera, implying the reporter’s complete ownership of the story. His piece to camera situates the events on Oxford St. The slow zoom on Tsigas from a very wide angle reaffirms his position as an authority on the incident, where he calmly states ‘despite these two incidents, they’re (police) still considering the night a success.’ Through this ‘closing’ Tsigas points the story towards ‘one discursive construction of the story, a preferred meaning’ (Bignell, 1997, p.121). A cross-fade to the imagery from the main parade in combination with the previous statement re-frames the package in a positive light, the amateur footage becoming the exception to the rule if only for a

brief moment, as the paradox of Sydney MP's Alex Greenwich 'receiving dozens of reports of questionable behaviour by police' re-emerges and the familiar shot of Jackson, surrounded by police and handcuffed on the floor becomes the resonate image of the entire broadcast.

Figure 5: "Mardi Gras Police Brutality" – Jackson Handcuffed



Source: (SBS News, 2013)

Whilst SBS's coverage of the Mardi Gras video engaged with the online origins of the amateur footage in more ways than three out of the five networks, it still effectively repositioned itself as an authoritative gatekeeper for information from the online sphere. Through references to the online sources of some of the material, 'samesame.com.au,' its brief, but indirect, mention of participatory journalists and its acknowledgment of the videos viral nature SBS effectively sourced its information, giving it credibility as an authoritative gatekeeper without obstructing the public's view of the news making process.

Concurrently, it also structured its news package so as to re-gain its authority as a gatekeeper and source of new information. It did so by placing subjects in prepared contexts, putting its reporter within the frame and normalising the footage so that it contrasted with the professional norms of broadcast news. This effective combination of normalisation techniques allowed SBS to retain its position over information flows.

Seven News: 'Brutality Claims'

Figure 6: Seven News Opening Graphic



Source: (Seven News, 2013)

‘A teenager at the centre of police brutality claims at Sydney’s Mardi Gras believes he could have died during his violent arrest, an investigation has been launched into Jamie Jackson’s treatment after video of him being thrown to the ground went viral on the Internet’ (Peter Mitchell, Seven News, 2013).

Peter Mitchell’s opening voice over of the incident highlights an extraordinary acknowledgement of the power of video virility over not only broadcast media but also judicial processes. In particular, he states that an investigation has been launched only after the video went viral; crucially implying that virility is a pre-requisite for judicial and matters in the public interest that may have otherwise gone unnoticed. Seven’s broadcast opens with the video at its most dramatic point; the body slam of Jackson accompanied by the familiar diegetic ‘woah!’ of onlookers. Simultaneous to the slam is the appearance of the ‘First on Seven’ logo, which graphically swings around and pull the viewers attention just as Jackson’s head hits the ground. Seven is the only network to claim the ‘First on’ header, implying a sense of immediacy, scoop and exclusivity, all misnomers for footage that had been already been online for over

24 hours. In tandem with the footer emblazoned across the bottom of the vision, Seven effectively lays ownership claims over the footage despite its previous acknowledgement of its viral nature, in doing so it positions itself as the only authoritative gatekeeper.

Figure 7: Interview with Jackson



Source: (Seven News, 2013)

This is only furthered by the vox-pop from a Seven interview with Jackson, by placing Jackson within a frame completely surrounded by Seven insignia, including, not one, but two 'First on Seven' logos, the network not only implies ownership of the original footage, but of Jackson as a subject himself, ensuring that the network is seen as the 'first' to gain access to the person behind the viral footage. That is, it is the only network 'capable' of providing information on the incident beyond the online sphere re-positioning itself as a source rather than a distributor of information.

Seven's coverage of the event highlights Sjoavaag's (2011) notions on 'embellishing' amateur footage normalisation. He argues that the integration of the footage allows for 'restriction and entrenchment by ignoring the amateur origin of the pictures' (2011, p. 57) this is symbolised by the Seven logos prevalent throughout the

coverage. Seven's continued repetition of the footage and its reliance upon it to provide the bulk of the coverage also conforms at Sjoavaag's argument that in these situations 'they are used to demonstrate the effect of event or serve as evidence for the story.' Typically, argues Sojvaag, in such cases of 'embellishing' the source of the amateur footage is acknowledged and separated from the institution as means of demonstrating that 'there is no professional account of the event' (2011, p. 63). Seven News however, despite the acknowledgement of the video's online existence has opted to take complete ownership of the story. Nine News also adopted this technique throughout its coverage. In both cases these techniques serve to render authority to the broadcaster.

Seven and Nine's coverage of the event offers the most pertinent examples of networks taking ownership of the amateur footage through visual and oral means, by installing insignia into the centre of the frame and through the conducting of interviews in highly prepared contexts. The result for Seven's coverage is a positioning of the broadcaster as the only source of information on this story, and therefore as the most authoritative gatekeeper.

Nine News: 'Police Brutality'

In the case of Nine News' coverage, the ownership is taken further, as the reporter figuratively replaces the eyewitness amateur videographer as being on the scene and therefore as the most authoritative gatekeeper.

Nine's coverage of the incident opens with presenter Peter Hitchener stating that 'Sydney Police are in damage control after a teenager accused them of police brutality during the Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras...Video has emerged of the young man in handcuffs being thrown to the ground.' The use of the term 'emerged' is integral to the placement of Nine compared to the other broadcasters. By omitting the term 'viral' e.g. 'video has gone viral of the young man in handcuffs...' Nine places itself in a much stronger position in relation to both its viewers and its association with the online sphere. In doing so, Nine is encoded as the leader in plucking this video from an otherwise unremarkable end. The opposite is in fact true, as the well-known virility of the video, means that it was far from obscure well before the bulletin went to air. What this implies to the viewer is that Nine is not only first on 'scene,' but is simultaneously a trustworthy distributor of new information as opposed viral information. Here as in the case of Seven's broadcast, Nine 'embellishes' the amateur footage without crediting its original source. This is only enhanced when Hitchener credits 'This report from Simon Bouda' so as to place not only the network but the individual reporter in Bouda as the source of information on this previously 'obscure' video.

