USE OF NARRATIVE STYLE IN BROADCAST NEWS

JENNIFER KRISTIN LONG
MAY 2013

Randy Reeves, Chair
Kent Collins
Greeley Kyle
To my parents: Thank you for being the rock I know I can turn to for emotional, mental and financial guidance. If it weren’t for you two I might be in a ditch in Kansas somewhere because I didn’t have the cash to rotate my tires before road tripping across the heartland. Thank you for paying for my hotel in Madison and my gas in Minneapolis. Your faith in me and in this project is what made it special. If it weren’t for your investment it just wouldn’t have been possible and for that I’m extremely thankful.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

4,500 miles, countless coffees and one too many karaoke sessions later, this project turned out being much more than I ever thought it could be. I went to places I never thought I would go and met so many great journalists I never dreamed of talking to in person. From knocking on trailer doors in Beloit, Wisconsin, to hiking through the muddy trails of Big South Fork Tennessee, this project let me see some of the best journalists and storytellers at work. Even the dream of doing this project would not have been possible without the support and love of my family, friends and the faculty members at the University of Missouri School of Journalism.

The biggest support came from my graduate faculty committee members. I truly believe I had the best committee a girl could ever ask for. I was blessed with a committee that had a healthy balance of people who pushed me when I needed to work harder, made me laugh when I took myself (and this project) too seriously and gave me the kindest and most sincere listening ear when I thought I couldn’t make any of this happen. If it weren’t for these three wonderful professors this project topic wouldn’t have even been a thought of mine.

To Randy Reeves: Thank you for your support and guidance throughout the inner workings of this crazy maze. When I thought about whom I could trust and feel comfortable working on this project with, you were the one who came to mind. Your faith that this project would eventually come together helped me believe it would too. I can’t thank you enough for connecting me with some of the best journalists around. Your dedication to keeping the Mizzou Mafia strong and making
students at Missouri some of the best young journalists in the country couldn't be more inspiring and exciting. Thank you for helping me realize just what this project could be and for giving me the freedom to pursue this crazy idea.

To Greeley Kyle: Thank you for helping me discover this project. Your words of wisdom will never leave me. “If you do something you're interested in you'll enjoy it much more.” That advice carried me through this project and has spurred my excitement for the road ahead. Thank you for your encouraging emails while I was on the road. When I told people I got a “great job” from Greeley, well, needless to say they were impressed, not because of what I did, but because they know that means something coming from you. Thank you for being tough on all of us. The fact that many of the journalists who participated in my research mentioned your name as an influence or a mentor is no coincidence. Your love for teaching and your love for this work have made many what they are today.

To Kent Collins: Thank you for giving me the opportunity to work on your innovative project. Your drive to do something so groundbreaking is impressive for many people in the industry. But for those of us who know just what it took to get Stay Tuned on the air, your work this year has been amazing. Thank you for teaching me that there is so much more to reporting than interviewing the suits and the scarves. It’s about the people who are living this life. Thank you for believing in this kind of journalism and believing that I could do something like this. Your love for life reminds me how wonderful this business can be, and also how important it is to have a world outside of work.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ........................................................................................................................................ ii
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS ...................................................................................................................................... vii
LIST OF TABLES .................................................................................................................................................. viii
ABSTRACT ........................................................................................................................................................... ix

Chapter:

1. INTRODUCTION .............................................................................................................................................. 1

2. PROFESSIONAL SKILLS COMPONENT ........................................................................................................ 4
   Proposal .......................................................................................................................................................... 4
   Weekly Reports ............................................................................................................................................. 6

3. PROJECT EVALUATION .................................................................................................................................... 23
   Personal Evaluation ...................................................................................................................................... 23
   Supervisor Evaluation - KETC ...................................................................................................................... 26
   Supervisor Evaluation - KOMU ................................................................................................................... 27

4. PROOF OF WORK ............................................................................................................................................. 28
   Work at KOMU ........................................................................................................................................... 28
   Work at KETC ............................................................................................................................................. 53

5. RESEARCH COMPONENT ............................................................................................................................. 59
   Proposal ......................................................................................................................................................... 59
   Theoretical Framework ............................................................................................................................... 62
   History of the Narrative in Historical Literature and Journalism .............................................................. 65
   Literature Review ......................................................................................................................................... 67
Methodology .......................................................................................................................... 71
Recruitment and Interview Process ......................................................................................... 75
Definition of Narrative Storytelling ......................................................................................... 79
Use of Narrative ....................................................................................................................... 86
Objectivity in Narrative ........................................................................................................... 91
Conclusions, Research Limitations and Future Research ..................................................... 95

APPENDIX .................................................................................................................................. 100

A. Interview Notes KOMU Gun Crime ..................................................................................... 100
B. Interview Notes KETC Arts .................................................................................................. 107
C. Interview Notes KETC Secondary Education .................................................................... 109
D. Interview Notes KETC Arch Tax ......................................................................................... 116
E. Original Approved Proposal ............................................................................................... 119
F. List of Questions for Interviewees ...................................................................................... 139
G. Campus Institutional Review Board (IRB) Documentation ................................................ 140
H. Changes to Project ................................................................................................................ 152
I. Andy Choi Interview Transcript, February 17, 2013 ......................................................... 155
J. Boyd Huppert Interview Transcript, March 14, 2013 ....................................................... 163
K. Chris Vanderveen Interview Transcript, March 26, 2013 .................................................. 172
L. Fritz Wetherbee Interview Transcript, January 7, 2013 ...................................................... 180
M. Jana Shortal Interview Transcript, March 15, 2013 ............................................................ 190
N. Jeremy Nichols Interview Transcript, February 18, 2013 ................................................ 199
O. Jim Matheny Interview Transcript, March 19, 2013 ........................................................ 207
P. John Ferrugia Interview Transcript, March 25, 2013 ........................................................ 213
Q. Kevin Torres Interview Transcript, March 26, 2013 ........................................................ 220
# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Map of Gun Crimes in Columbia 2008</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Columbia Gun Crimes 2007-2012</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
USE OF NARRATIVE STYLE IN BROADCAST NEWS

Jennifer Long

Randy Reeves (Committee Chair), Greeley Kyle, Kent Collins

ABSTRACT

This research examines how reporters and photographers can use narrative style in daily news stories and in long-form investigative and feature pieces; and also the objectivity of the story style. This research was conducted through semi-structured in-depth interviews with 11 recognized storytellers who use narrative style in their work.

Research participants said total objectivity is unattainable in any story style because of a journalist's own biases and worldly experiences. However, data analysis showed there is a divide between respondents about using narrative style for story topics that are controversial or political. There was a link here with research question one. Respondents who said the narrative style could be used everyday for every story topic, also said the narrative is just as objective, if not more objective than the inverted pyramid style. Respondents, who said it’s hard to use the narrative everyday because it shouldn’t be used for every story topic, also said the narrative opens the door to less objectivity.

Because television viewership is changing, some stations are turning to narrative style to better engage viewers, because of this it is important to better understand how to use the style and whether or not the style is believed to be objective and truthful.
1. INTRODUCTION

I fell in love with journalism as an eager freshman, sitting in a squeaky bucket chair in a rundown lecture hall at Stony Brook University. What I didn't know about that preliminary news literacy course was it would be the start of an incredible journey. During my time at Stony Brook I learned the technical skills it takes to be a great reporter. Very quickly I learned that no matter what story or report you do as a journalist, it touches someone. One of the most moving experiences I had during my time at Stony Brook was on a reporting trip to the Gulf of Mexico a year after the BP oil spill in 2010. I take a look back now at an excerpt from one of my blog posts during that trip:

The story was the oil. The spill. The national media descended on this community and had the story: the biggest unintentional release of oil into a body of water in the history of the world.

But now there's a different story and no ones reporting it. Months later, the networks are gone. The local papers and television stations cover small stories, but in comparison to the summer, when reporters and cameramen swarmed the area, it's a starkly different world. Though the national media is physically gone, it continues to leave an impression.

Many, including myself before I came down here, believe the gulf is drowning in oil. But is it? From what I’ve heard people are trying desperately to get back to normal. These people aren’t looking for tons of media attention. It seems what they want is for the world to see that they’re trying to get back
on their feet. That they’re not knee deep in oil. Fish are abundant and people eat whatever they catch. Businesses, hotels, charter services and restaurants are open. But those who would usually come for vacations believe the beaches are black and the water is slimy. Will they be back in the spring? That’s the 20 billion dollar question.

It’s hard to have a real consensus on the impact of the oil. I don’t know. Scientists don’t know. We may never truly know the full impact of the Deepwater Horizon explosion. However, one thing is for sure. The situation down here is not as bad as I thought.

During that trip I began to realize people are at the heart of every story. It’s a simple principle known from childhood bedtime stories, fables and even some common jokes. I continued to discover the importance of humanizing stories throughout my time as a graduate student at the University of Missouri School of Journalism. Broadcast faculty at the school such as Greeley Kyle and Kent Collins taught me how important narrative storytelling is and how effective the method can be in communicating with the viewer.

For the past four months, I’ve had the privilege to work at KOMU-TV as a reporter and practice narrative style storytelling in broadcast news. Elements of the narrative, including characterization, point of view, plot, conflict and sometimes (but not always) resolution, have helped me look at each assignment as an opportunity to tell a story to the viewers, rather than a report.

What I sought to discover through this professional project is how people in
the broadcast journalism industry use narrative storytelling. I wanted to know when reporters use this method of story structure and why. I also wanted to challenge reporters on the objectivity of the style. Is the narrative style as objective, less objective or more objective than a straight news, inverted pyramid style news piece? This is an important topic of research because the industry is changing. Many Americans are turning away from their televisions and newspapers to get the daily news. In order for the broadcast news industry to stay relevant it has to give viewers a reason to tune in. Some stations are turning to storytelling to give viewers more than what they can get from a web story or a tweet. For that reason, it’s important to ask how and when reporters can use storytelling. Are certain topics off limits? Is it too artful for the daily news beast? Does it play with the viewer’s emotions too much? These are the hard questions that I asked some of the best storytellers in the business during the past four months.
2. PROFESSIONAL SKILLS COMPONENT

Proposal
For the professional skills component of my project I will work as a news reporter for the KOMU newsroom. When I start this project on January 21, 2013, I will have already completed television-reporting classes such as advanced television reporting, investigative reporting and the computer assisted reporting boot camp.

During my time as a graduate student, I worked in the KOMU newsroom playing multiple roles such as producer, anchor, web editor, and live, general assignment and investigative reporter. During this project I will focus my attention on reporting.

For this project I will work 30 hours a week for 14 weeks at KOMU starting the week of January 21 and ending the week of April 29. I will produce long-form investigative or feature narrative stories for sweeps. I will also work on occasion as a general assignment reporter, also practicing narrative style in day-turn packages and live-shots.