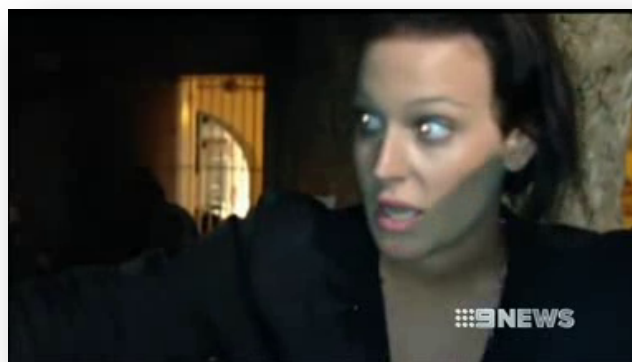
Figure 8: Jackson Arrested



Source: (Nine News, 2013)

Bouda's report opens with the acquainted shot of Jackson struggling with Police in figure 8, as an officer restrains him by holding his neck, as the diegetic sounds of the struggle are allowed to play out Bouda's voice over comes in. Bouda's statement 'Police Brutality' is followed by an unusually long pause (6 seconds) with Jackson screaming 'What's his name? What's his name? I didn't do anything wrong!' directly to the camera. Bouda follows up with 'or rough justice – it doesn't matter, it was ugly.' Here Bouda indicates that regardless of what actually occurred, that is to say, the facts of the incident, the video itself is what is of concern. The news value of the video is heightened when Bouda engages with it in the present tense, as footage of the blood on the cardboard and the body slam plays out, Bouda describes the scene unfolding, 'with his hands cuffed behind his back, 18 year old Jamie Jackson is slammed to the ground'. An abrupt change of scene takes the viewers to a Nine-studio interview with Jackson who returns us to the past tense, 'I could have been killed, like the way he threw me to the ground.' The brief glimpse of a conventional studio setting (implying the same sense of subject ownership as Seven's coverage) is abruptly interrupted by a return to the 'live' scene.

Figure 9: Eyewitness to the event



Source: (Nine News, 2013)

As Bouda explains, 'his friends and onlookers were horrified,' and the first instance of spontaneous interviews with witnesses by the amateur videographer are broadcast. In this section, the perceived rawness and liveness of the event are harnessed by Nine for dramatic effect by omitting the videographers questions from the broadcast. The camera focuses on the witnesses describing the events before them, 'this one here grabbed him by the throat and smashed his skull on the pavement.' A quick cut takes us back Jackson's face planted against the floor and an upward pan shows the second witness, a teary, emotional female, saying 'there's blood all over the ground.' Only two networks, Nine and Ten, utilised these interviews as a means of adding to the depth of the story, when they are integrated with the authority of the network, they grant the impression of Bouda and a cameraman actually being on scene as the eyewitnesses whilst also providing the grainy dramatic shaky vision only achievable through the abandoning of professional techniques by an amateur videographer. It thus has a dual effect, placing the viewer in the scene with the reporter whilst simultaneously aiding perceptions of authenticity.

The narrative arc of the piece then takes a curious turn when Bouda discards the inverted pyramid structure in favour of retelling the contextual background and weaving a story, he proclaims with all the authority of a narrator, 'this is how it began.' In this instance, a second set of footage is brought to the narrative, which plays out as Bouda describes, 'Police wrestle with Mr Jackson on the corner of Oxford and Riley Streets during the weekends Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras.'

The coverage then cuts to the same footage used at the beginning of the piece, a policeman grabbing Jackson's throat as witnesses exclaim in the background and off

camera, ‘we just saw you wack his head against the ground, his blood is on the ground because of you.’ With this cut back to the ‘live’ scene, Bouda returns to reporting directly from the event and a sense of immediacy is restored. He then brings in a comment from Jackson’s father which Bouda himself reads out, ‘he was thrown around like a rag doll.’

Figure 10: Text Overlay of Body Slam



Source: (Nine News, 2013)

The bold, uneven typeface on top of the background footage of Jackson’s body slam, contributes both drama and a sense of family outrage. By utilising the background footage in combination with the text, Nine maintains a presence that is ‘live’ at the scene whilst also appropriating traditional journalistic commentary from family members.

Despite the apparently dramatic nature of the events portrayal, Nine utilises the ubiquitous press conference from commissioner Mark Murdoch to draw back the scale of its drama and incorporate a necessary (albeit undermined) secondary perspective, as Murdoch explains, ‘we have seen but one small part of what is clearly a much larger incident.’ Nine then draws in the second story that formed a part of

each networks package, the alleged brutality received by Bryn Hutchinson. Here the pattern of police's use of excessive force is once again drawn out from beyond the original amateur vision and into a pattern, as the images of Hutchinson's injuries (with no credit to the source) cross fade in and out across the screen. Nine is positioned as the authoritative source at both the new event and through the photographs of injuries sustained, in direct opposition to their origins in the online sphere. This is compounded by the traditional technique of utilising Hutchinson's walk up, and the subsequent press conference as a means of direct access to the source of the allegations.

Nine's positioning of itself as an authority throughout this package is one that perpetuates the notion that it is the only source of information when it comes to this news item as throughout the piece, Nine acknowledges no other sources of information. What the normalisation of the footage in this context effectively encodes is a re-affirmation of its position as a gatekeeper against a tide of alternative news sources.

Ten News: 'Police Brutality'

Channel Ten's coverage of the video takes a very different stance to that of its commercial opposition, Nine and Seven. Whilst Ten news exhibits several normalising functions in its reportage of this package it simultaneously acknowledges that it is not the only source when it comes to this story by invoking the frame of participatory journalism within its coverage, weakening its position as an authoritative gatekeeper.

Channel Ten's coverage opens with the same throat grab evident in both Seven and Nine's coverage, it moves through the video unedited until Jackson is thrown to the ground. In total 22 seconds of the footage is left to stand for itself without an accompanying voice over. Here the strength of the report rests on the embellishment of the video, demonstrating the inherent news value of the piece according to Ten News producers. As the clip continues to roll, the reporter, Lachlan Kennedy gives contextual information to orientate the audience, 'the young man in handcuffs is 18 year old Jamie from Sydney's south, police allege he swore and then was aggressive.' The coverage then cuts to the seconds set of footage, also utilised by Nine, which Kennedy claims 'appears to show Jackson take a swing.' A rapid cut then brings the audience back to the repeated footage of Jackson being thrown to the ground in a body slam.