In addition to working at KOMU I will work as a reporter for KETC’s new public affairs broadcast Stay Tuned. One of my committee members Kent Collins is working with KETC (the PBS affiliate in Saint Louis) to create this new weekly show that will utilize social media to address social, political and public policy issues in the community. I will work as a reporter, photographer and field producer to produce the set-up piece every week. This will involve setting up interviews, researching topics and putting together in-depth narratives about how the weekly topic is affecting members of the community.
The professional skills component of this project will take constant researching, reporting, writing and photographing. Some of these pieces will be investigative in nature, which will involve making open records requests to obtain documents and data, while others will be human-interest stories. I will attempt to use narrative storytelling in every piece, no matter if it is a daily assignment, or a long-form feature or investigation.

To document my work for this professional project I will include important and pertinent aspects of the reporting process such as interview transcripts and notes. I will also include links to the aired stories along with the scripts. I will work closely with my committee chair Randy Reeves to make sure I am on track to have projects completed in time for the rating sweeps periods. Reeves works in the KOMU newsroom as the executive producer so he will be easy to access. He will also aid me in the scholarly analysis component of this project. University of Missouri assistant professors Greeley Kyle and Kent Collins will serve on the committee as my editors. Kyle and Collins will approve story ideas, help in the reporting process and edit scripts with me. Both have extensive background in television news and are experts in humanizing stories and utilizing storytelling techniques.

At this end of this project I will be well versed and educated in using narrative storytelling techniques in investigative, feature and daily pieces. This will help me greatly as I search for my first job in broadcast television, as I will be seeking out stations that value, invest in and encourage narrative-style storytelling in their broadcasts.
**Weekly Reports**

Week 1:

This week was dedicated to organizing my schedule and outlining my semester. I will be starting my daily shifts at KOMU next week. This week I emailed news director Stacey Woelfel and assignment editor Emily Spain to explain my responsibilities during my daily shift.

I also requested and obtained data from the Columbia Police Department for a story I will be working on for February sweeps. This data includes gun crimes in Columbia from 2007 to present. This story will analyze how gun crimes have changed over the years (possibly geographically where gun crime is most common). This will be an investigative/data story that I will produce for February sweeps. The goal of this project will be humanizing this crime issue. I need to find a neighborhood, family, mother, etc. to tell this story through. First however, I need to analyze the data. That will happen next week.

As for the research component of this project I have already conducted one interview. I interviewed Fritz Wetherbee, a longtime New Hampshire storyteller for the New Hampshire Chronicle (a long-form feature segment for WMUR, the Hearst affiliate in New Hampshire). I will be transcribing his interview next week and sending out emails to other possible research participants. Here are the other people I will be contacting:

Jason Lamb – Nashville (news) jlamb@newschannel5.com

Jim Matheeny – Knoxville (feature) jim.matheny@gmail.com
I sent out emails to Jason Lamb, Jim Matheny, John Ferrugia, Boyd Huppert and Andy Choi. I heard back from Lamb, Choi and Ferrugia. I have scheduled a visit to WISC (Madison, Wisconsin) to visit reporter Andy Choi from February 17-18. During that visit I will be doing a reporter shadow and interview. Lamb also agreed to a station visit and interview that I hope to do at the end of February/beginning of March. The only reason I haven’t set up a specific date is because I’m waiting to hear back from Jim Matheny who also works in Tennessee. John Ferrugia got back to me and told me he would speak to me when sweeps is over.

Week 2:

This week I did a daily reporting shift at KOMU as well as some data analysis for the Columbia gun crime story. The daily reporting shift was a little disappointing. I covered a memorial for Missouri veterans. I missed the opening ceremony for the event, which was unfortunate because there were veterans there, a possibility for good nats, etc. Even though I missed the actual event I thought I could find a way to humanize the story. Unfortunately I wasn’t able to contact any families of the veterans who were in attendance at the event. It just ended up being a VOSOT. During this shift I learned that you have to know when you’re not getting anything
and decide when to get onto a new story. It’s also important to remember that every thing won’t always go the way you planned.


Here is the work I’ve done on the Columbia Gun Crime data. I still have some analyzing to do and calls to make because in some cases there are multiple reports for one incident, which is throwing off my numbers. But here’s an initial analysis.

Table 1: Columbia Gun Crime 2007-2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count of Report_Title</th>
<th>Column Labels</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Row Labels</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROBGUN</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASSGUN</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHOTFIRE</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEAPVIO</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHOOTDwell</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VANAUTO</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEAPPOS</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISWEAPON</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This showed Robbery-Gun (ROBGUN) was the most common, Assault-Gun (ASSGUN) was the second most common, and Shots Fired (SHOTFIRE) was the third most common. It looks like robberies with guns jumped significantly between 2010 and 2011 (nearly doubled). Shots Fired incidents saw a similar jump from 2010 and 2011. I would like to try and plot out where the incidents are taking place.

This upcoming week I’ll be setting up the visit to Tennessee to visit Lamb and hopefully Matheny. I’ll also be doing another daily shift at KOMU, work on the Columbia crime data and continue transcribing the interview with Fritz Wetherbee.
I will also try to contact Boyd Huppert again. I’d like to have him in my project and I didn’t get a response so I’m going to keep trying.

Week 3:

Unfortunately this week I was sick and wasn’t able to do as much on my project as I would have liked. I wasn’t able to go in for a daily shift at KOMU because I was sick, but I did make some progress on my research. I transcribed the interview I did with Fritz Whetherbee of the New Hampshire Chronicle. The interview was an hour and a half so it took a few hours to go through. Whetherbee had a lot of good things to say about storytelling – he believes it’s not exactly objective or truthful, but neither is journalism as a whole because you’re always making decisions about what to cover, what to put first, who to talk to, what to leave in and what to leave out.