Ten then adopts a unique perspective amongst the networks; it includes the videographers question to the witnesses in the original uploaded footage. As the videographer asks 'tell me what happened,' and the witness responds, 'this one here, he grabbed him by the throat and smashed his skull on the pavement.' Kennedy's voice over then interjects and describes the video itself. 'The video rolls for 4 minutes and captures onlookers reduced to tears.' By comparison with the other networks coverage of the event the inclusion of the questions by the videographer and a description of the video itself are poignant factors in differing approaches to amateur content. Kennedy's approach to the content fits Sjoovag's description of 'embellishment' where amateur videos are used to create a narrative frame from which the images can be understood (2011, p.57). Whilst the other networks also do

this to varying degrees, Ten is the only one to situate amateur images ‘as proof there is no professional account of the event’ (2011, p.63). The inclusion of the interviews highlights the inherent journalistic qualities of this footage not often found in other amateur sources whilst simultaneously reducing Ten’s position as a gatekeeper of information. The inclusion of the questions by the videographer and his presence within the frame signals to the audience that Ten was not present at the event, a fact that all the other networks endeavoured to hide.

Following the inclusion of a second interview, with questions asked by the videographer, Kennedy switches the frame of the story to one that focuses on participatory journalism. As the voice over demonstrates ‘Repeatedly, officers ask for the filming to stop, something they had no right to request.’ This is followed by yet another inclusion of the videographer as an actor within the frame, the police officer asks him to ‘stop filming’ to which the videographer responds, ‘It’s not against the law, I don’t have to.’ In comparison to the other networks, Ten’s concentration on this element of the story is telling. Apart from SBS’s brief mention, no other network engaged with a participatory journalism frame across their broadcasts. Ten not only engages with it but articulates it as a central focus point in their story, this is emphasised by the grab chosen by Kennedy from the police press conference which emphasises a citizens right to film police officers, ‘unfortunately, it shows a degree of naivety of the police involved who made those comments.’

Kennedy’s report then moves to the familiar narrative of Bryn Hutchinson’s police brutality accusations with the accompanying images and the prepared context of Sydney MP Alex Greenwich’s press conference. Finally, Kennedy introduces another

authority into the frame, a Sydney journalist Serkan Ozturk, ‘who has also received several reports of excessive force. Ozturk comments, ‘this is probably just the incident that blows the lid, there’s serious questions to be answered here.’ Indeed, by ‘blowing the lid’ Ozturk refers to the rapid spread of the footage across social networks and finally into News broadcasts. The video evidence and its proliferation across all of these avenues is seen as a key trigger for meaningful action, as Kennedy’s close on the police press conference reveals, ‘the NSW police force treat the matter very seriously and will deal with it in accordance with the evidence.’ The final piece of evidence offered by Ten news is the third repetition of Jackson being thrown to the ground,’ offering no illusions as to their preferred reading of ‘police brutality.’

Ten’s coverage of this story is markedly different from that of the other networks. By including both references to the video and the questions of the videographer, the coverage emphasises the inherent journalistic elements of the uploaded footage, whilst simultaneously signalling to the audience that it was not present at the event. This undermines Ten’s position as an authority, whilst elevating the authority of participatory journalism through effectively acknowledging it as another gate. Despite this, Ten attempts to re-affirm its position as a gatekeeper through the standardised normalisation techniques seen across the broadcasts. Nonetheless, the importance it places on the uploaded footage as the single biggest contributing factor to its story is evident; the result is a positioning of Ten News as one source amongst many.

Gatekeeping & Normalisation in Broadcast News

‘The increasing importance of live coverage of event-driven news often means such stories are characterised by the saturation of images that are indelible and endlessly replayed’ (Livingstone & Bennett, 2003, p. 366)

The Mardi Gras police brutality video is a key example of just such a story described by Livingstone & Bennet (2003). Each network placed the footage of the event at the top of their inverted pyramid, and they all utilised the same elements of the clip, sometimes up to two or three times in the one package. The uploaded footage distinguishes itself from other amateur content by already including inherent journalistic tenets; the combination of dramatic vision with eyewitness accounts gave networks a golden package of participatory journalism. This package enabled the networks to frame the story as their own narrative, effectively placing themselves on the ground as secondary eyewitnesses to the event.

In answering the research question, *what does this case study demonstrate about the gatekeeping processes involved in the transition of amateur footage from the moment of capture to its upload and into its broadcast across Australian television news?*

In its transition from upload to broadcast the research suggests that amateur footage has been normalised so as to retain and emphasise Australian television news’ role as authoritative gatekeepers. Whilst Ten and SBS news exhibited some alternative paradigms in their approach to amateur footage, journalistic conventions in

combination with a lack of acknowledgement of online sources attempts to position broadcasters as the only authoritative sources of information. Across the board, the networks deftly combined this with the aesthetics of the footage to produce authoritative, normalised reports. As the defining aesthetics of this footage demonstrate to an audience that a professional was not at the scene of the incident, ‘amateur footage in fact validates itself while at the same time validating the mainstream media institution broadcasting it’ (Sjoovag, 2011, p.72). In this dynamic the fraternal theoretical approaches of gatewatching and gatekeeping come into play, the critical mass of gatewatchers proliferating the footage online through a variety of tactics allows for the footage to rise to prominence, whilst the act of gatekeeping by major news networks allows them to normalise the footage so as to meet contemporary journalistic expectations and retain their authority. Further, the network’s utilisation of the clips online status acts as means of accentuating their access to the most current and newsworthy material, whilst simultaneously maintaining their ability to provide the complete coverage. As Puustinen and Seppanen argue,

‘New technology is only democratically potent if it reaches a critical mass. In order for this new technology to communicate the effects of social upheaval and accidents to wider audiences witnesses to such events need a large-scale one-to-many disseminator, for most people this medium is still television’ (Puustinen & Seppanen, 2011, p. 153).