I also finalized plans for my trip to Madison, Wisconsin to visit Andy Choi at WISC. I will leave at the end of this week on Saturday February 16th and return on Tuesday February 19th. During the visit I will watch Andy anchor the Sunday evening newscasts and do a preliminary interview with him regarding narrative storytelling. I will then do a reporter shadow on Monday for the 5/6 newscasts. The trip to Tennessee is still in the works. Lamb told me he is planning a special shoot for the visit so the date is still not finalized.

This week I will be working on the Columbia crime data story. We have not set an official date that it will air, but Stacey says it will be at the end of sweeps (around February 25th). I will be going to NICAR to get help with analyzing and confirming what I have with my data and also ask questions about mapping. I will
also be contacting sources, collecting file footage and trying to get gun video. I think I will start by talking to the Columbia police department about gun crimes in the area. I’m not sure whom else to talk to about this. Activists? Will the data, the police and then the humanized aspect from a family be enough?

I was also thinking about trying to get started on a feature. I was thinking about looking into the historic buildings of Columbia. A lot of them are being torn down and there’s a big discussion about it. I’m wondering if the historical society gets money from the city. If so, how much? And what are they doing to protect these old homes and buildings? I thought it would be kind of cool to make the buildings the characters.

Week 4:

This week I solidified the analysis of the data I will use in my Columbia Crime Data story. Here is what I found:

Most Common Gun Crimes 2007-2012

1. Robberies with a Gun (25% of all gun crimes)

2. Assaults with a Gun (15% of all gun crimes)

3. Shots Fired (13% of all gun crimes)

These three incidents make up over half of all gun crimes in Columbia.

The total amount of gun crimes in Columbia has increase 65% since 2008 jumping from 170 incidents that year to 281 incidents in 2012.

And between 2010 and 2011 Robberies with Guns and Shots Fired increased significantly.
2010-2011 Shots Fired incidents increased by 80% (26 incidents to 47 incidents)

2010-2011 Robberies with Guns increased by 56% (44 incidents to 69 incidents)

A handgun is the most used weapon (nearly 70%)

Maps:

2012 RobberywithaGun -
http://batchgeo.com/map/f34b6c9b5694eb15c2a8a966c237b149

2012 AssaultwithaGun -
http://batchgeo.com/map/355e648ff55dcad957cf5f18602bb1ce

2012 ShotsFired –
http://batchgeo.com/map/5c68025d958c834b80474d710135a903

2012 RobAssaultShots -
http://batchgeo.com/map/5fdfc7f971279cc304cc5da6304041d8

2008 RobAssaultShots –
http://batchgeo.com/map/129dd8aefd9a645529918b1b8cd47636

2008 – 2012 50% increase in Robberies with a Gun, Assault with a Gun and Shots Fired

You can really see the increase in the maps.
Next week I am doing my interviews with Columbia PD, hopefully with both the detective and the crime analyst. I’m still looking for a CCC for the story. I contacted a few people through Facebook and through some local community groups but haven’t heard back from anyone. If I don’t get any responses I will go to a
neighborhood that had multiple incidents in the last year and start knocking on doors.

Officer John Logan: Detective of the Columbia Police Department's Major Crimes Unit 573-874-7412

Crime Analyst Jerry East: Columbia Police Department 573-874-7406

Chosen Generation Ministries: (573) 219-6125

I also worked at KOMU to collect some file footage of gun crime incidents. Next week I'm going to have to get creative with b-roll and request some graphics.

I'm leaving for Madison, Wisconsin tomorrow to do the interview with Andy Choi at WISC. I am still in the process of setting up the trip to Tennessee to see Jason Lamb and Jim Matheny, and the trip to Minneapolis to see Boyd Huppert and Jana Shortal.

Week 5:

This week was very busy. For the research portion of my project I was in Madison Wisconsin on Sunday and Monday. I was at WISC where I interviewed reporter Andy Choi and photographer Jeremy Nichols. This week I also set up an interview with CBS photographer Les Rose on Monday of next week and a visit to KARE in Minneapolis to visit Boyd Huppert and Jana Shortal in two weeks (March 4th).

On Wednesday I worked on getting interviews for my story on gun crime. I did an interview with a crime analyst at the Columbia Police Department and community activist Lorenzo Lawson (an organizer of Silence the Violence). After
sitting in voicemail purgatory for about a week I decided to make a trip to Como PD PIO Latisha Stroer’s office on Wednesday. She was very confused about who was supposed to do the interview with me for my story. First it was supposed to be detective Jon Logan, apparently next week it’s going to be with Captain Schlude. The interview is supposed to happen Monday or Tuesday.

On Sunday I went out to see if I could find a CCC for this story. In looking at the data I found the neighborhood right around Blue Ridge Elementary School saw around 7 incidents involving gun crime in 2012. That’s up from zero incidents in 2008. I think this neighborhood can be an example of what’s going on on a bigger scale citywide. If I can find a few families/parents to talk to me I think I can make this work. It looks like crime is increasing especially in the northeastern corner of the city.

I talked to a lot of people Sunday. I could only get one person to go on camera and I knew immediately they weren’t really CCC material. I collected a lot of broll of the neighborhood and city. The goal of the next two days is to find a CCC or turn the neighborhood into the CCC. I’ll be going to the school tomorrow when it opens to see if I can talk to some parents. The other obstacle is getting video of guns – ComoPD said no video of confiscated guns and no video of their guns. Next move will be going to gun shops – but my guess is they’ll probably say no when they hear what the story is.

Thursday and Friday I was basically on snow coverage duty. On Thursday I reported for the noon show and did a live shot in the crazy downpour. On Friday I
reported on the aftermath of the storm and did a live package. Here are the links to my work.


It will be a rush to get this finished for my Wednesday 10pm deadline. The script needs to be written Tuesday and the story edited on Wednesday.

Week 6:

This week my story on gun crime aired on KOMU. I was happy with how it came out.


I was a little upset that I couldn’t find one specific character to center this piece around. On Sunday and Monday I went out knocking on doors and actually met at least three people that could have potentially been the central compelling character. However, a lot of the people I met had reasons for not wanting to go on camera. This story took me out of my reporting comfort zone, which I think was a good experience for me. I went to parts of town I don’t normally go to and talked to people about things that I’ve never experienced. I also had to get creative by trying to figure out how to make this big story smaller and how to illustrate things I didn’t have footage of. Overall I think the piece turned out well and I learned a lot.

This week was also my last week co-anchoring at KOMU. I’ve been working as a co-anchor every Wednesday night since August while KOMU was looking for a
permanent staff member. The new staff member starts on Monday and I will have a different assignment as far as anchoring goes.

Next week the plan was to go to Minneapolis, however, recruiters coming to KOMU and a workshop entitled Writing Powerful Narratives will keep me in Columbia. I plan to reschedule the visit to Minneapolis for the following week and hopefully plan the trip to Nashville and Knoxville for the week after. My goal is to have all of the research completed by the end of March.

This week I will also transcribe the interviews that I did in Madison and with Les Rose at KOMU. I will also be researching for another story to do for KOMU – probably a feature this time.

Week 7:

This week I worked on setting up the final interviews for my project. I will have all of my research collected and transcribed by the end of spring break. Here is the list of interviews I will be doing.

March 13-15
Mitch Pittman – KSTP
Boyd Huppert – KARE
Jana Shortal – KARE
March 19
Jim Matheny - WBIR
March 25-26
John Ferrugia – KMGH
Chris Vanderveen – KUSA
I’ve already transcribed the interviews with Fritz Wetherbee (WMUR), Andy Choi (WISC), Jeremy Nichols (WISC), and Les Rose (CBS). By the end of this I will have done a lot more research than I originally thought, but I think it will give me a better analysis of this style of story crafting.

I’m still working daily shifts at KOMU and I’m looking for another long form feature idea. The sewer lagoon story idea may take shape in early April when the weather gets a little warmer and the snow melts.

Week 8:

This week I did a daily shift at KOMU at the beginning of the week and then traveled to Minneapolis during the second half of the week for my research. On Wednesday I met with Mitch Pittman, a one-man-band reporter who worked for KSTP. His contract at KSTP just ended and the station is not renewing him because they are phasing out their one-man-band reporters. He gave a good perspective about producing narrative stories as a multimedia journalist doing everything. He also gave some insight about working at a station that does not necessarily encourage storytelling. He hopes to get a job at either KING or KUSA in the coming months.

My time at KARE was like a dream come true. I talked to Boyd Huppert on Thursday and Jana Shortal on Friday. I thought it was interesting to get the thoughts of one of the most respected storytellers in the business. One of my questions is: Do you believe every topic or story can be told through the narrative? Boyd said without a shadow of a doubt yes. He told me about two recent stories he did on gun control and gay marriage and he used narrative storytelling to tell both pieces (one
a long-form feature, one a daily story). Jana said narrative style storytelling isn’t appropriate for every topic and sometimes it’s better to just tell the viewer the facts.

Week 9:

This week I went to WBIR in Knoxville. I did an interview and job shadow with Jim Matheny, a one-man-band daily and long-form reporter. Jim works as a daily reporter throughout the week and also works on a feature franchise called “Namesake.” The namesake feature stories explain where the names of different locations or landmarks originate.

On Tuesday I shadowed Jim on a shoot for a Namesake piece. He used to do one story a week but now does one a month due to scheduling. We went to “No Business” in the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area. Jim taught me about his equipment and how to manage doing everything as a one-man-band reporter. We hiked down into the national forest and had to cross a creek in one of the station vehicles. It was a pretty exciting shoot.

At the end of the week I traveled to Denver. I will do interviews with John Ferrugia and some reporters at KUSA next week. Next week I will also work to try and get the majority of my transcribing done.

1. Fritz Wetherbee – Transcribed
2. Andy Choi – Transcribed
3. Jeremy Nichols – Transcribed
4. Les Rose – Transcribed
5. Mitch Pittman – Transcribed
6. Boyd Huppert – Transcribed
Week 10:

This week I went to Denver and visited KUSA and KMGH. KUSA is well known in the journalism world as a strong photography and storytelling shop. I talked to Chris Vanderveen and Kevin Torres at KUSA. Vanderveen is a general assignment reporter and also works for the station’s Storytellers franchise. Vanderveen says the station has been busy this year with the Aurora Colorado Theater shooting, a tough fire season, kidnappings and the murder of the state’s department of corrections officer. He said the challenge is being able to decide when storytelling is needed and when to just go with the facts. When news breaks, it’s usually just a struggle to get the information and relay it to the public. Days or weeks later is the time to do some more in-depth storytelling. Vanderveen says a lot of the stories featured on the station’s weekly Storytelling franchise are features, and he says features are some of the hardest narratives to do. He said it’s easy to get people to care about breaking news; it’s not as easy to make an obscure feature relevant and interesting to everyone.