Despite the centrality of the footage to each network’s coverage, only one network, Channel Ten, let the authority of the story move briefly beyond its hands and into

those of participatory journalism. Each network had an overt interest in retaining its gatekeeping function by positioning themselves as authorities in disseminating the news from the online sphere. This occurred through a number of symbolic tactics including narration, visual symbolism, the inclusion of authoritative figures through prepared contexts and the cultural status of its newsreaders and reporters, which removed the original videographer as an interloper. What this authority allows is for the negation of the threat of participatory journalism to the gatekeeping status of professional journalists. As Sjoovag argues, 'even though user generated content may pose a threat to the gatekeeping privileges of the mainstream news media...the journalistic narrative as an institutionalised practice manages to balance this threat through editing and framing' (2011, p.72).

The other news services of the ABC, Seven and Nine offered no real acknowledgement of other online sources of news or the participatory journalism inherent to the success of the Mardi Gras video. Further, these broadcasts stuck firmly to news conventions in their packages embellishing the footage so as to meet professional norms. Two broadcasters, Seven and Nine, went even further in their ownership claims over the footage. Seven opted to take ownership visually through the placement of Seven insignia throughout the frame while Nine placed a reporter as the eyewitness to the event, normalising the footage to such an extent that Nine became encoded as the only authoritative source of information on the Mardi Gras Police Brutality incident.

Whilst some commenters in the online community may resent the re-framing of the footage to suit journalistic conventions, it is clear that those conventions have already

spread to the user generated content arena. As content such as this with embedded journalistic features and news values continue to spread with technology, news organisations are likely to continue to maintain their status as gatekeepers of the gatewatchers.

Conclusion – Gatekeeping the Gatewatchers?

This case study of the development of the ‘Mardi Gras Police Brutality’ video across its online and broadcast formats reveals a number of significant developments in the proliferation of amateur footage, the gatekeeping process and its normalisation through broadcast networks.

In addressing the research question, *What does this case study tell us about the gatekeeping processes involved in the transition of amateur footage from the moment of capture to its upload and into its broadcast?*

This case study reveals significant insights into gatekeeping processes across these transitional points. The first gate is situated at the moment of capture where participatory journalists are gaining an awareness of news values and journalistic conventions. In this case study, the placement of an eyewitness at a newsworthy event in combination with easily accessible technological means allowed for an authentic and valuable capture of events.

The transition of the footage from the device to its upload online marked the second gate in this process, where the footage was valued for its newsworthiness, journalistic

qualities and perceived authenticity by being propelled forward across social media sites. In this space the gates of media producers were acknowledged and were actively penetrated through viral gatewatching tactics. At the same time, some YouTube members were wary of the third stage of the gatekeeping process, where normalisation processes and the authority of broadcast gatekeepers were regarded as potentially manipulative and unreliable.

Once the footage reached the gatekeepers, broadcast networks became aware of its valuable eyewitness content and proceeded to normalise it to fit journalistic conventions and retain authority over the news making process. Through this process they largely undermined the authority of the first and second gates by establishing themselves as the authoritative source over the flows of information.

Once the footage was broadcast as a normalised product, the gatekeeping process returned full circle allowing for criticism of the normalised product by some and validation by others as an authoritative source of information.





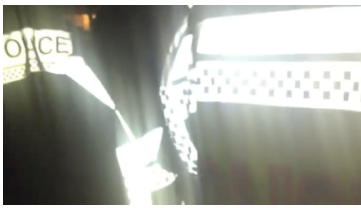
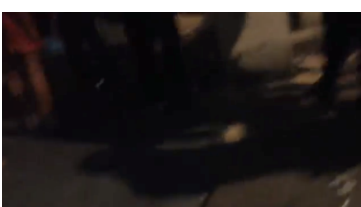
In many ways, amateur footage case studies such as this provide a recipe for networks in incorporating cheap, accessible and relevant content into their broadcasts. As the tenets of participatory journalism filter through to a wider audience and news conventions become integrated in the practice of eyewitnessing and capturing an event, there is no doubt that more forms of content such as this will continue to appear. As it does so, news networks are likely to embellish and normalise the footage so that it both validates the organisation as current and positions them as gatekeepers of a widely gatewatched sphere, online media. As long as television remains the




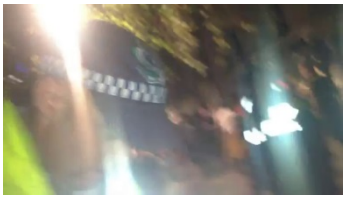
dominant one-to-many method of media dissemination their retention of their gatekeeping role outside of the online sphere will remain pertinent.




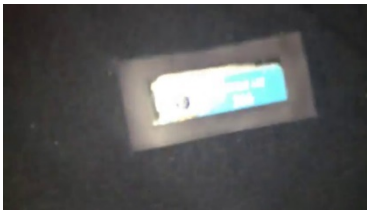
Appendices

Appendix 1: ‘Mardi Gras Police Brutality’ – Uploaded Footage

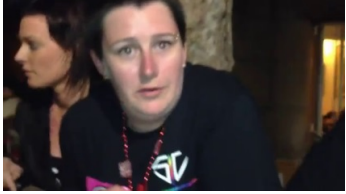


Source: (“Mardi Gras Police Brutality,” 2013)

Audio	Vision Description	Thumbnail
<p>JJ: Someone Tell me what his name is...what’s his name! I Didn’t do anything wrong</p>	<p>Jackson grabbed by the throat</p>	
<p>Police: Stop filming mate Videographer: I know it’s not against the law</p>	<p>Camera pans to CU police badge</p>	
<p>Witness 1: It’s all on video, we just saw you wack his head against the ground, his blood is on the ground because of you and then you punched him</p>	<p>Jackson swivelled around by the police officer</p>	
<p>JJ: I did nothing wrong (crying)</p>	<p>Jackson pleading to witnesses.</p>	
<p>Witness 1: You’re a piece of shit</p>	<p>Camera surrounded by fluro vests of police</p>	
<p>JJ: Make sure you get his name Witness 1: He wont be punished because you’ll have an internal inquest, nothing will happen, please tell them they just slammed that guys head against the ground</p>	<p>Camera tracks in back towards JJ and the police</p>	
<p>Inaudible brackground</p>		