Kevin Torres has only been working for KUSA for about three years. He is also a general assignment reporter but manages the Storytellers franchise. He works as both a one-man-band and on a reporter/photog team. Torres was one of the first
reporters on the scene after the Aurora Theater shooting and has traveled all across the state for the Storytellers franchise. Torres also talked about the importance of storytelling but that it shouldn’t be done for every subject all of the time. He also said:

I don’t think having a shop that does all storytelling is a necessarily good idea. We have a lot of generic reporters too who just report a, b, and c. But they’re needed because I feel that you can’t always do it because then it doesn’t make it as special. I mean it’s great to have, out of maybe 10 stories in a newscast; maybe one of them is a storytelling piece.

While I was in Denver I also talked to Missouri Honor Medalist John Ferrugia at KMGH. Ferrugia is my only investigative reporter in this project and I wish I had interviewed more. Ferrugia said characters are crucial to every single piece he does. He also said he wouldn’t be able to report without the narrative. He said every single issue could lend itself to the narrative except for maybe the “you paid for it” type stories. Ferrugia also talked about how the digital age is changing journalists. He said technology is weakening the narrative we have with each other. He said:

What I’m always looking for is essentially a porthole through which I can look at the horizon through; which I can see the much broader systemic and public policy issues and that’s where narrative comes in. It’s actually the basis of what we do in investigations.

Week 11:

Week 11 was almost solely dedicated to transcribing interviews. By the end of the week I was able to finish all of the transcriptions. Now that I have all of my
research gathered I need to work on the analysis. I anchored at KOMU this week and have been interviewing for reporter/MMJ positions.

Week 12:

This week I traveled with Kent Collins to Washington DC for the 2013 Hurley Symposium. The daylong conference focused on how social media is changing the way people consume news. Kent, as well as some people from KETC, spoke about Stay Tuned and second screen innovation. Part of Kent’s research is to understand how social media can add value to television news and the public forum. What I found interesting throughout the discussion at the symposium is how the narrative can be affected by the influence of technology. I was reminded of my interview with journalist John Ferrugia. He spoke about how dependence on technology for communication can be dangerous. He said the reporters coming out of journalism school now don’t have the same skills people of his generation have. He said he noticed many journalists communicate through emails and through social media, not through the interpersonal narrative. He said this is important to identify and think about because we need to figure out a good balance when using new technologies.

It was great to talk to Jack Galmiche, the president and chief executive officer of the Nine Network of Public Media, and Ed Reggi, Stay Tuned’s social media strategist, about what works and what doesn’t with Stay Tuned. Reggi said it’s sometimes difficult to figure out whom to have on the Google Hang outs and who to have as live interviewers during the show. He said there seems to be a little lack of consistency in that department. He also said it’s a weekly struggle to figure out how
to get viewers and community members engaged on social media. The show has seen some improvement since it first went on the air in November but there is still a lot left to do.

Week 13:

This week was dedicated to interpreting the research I have and putting my project together. I will also be working on putting a power point together for Kent’s KETC project that will identify how to get people involved on social media during Stay Tuned. For different show topics I will identify what kind of people we want to have in the discussion and what kind of questions we should ask them to get them involved.

Week 14:

This week I worked at KOMU as the Tiger Chair. My job for the 5pm and 6pm newscasts was to edit and approve broadcast scripts and web stories. At the end of the week I will be traveling to Saint Louis with five other KOMU reporters for the Society of Professional Journalists regional conference. We will all be receiving regional Mark of Excellence awards for our work at KOMU. I will receive awards for three stories I produced last semester. What I find interesting is I used narrative style for all of these three pieces. One was a daily story, one was a long-form feature and one was a long-form investigation. The rest of my time has been dedicated to writing and finishing this project.
3. PROJECT EVALUATION

Personal Evaluation
My work at KOMU and KETC during the past few months involved some deviation from my original proposal. Throughout the course of the semester I realized that my work on Kent Collin’s Reynolds Journalism Institute fellowship project should be included in my final product. The goal of Collins’ project was to create a public affairs broadcast on the Saint Louis PBS affiliate KETC. The show, Stay Tuned, utilizes social media to engage the public on community issues during the weekly, hour-long show. My role on the project was to produce the setup piece for each week’s broadcast, and every week I rotated between the jobs of reporter, photographer and field producer.

The purpose of the setup piece is to introduce the show topic to the audience and explain how it affects real people in the community. Our team of reporters found narrative storytelling to be a great method of story structure in our assignments. However, we found that the narrative wasn’t always an easy sell to the producers and organizers of the show. Many times we were asked to get straight to the facts, instead of spending time developing central compelling characters. On certain assignments we were told to interview multiple experts and power players instead of finding real people who were affected by the decisions of people in power.

This was a constant struggle and completely different from my experience at KOMU. Working with KETC on Stay Tuned was important because I experienced first hand some of the challenges that come along with using narrative storytelling. Sometimes you have to fight to keep certain characters in the story. This was an
important experience because I got to learn what happens at a real news operation. At KOMU, because it is part television station, part university teaching lab, I had the freedom to pursue whatever stories I wanted and construct them in any way I wanted. I believe that was an important freedom to have a student, however it was also important to experience how a different newsroom operates.

During my work at KOMU, I found that daily use of narrative storytelling is not always easy and sometimes isn’t best method of story structure. I realized storytelling in daily assignments could be difficult because extra time is always scarce and the daily news beast is always starving. I learned you don’t always need extra time to incorporate elements of the narrative into daily assignments, however sometimes things just don’t pan out the way you had planned. After this happened to me a few times I realized that it was ok. In discussing this with my graduate faculty and with research participants I found that it’s just the nature of the beast. If there were no such thing as deadlines we could make things perfect, but because we are under time constraints we do our best with what we have.