<p>conversations</p> <p>Witness: Jamie! (a loud smack is heard against the pavement)</p> <p>Witness: Jamie!</p> <p>Witness 2: Wow! That's way wrong...you cannot do that.</p> <p>Videographer: I know its not against the law...</p> <p>Police 2: Stop filming mate!</p> <p>Videographer: Why?</p> <p>Police 2: Because</p> <p>Videographer: It's not against the law...I don't have to</p> <p>Police 2: What are you filming for?</p> <p>Videographer: Because I'm allowed to</p> <p>Police 2: No you're not</p> <p>Videographer: What do you mean?</p>	<p>CU on the bloody cardboard</p> <p>Rapid pan out and JJ is thrown to the ground by police officer Jackson remains on the ground</p> <p>Camera pans around to police officer</p> <p>Then pans down to boot on Jackson's back</p> <p>CU on Jackson crying</p> <p>Police officer talking to videographer</p>	   
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<p>Police 2: What are you filming for?</p> <p>Videographer: I'm media, I'm allowed to film... what law is there against me filming this?</p> <p>Police 2: Stop filming</p> <p>Videographer: Why?</p> <p>Police 2: Because I said</p> <p>ness 3: Just don't hurt him</p> <p>Witness 4: (To cameraman) Did you get the full thing?...because that's just wrong.</p> <p>Witness 5: It's just not on, look at his head.</p> <p>JJ: I haven't done anything wrong</p> <p>Witness 6: Did you get it?...that's just not on</p> <p>Videographer: Yeah, I did, I did, I got it all</p> <p>Police 1: Everyone has to move over there, you can film but it has to be from over there. Enough's enough.</p> <p>Videographer: I'm not doing anything</p> <p>Police 1: I know that's fine, just move over there for me, for your safety and mine, just back there with the crowd. You two mam.</p>	<p>Jackson cuffed against the ground</p> <p>Camera moves through the crowd to find Jackson cuffed sitting up</p> <p>Jackson still sitting up, surrounded by police crying.</p> <p>CU on police officer badge</p> <p>Wide Police officer</p>	   
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<p>Witness 6: That's just wrong, how they trod on him. (Off camera)</p> <p>Witness 7: They just slammed his head and now there's blood all over the ground (crying)</p> <p>Witness 6: Do you know him?</p> <p>Witness 7: No, I've got no idea who this guys is</p> <p>Witness 6: It's just ridiculousdo you know that guy?</p> <p>Videographer: No I don't know him at all, I jut saw the police attack him, so that's why I started filming</p> <p>Witness 7: How can we trust the police force when that's the sort of shit they do in front of hundreds of people</p> <p>JJ's friend: I just want to know what your facebook name is so that I can get you...like...</p> <p>Witness 8: I've got a video of it as well, what's his name? Jamie Jackson.</p> <p>Witness 6: Look at his head...look at his head, look at his head, this is ridiculous.</p>	<p>Camera pan's back</p> <p>CU Witness describing events</p> <p>Camera pans to Jackson being consoled by his friend</p> <p>CU on Jackson's friend</p> <p>Wide to Jackson on the floor</p> <p>CUT</p>	  
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<p>Videographer: Can you tell me what happened, like what you saw?</p> <p>Witness 9: That shit was uncalled for. This is the gay community mate, they should be saving us.</p> <p>Videographer: No, no, yeah...</p> <p>Witness 10: smashed him on the pavement.</p> <p>Videographer: Can you tell me what happened?</p> <p>Witness 10: This one here...</p> <p>Grabbed him by the throat and smashed his skull on the pavement</p> <p>Witness 9: Take it to the police, I'm telling ya.</p> <p>Videographer: I will, I will.</p> <p>Witness 6: Not right, not good. Just make sure you get there badge numbers, because they're all involved.</p>	<p>MCU Witnesses on steps</p> <p>CU Witness 9</p> <p>Pan left to witness 10</p> <p>CU Witness 10</p> <p>Camera pans rapidly left again back to police officers and Jackson.</p> <p>CU on witness</p> <p>Wide on scene</p>	  
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Appendix 2: Coding Matrix – You Tube Comments

Source: (“Mardi Gras Police Brutality,” 2013)

Words Coded For

- News
- Media
- Specific Channel
 - (ABC, SBS, Seven, Nine, Ten)
- Other Media
 - (smh, Sydney Morning Herald , Daily Telegraph, The Australian)
- Specific Program
 - (Today Tonight, A Current Affair, ACA, Dateline, 7:30 Report, The Project, Sunrise, The Today Show, ABC News, Nine News, SBS News, Ten News)
- Social Media and Online
 - (Facebook, You Tube, Viral, Google, Twitter)

Coding Categorisation

All Sources

- Frequency
- Sentiment
 - Positive, Neutral, Negative

Specific Categories

- News/Media
 - News/Media as authority
 - News/Media as unreliable
- Specific Channel or Program or Other ‘mainstream media’
 - Channel/Program/Other as authoritative source
 - Channel/ Program/Other Media as unreliable
- Social Media or Online
 - Facebook as a means of accessing authority
 - Facebook as a negative space
 - YouTube as an authority
 - YouTube as a negative space
 - Google as an authority
 - Virility as a means of accessing authority
 - Virility as a negative phenomenon

Appendix 3: Coding Results

Word Coded For	News	Media
Frequency	○ 92 References	○ 100 References
Sentiment	○ 69 Positive ○ 9 Neutral ○ 14 Negative	○ 25 Positive ○ 10 Neutral ○ 65 Negative
News/Media as authority	○ 69 references viewed news as an authority	○ 25 references viewed the media as an authority
News/Media as unreliable	○ 14 references viewed news as unreliable source	○ 65 references viewed the media as an unreliable source

Word Coded For	Specific Channel (ABC, SBS, Seven, Nine, Ten)	Specific Program (Today Tonight, A Current Affair, ACA, Dateline, 7:30 Report, The Project, Sunrise, The Today Show, ABC News, Nine News, SBS News, Ten News)	Other Media (smh, Sydney Morning Herald, Daily Telegraph, The Australian)
Frequency	○ 15 References in total ○ (ABC: 4, SBS: 3, Seven: 3, Nine, 3, Ten, 2)	○ 30 References in total ○ (Today Tonight: 6, The Project: 6, A Current Affair, 5, ABC News: 5, Nine News: 3, Sunrise: 3, Ten News: 2)	○ 3 References in total ○ (smh, The Sydney Morning Herald: 3)
Sentiment	○ 15 Positive references	○ 30 Positive references	○ 3 Positive references
Channel/Program/Other as authoritative source	15 references viewed a specific outlet as an authoritative source	30 references viewed a specific program as an authoritative source	3 references viewed SMH as an authoritative source
Channel/Program/Other Media as unreliable	0 references viewed a specific outlet unreliable	0 references viewed a specific program as unreliable	0 references viewed smh as unreliable

Word Coded For	Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Google)
Frequency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Facebook: 43 ○ Google: 22 ○ YouTube: 15 ○ Twitter: 3 ○ Social Media: 8
Sentiment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Facebook: 33 Positive references, 10 Negative references ○ Google: 22 Positive references ○ YouTube: 9 positive references, 6 Negative references ○ Social Media: 3 Positive, 5 Negative
Facebook/ YouTube as a means of accessing authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Facebook: 33 ○ YouTube: 8
Facebook/YouTube as a negative space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Facebook: 10 ○ YouTube: 6
Google as an authority in itself	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Google: 22

Word Coded For	Viral
Frequency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Viral: 28 references
Sentiment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Positive: 20 ○ Negative: 8
Virility as a means of accessing authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 20 references
Virility as a negative phenomenon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 8 references

Appendix 4: News Broadcast Analysis

Source: (ABC News, 06/03/2013)

Audio	Vision Description
<p>David Cunrow: NSW police are investigating 2 separate allegations of excessive force at last weekends by officers at the Sydney Mardi Gras</p>	<p>Newsreader presentation</p> <p>Plasma: Rough Justice – Police Banners, NSW badge, Jackson surrounded and on the ground, Reflective clothing shining</p>
<p>David Cunrow VO : This Video posted on the Internet last night shows 18 y.o. Jamie Jackson being thrown to the ground and stomped on by a Police Officer</p>	<p>OV/L – Video – CU, Blood on carboard, wide pan, police throwing Jackson</p>
<p>David Cunrow VO: In a separate incident, Bryn Hutchinson says he was repeatedly kicked for trying to cross Oxford St, both men were charged with assaulting police</p>	<p>(Bryn Hutchinson Walk Up) OV/L - Images, cross fade, injuries bruising</p>
<p>Alex Greenwich: My Office and I know others have been overwhelmed with emails of other situations which are of great concern to me</p>	<p>Super: Alex Greenwich Sydney Independent MP Press conference</p>
<p>David Cunrow: But police say the incidents were isolated</p>	<p>OV/L – Jamie Jackson, face to the ground, foot on back</p>
<p>Asst Police Commissioner: In the scheme of things we don't have a super big problem</p>	<p>Super: Assistant Police Commissioner, Mark Murdoch . Press conference</p>
<p>David Cunrow VO: Police say the Ombudsman will oversee both investigations</p>	<p>OV/L – Jamie Jackson, handcuffed, bound white light behind him, desperation, background sound, chaotic</p>

SBS

Source: (SBS News, 06/03/2013)

Audio	Vision Description
<p>Janice Peterson: NSW Police have launched two separate investigations into allegations of police brutality at Sydney's Mardi Gras Parade</p>	<p>Newsreader presentation (Plasma Graphics: Sydney Mardi Gras, Gay Flag, Police Backs Turned)</p>
<p>Anton Enus: A Video Posted Online shows a policeman throwing a handcuffed 18 year old to the ground and putting a foot into his back</p>	<p>Newsreader presentation</p>
<p>Manny Tsigas: This amateur vision shows a man struggling with police just off oxford St at Saturday nights Mardi Gras –</p>	<p>(Jackson face reflectors police behind)</p>
<p>Jamie Jackson: 'What's his name I didn't do anything wrong'</p>	<p>(Throat grab, pulled back, moved around)</p>
<p>Tsigas: He's since been charged with assaulting police, resisting arrest and using offensive language but his apprehension has come under intense scrutiny</p>	<p>(Cut Cardboard blood, body slam) (Boot on back, face planted, moans from Jackson)</p>
<p>Tsigas: After the man is thrown to the ground shocked onlookers are told to stop filming, they refuse</p>	<p>Seven News Interview</p>
<p>Jackson: I didn't deserve to be treated that way, just got pretty heated, I'm just completely in shock about the whole thing, it could have been dealt with so much easier.</p>	
<p>Tsigas: The footage posted last night has since gone viral, the NSW police say an internal investigation has been launched and no one should rush to any judgment</p>	<p>(Commissioner Walk Up)</p>
<p>Asst Comissioner: 'the gentleman's in handcuffs for a reason I would suggest, but again we just need to see what the investigation discloses</p>	<p>Press Conference: Assistant Police Commissioner</p>
<p>Tsigas: Mardi Gras organisers agree the vision they say is distressing on a number of levels</p>	<p>(Tsigas in wide shot talking to 'Mardi Gras organiser')</p>
<p>Michael Rolik: It actually brought a tear to my eye, you know we all put in a 110% effort to make this a very safe event and very welcoming, that's what we are all about.</p>	<p>Super: Michael Rolik, Mardi Gras Organiser</p>