I ended up doing much less at KOMU than what I had specified in my proposal. This is because I decided to focus heavily on the research aspect of this project. I made this decision because I believed conducting in-depth interviews in person would garner better, and more honest results. I think this decision was the right one. Meeting and shadowing these journalists not only gave me extra insight for this project, but it helped me better understand some of the obstacles I came to face when using this story structure in my own work. The questions that I asked of these journalists were not easy ones. Doing interviews in person allowed me the
exciting opportunity to watch these journalists think and wrestle with some of the ideas.
Supervisor Evaluation - KETC

From Kent Collins, Reynolds Journalism Institute Fellow and Committee Member:

Jennifer Long, as a member of the KETC team for Stay Tuned, a weekly public affairs program.

Jenn Long became the lead reporter on a complicated public affairs collaboration between the Reynolds Journalism Institute and the Ninetworks of KETC Television in St. Louis. As such, she did outstanding work in four areas:

- Conceptualizing a three-to-four minute television news package in consultation with me and with KETC staff members. The packages were in-depth stories about important issues in the St. Louis Region. Ms. Long often had to manage the conflicting editorial judgments of KETC and me.

- Researching the story, setting up interviews, traveling to St. Louis for field production, writing and editing the package.

- Shooting video and advising other reporters in the production team.

- Encouraging and directing some of the work of all RJI participants.

Ms. Long is attentive to detail, clear in communication and well focused in her chores.
Supervisor Evaluation - KOMU

May 1, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

This is a letter in support of Jennifer Long and her work in the KOMU newsroom. Jen has served the newsroom in a multitude of jobs over her two years at the University of Missouri. This work culminated in her Masters project work in the spring semester of 2013.

Jen worked a number of news reporter shifts turning daily work with precision and timeliness. She also contributed uncounted hours in the development of a large investigative story, documenting the changing landscape of growing city of Columbia. This report involved digging through mountains of data to find out where the most serious crimes have occurred in the past year and how that compares to previous yearly reports. This showed how certain neighborhoods have changed as the years progressed. It was detailed and insightful and was a significant part of our promotable news coverage during the all-important February ratings period.

In short, her work was outstanding. She completed every task she was assigned and served as a newsroom leader throughout her project. She can and should be lauded for her work.

Sincerely,

Randy Reeves
Associate Professor, Missouri School of Journalism
Executive Producer, KOMU-8 News
4. PROOF OF WORK

Work at KOMU

**C02 - 1 V-VETERANS...**

CAM: 6

---

**17:39:00, Amy Fenton**

(VERONICA ON CAM))

COLUMBIA COMMUNITY MEMBERS GATHERED THIS MORNING TO REMEMBER FALLEN SOLDIERS FROM ACROSS MISSOURI.

((TAKE VO))

THE "REMEMBER OUR FALLEN" MEMORIAL OPENED TODAY. PICTURES OF THE SOLDIERS, AS WELL AS NOTES FROM FAMILY MEMBERS ARE ON DISPLAY.

ONE VETERAN SAID THIS MEMORIAL IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE IT HONORS LOCAL VETERANS.
17:39:00, Amy Fenton

"These are the people you know. These are you neighbors and they can get even more from it. It's not just, 'Hey we support our veterans' it's 'Hey we support veterans and these people that come from our own lives, our own neighbors, our own friends and family' and I think that's why it's the most important."

((VERONICA/RESUME VO))

The memorial will be at the Columbia/Boone County Public Health and Human Services Office until February 8th.
CAM:

((ANCHOR ON CAM))

OVER THE PAST
FIVE YEARS IT SEEMS LIKE WE'VE HEARD MORE ABOUT GUN CRIMES IN COLUMBIA.

BUT IS THAT PERCEPTION OR REALITY?

WE DECIDED TO TAKE A LOOK AT DATA FROM THE COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT TO FIND OUT.

REPORTS INVOLVING GUNS HAVE BEEN ON THE RISE IN THE PAST FEW YEARS, BUT THERE'S NO ONE ANSWER AS TO WHY GUN CRIME IS GOING UP, WHERE IT'S HAPPENING, OR HOW TO FIX THE PROBLEM.
1 P-GUN CRIME...

TAKE PKG
RUNS = ???

*CG [1] 2LINE: WOODLAND
DRIVE: COLUMBIA

31

11:14:43, Jennifer Long

((TAKE PKG))

((NATS - CARS
ROLLING UP))

IT'S A TYPICAL MORNING AT BLUE RIDGE ELEMENTRY...

BROTHERS AND SISTERS HEADED INTO SCHOOL...

((NATS: KIDS SAY BYE))

BUT THE AREA IN A ONE MILE RADIUS OF THIS SCHOOL IS MOVING FROM READING WRITING AND ARITHMETIC TO SHOTS FIRED, ARMED ROBBERIES AND ASSAULTS WITH GUNS.

"IT SOUNDED JUST LIKE FIRECRACKERS BECAUSE THERE WERE SO MANY SHOTS RIGHT AWAY."

"WE JUST NEED TO DO SOMETHING TO STOP THIS CRIME THAT IS GOING ON."

THIS NEIGHBORHOOD IN NORTHEAST COLUMBIA HAS SEEN A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE

*CG [1] 2LINE: DEREK TARWATER
|NEIGHBOR

*CG [1] 2LINE: BENITO MENDEZ|FATHER
IN GUN CRIME REPORTS OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS.

THIS MAP SHOWS IN 2008 THERE WERE NO REPORTED INCIDENTS IN INVOLVING GUNS IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD.

LAST YEAR THERE WERE AT LEAST 7 REPORTED INCIDENTS RIGHT ON THESE STREETS:

((NAT. CARS ROLLING BY ON BUS70))

WE LOOKED AT DATA FROM THE COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT TO SEE WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING IN THE REST OF THE CITY.