<p>Sometimes things don't go as planned and that's what's happened here.</p> <p>Tsigas: Police are also investigating a second incident involving a man who's since been charged with assaulting police, he claims he was thrown to the ground by a group of officers as he tried to cross Oxford St</p> <p>Tsigas PTC: Police are now calling for witnesses to come forward they say they had around a 1000 officers patrolling crowds of up to 200,000 people and despite these two incidents their still considering the night a success.</p> <p>Tsigas: But one Sydney MP says he's received dozens of reports of questionable behavior by police</p> <p>Greenwich: There were more than just these two incidences, my office and I know others have been overwhelmed with emails of other situations which are of great concern to me and I'll be following those up directly with the police and the police minister</p> <p>Tsigas: Both men are due to appear in court in April, Manny Tsigas, World News Australia</p>	<p>(Cross Fade: Bruising Images)</p> <p>(top left super- samesame.com.au)</p> <p>Tsigas PTC on Oxford St</p> <p>O/L – parade roll in</p> <p>Press Conference Alex Greenwich</p> <p>(Jackson on the ground, surrounded, flashing lights)</p>
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Seven

Source: (Seven News, 06/03/2013)

Audio	Vision Description
<p>Peter Mitchell VO: A teenager at the centre of Police brutality claims at Sydney's Mardi Gras</p> <p>Peter Mitchell VO: Believes he could have died during his violent arrest, an investigation has been launched into Jamie Jackson's treatment,</p> <p>After video of him being thrown to the ground went viral on the internet</p> <p>Jackson: It was completely unnecessary the amount of force they were using...and it just got</p>	<p>(Body Slam) (First on Seven)</p> <p>Super: Brutality Claims: Investigation Launched over Mardi Gras Incident</p> <p>(Throat Grab)</p> <p>(Body slam)</p>

<p>pretty heated and I'm just completely in shock about the whole thing.</p> <p>Peter Mitchell VO: Despite being shaken up by the incident, the 18 year old says he has nothing but respect for Police</p>	<p>(First on 7 2X)</p> <p>Jackson Interview</p> <p>(Jackson on the floor, surrounded)</p> <p>(Boot on back)</p>
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Nine

Source: (Nine News 06/03/2013)

Audio	Vision Description
<p>Peter Hitchener: Sydney Police are in damage control after a teenager accused them of brutality during the Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras. Video has emerged of the young man in handcuffs being thrown to the ground. This report from Simon Bouda</p>	<p>OV/L – Jackson, surrounded by police, struggling, police insignia clearly visible</p>
<p>Simon Bouda VO: ‘Police brutality’ –</p>	<p>OV/L – portrait vision, wide, context, police surrounding him, C/ blood on the cardboard, wide pan slam.</p>
<p>Jackson: WHATS HIS NAME, WHATS HIS NAME, I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG-</p>	<p>Body Slam</p>
<p>Bouda VO: ‘or rough justice? It doesn't matter, it was ugly.</p>	<p>A police boot lands on his back</p>
<p>Bouda VO: ‘or rough justice? It doesn't matter, it was ugly.</p>	<p>A Current Affair Interview</p>
<p>Jackson: I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG –</p>	<p>OV/L – Wide, Police, pan down, Jackson, boot on back</p>
<p>Bouda: with his hands cuffed behind his back, 18 year old Jamie Jackson is slammed to the ground.</p>	<p>Witness Interview</p>
<p>Police: STAY ON THE GROUND,</p>	<p>Witness 2 interview</p>
<p>Onlookers: NO NO</p>	<p>OV/L - Unclear, police running in, arrest</p>
<p>Bouda: A Police boot lands on his back</p>	<p>Footage unclear, portrait mode in blurred frame</p>
<p>Jackson: ‘I could have been killed, like the way he threw me to the ground, like the way I hit my head in the wrong position, you know it was just crazy like.</p>	<p>OV/L throat grab</p>
<p>Bouda: His friends and onlookers were horrified</p>	<p>Super: “was thrown around like a rag doll’ – dramatic typeface</p>
<p>Witness: This guy here, grabbed him by the throat and smashed his skull on the pavement</p>	<p>Super: “was thrown around like a rag doll’ – dramatic typeface</p>
<p>Witness 2: there's blood all over the ground, (weeping)</p>	<p>Super: “was thrown around like a rag doll’ – dramatic typeface</p>

<p>Bouda: This is how it began</p> <p>Bouda: Police wrestling with Mr. Jackson on the corner of Oxford and Riley St's during the weekends Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras.</p> <p>Audio OV/L Witness 2: We just saw you whack his head against the ground, his blood is on the ground because of you</p> <p>Bouda: After seeing the footage, Jamie's father, Damien said he 'was thrown around like a rag doll'</p> <p>Asst Police Commissioner: We have seen but one small part of what is clearly a much larger incident</p> <p>Bouda: Mr. Jackson was charged with assaulting police resisting arrest and using offensive language</p> <p>Bouda: Bryn Hutchinson also claims he was injured by police that night, it was excessive use of force for no reason</p> <p>Bouda: He says he was set upon when he tried to cross Oxford St. after the parade had passed</p> <p>Bouda: He suffered bruising to his arms legs and body</p> <p>Hutchinson: I'm alleging that there was an assault that took place and it was the police that did it</p> <p>Unknown talent: we'll be asking the police to investigate that as well</p> <p>Bouda: Mr. Hutchinson has also been charged with assaulting police, Simon Bouda, Nine News</p>	<p>Press conference</p> <p>OV/L – Jackson on the ground, white, surrounding</p> <p>OV/L – Hutchinson, MCU face</p> <p>OV/L – Walk up</p> <p>CU - Bruising</p> <p>Interview</p> <p>Interview</p>
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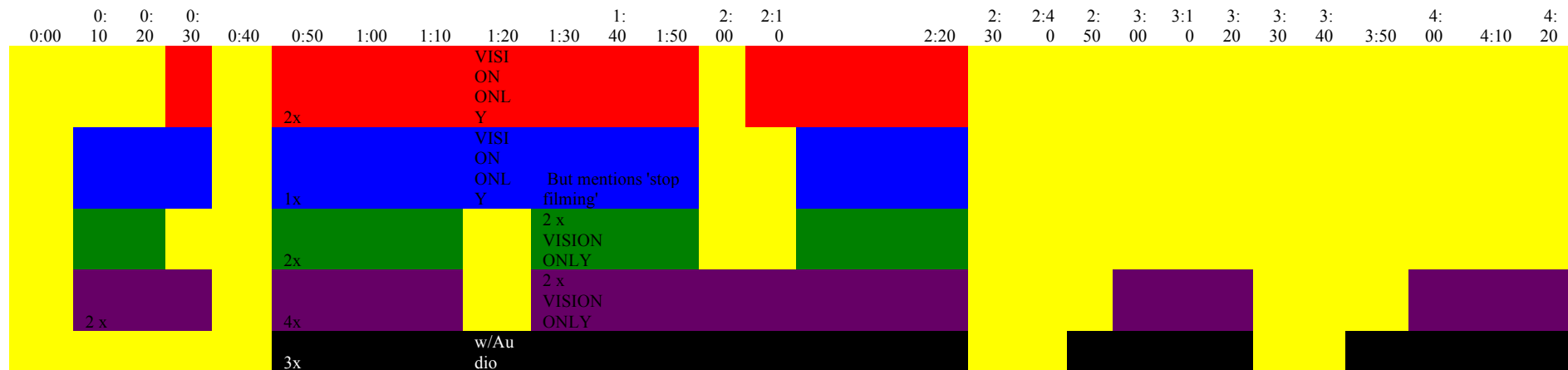
Ten

Source: (Ten News, 06/03/2013)

Audio	Vision Description
<p>Mal Walden: Police in Sydney are defending their tactics after two serious claims of brutality at last weekends Mardi Gras, the alleged victim, a teenager and a respected rights campaigner</p>	<p>News reader presentation</p>
<p>A warning that this report from Lachlan Kennedy contains graphic images</p>	
<p>Witness: ‘its all on video - we just saw you wick his head against the ground</p>	<p>(Jackson pulled away, swung from left to right, reflective visor foreground)</p>
<p>Jackson: I did nothing wrong-</p>	
<p>Witness: His blood is on the ground because of you and then you punched him.</p>	<p>(Cross fade, blood, on cardboard)</p>
<p>Jackson: ‘I did nothing wrong,</p>	<p>(body slam)</p>
<p>Witnesses: shrieks - Jamie! Woooah!</p>	
<p>Witness - That’s way wrong</p>	<p>(Jamie, boot on back, face plant floor)</p>
<p>Lachlan Kennedy: ‘The young man in handcuffs is 18 y.o. Jamie from Sydney’s south, police allege he swore, and then was aggressive, a second video appears to show him take a swing, whether that warranted this reaction is now under investigation.</p>	<p>(Second video, portrait shot, unclear)</p> <p>(Body Slam)</p>
<p>Videographer: Can you tell me what happened?</p>	
<p>Witness: This one here, (sharp pan right – then pan back) took him by the throat and then smashed his skull on the pavement.</p>	<p>Witness 1 Interview</p>
<p>Lachlan Kennedy: The video rolls for 4 minutes and captures onlookers reduced to tears</p>	
<p>Witness 2: no I’ve got no idea who this guy is</p>	
<p>Witness 3: that’s just ridiculous</p>	
<p>Lachlan Kennedy: Repeatedly officers ask for the filming to stop, something they have no right</p>	<p>Witness 2 Interview</p>

<p>to request.</p> <p>Videographer: ‘Its not against the law, I know its not against the law’</p> <p>Officer: ‘Stop filming’</p> <p>Videographer: Well I don’t have to</p> <p>Asst Commissioner: Unfortunately it shows a degree of naivety of the police involved that made those comments</p> <p>Lachlan Kennedy: There are separate allegations of brutality from gay rights advocate Bryn Hutchinson; he claims several officers threw him to the pavement.</p> <p>Alex Greenwich: There were more than just these two incidents, my office and I know others have been overwhelmed with emails</p> <p>Lachlan Kennedy: Journalist Serkin Oz Turk has also received several reports of excessive force</p> <p>Oz Turk: ‘This is probably just the incident that blows the lid maybe, there’s obviously serious questions to be answered here</p> <p>Assistant Commissioner: The NSW police force treat the matter very seriously and will deal with it in accordance with the evidence</p> <p>Lachlan Kennedy: In both instances the officers were brought in from Western Sydney, they were reportedly briefed on how to handle Mardi Gras crowds</p>	<p>Witness 3 Interviews (Jamie throat grab 2nd angle)</p> <p>Videographer interacting with police officer</p> <p>Press conference (Bruising, photo slideshow)</p> <p>(Wide talking to Kennedy)</p> <p>Press conference (Jamie throat grab, blood cardboard, body slam)</p>
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Appendix 5: Sections of uploaded footage utilised by networks



Dialogue in Clip



Ohhh
h!

That's wrong!

Jacks
on Jackson
cry crying

I didn't do anything wrong

Do you
know
him?

No Ive got no
idea who this
guy is.

How can
we trust
the
police
force?

Look at his
head!

this one here,
grabbed him
by the throat and
smashed his skull
on the
pavement

I will,
I will.

**Vision in
Clip**

	0:00	0:10	0:20	0:30	0:40	0:50	1:00	1:10	1:20	1:30	1:40	1:50	2:00	2:10	2:20	2:30	2:40	2:50	3:00	3:10	3:20	3:30	3:40	3:50	4:00	4:10	4:20
(Throat Grab 1)			(CU Cop Badge)	(Fluro Vest s)	(BO DY M)	(BO DY M)		(Boot on back)		(BOOT ON THE BACK CRYING)	(Pan up to police officer)		(Sitting, Surround ed)	(Sitting Crying)		(Co p wid e)		(Witness Interview 1)	(Witness Interview 2)		(Wide, Police surrounding)	(Witness interview 3)			(Witness 4)		

KEY

ABC	Red
SBS	Blue
SEV	Green
EN	Dark Green
NIN	Purple
E	Black
TEN	Black

Key

Videographer	Red
Jacks on	Blue
Police	Green
Witness 1	Purple
Witness 2	Orange
Witness 3	Light Green

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