AND REPORTS OF ARMED ROBBERIES, ASSAULTS WITH GUNS AND SHOTS FIRED INCIDENTS HAVE BEEN ON THE RISE.

HERE'S A MAP OF ALL OF THE INCIDENTS IN 2008.

NOW TAKE A LOOK AT 2012. THAT'S NEARLY A 60% INCREASE IN
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3 P-GUN CRIME...</th>
<th>11:14:43, Jennifer Long</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*CG [1] 2LINE LATISHA STROER</td>
<td>COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REPORTS FILED INVOLVING GUNS:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;WE'RE TRYING TO GET A HANDLE ON SOME OF THE GUN VIOLENCE THAT IS OCCURRING.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLUMBIA POLICE PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER LATISHA STROER SAYS 2011 SAW THE MOST INCIDENTS INVOLVING GUNS.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STROER SAYS THE DEPARTMENT DOESN'T KNOW WHY GUN CRIME IS INCREASING IN THE CITY.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUT FREQUENT SHOTS FIRED INCIDENTS IN EARLY 2012, LIKE THE ONES AT CHUCKY CHEESE'S AND THE OLD BOONE TAVERN, PROMPTED POLICE TO GET MORE OFFICERS ON THE STREETS AND CITIZENS TO START INITIATIVES LIKE SILENCE THE VIOLENCE.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>*CG [1] 2LINE: LORENZO LAWSON</th>
<th>COMMUNITY ACTIVIST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I HAVE DONE MORE YOUNG FUNERALS IN COLUMBIA THAN I HAVE IN MY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WHOLE ENTIRE LIFETIME..."
COMMUNITY
ACTIVIST LORENZO LAWSON HELPED START THE SILENCE THE VIOLENCE MOVEMENT LAST SUMMER.
HE SAYS THE CONVERSATION ABOUT GUN CRIME HAS TO START WITH THE CITY'S YOUTH.
"MEN AND WOMEN THAT ARE COMMITTING THESE CRIMES THEY HAVE THAT IN COMMON THAT THEY HAVE EITHER BEEN SUSPENDED OR DROPPED OUT OF SCHOOL, AND IT MAKES IT VERY DIFFICULT FOR THEM TO DO SOMETHING POSITIVE FOR THEM LIKE EARNING MONEY AND I BELIEVE THAT A LOT OF IT IS TIED TO ECONOMICS, DRUGS AND DRUG TERRITORIES."
"ANOTHER THEORY - INCREASE IN
CENSUS, OVER THOSE PAST TEN YEARS COLUMBIA'S POPULATION HAS INCREASED BY NEARLY 30%. THE COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT HAS SEEN PEOPLE MIGRATE TO THIS AREA FROM METROPOLITAN REGIONS LIKE KANSAS CITY, SAINT LOUIS, AND EVEN MEMPHIS AND NEW ORLEANS, AND WITH A BIGGER CITY COMES BIGGER PROBLEMS."

"AS COLUMBIA GROWS AND EXPANDS THERE WILL BE SOMETHING THAT IS MORE ASSOCIATED WITH A BIG CITY THAN WITH A SMALL TOWN."

COLUMBIA POLICE CRIME ANALYST JERRY EAST SAYS MANY OF THE GUN CRIMES IN THE AREA ARE BETWEEN PEOPLE WHO KNOW EACH OTHER.

"IT'S NOT A STRANGER ON STRANGER CRIME,"
STRANGER ON STRANGER CRIME, WHICH IS WHAT THE MAJORITY OF PEOPLE OUT THERE REALLY HAVE A WORRY FOR. SOMEBODY IS GOING TO A CERTAIN PERSON FOR A SPECIFIC PURPOSE WHETHER IT'S FOR DRUGS, GUNS OR MONEY OR WHATSOEVER."

AND THERE ISN'T ONE ANSWER TO THE PROBLEM.

"WE'RE JUST TRYING A LOT OF DIFFERENT THINGS TO SEE WHAT'S WORKING AND TO TRY TO BUILD THOSE RELATIONSHIPS IN THE COMMUNITY."

BUT WHEN THAT ACTIVITY MOVES INTO YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD,

"IT DOES BOTHER ME IT'S SCARY. THERE'S CRIME EVERYWHERE, EVERYWHERE YOU GO," OR WHERE YOUR KIDS GO TO SCHOOL...

"IT MAKES ME NERVOUS, BECAUSE MY
11:14:43, Jennifer Long
KIDS AND NOT JUST MY
KIDS BUT ALL OF THE
KIDS IN SCHOOL AND
IT'S PRETTY NUTS AND
IT'S NOT SAFE."
CAM:
*CG [1]
WEB_SNIPEDATA/INTERACTIVE
MAPS|SEARCH "GUN CRIMES"

11:14:43, Jennifer Long
(ANCHOR ON CAM)
TO FIND MORE
ANALYSIS OF THE DATA
FROM THE COLUMBIA
POLICE DEPARTMENT
AND TO SEE THE
INTERACTIVE MAPS
SHOWING WHERE
THESE INCIDENTS ARE
HAPPENING SEARCH
GUN CRIME ON OUR
WEBSITE KOMU.COM
A13 - 1 TOSS STATE ROADS...
CAM: 5

18:39:10, MATT EVANS

((ANGIE ON CAM))
MODOT IS DOING
ITS BEST TO KEEP
THOSE HIGHLY
TRAVELED STATE
ROADS AND HIGHWAYS
CLEAR.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A14 - 1 TRANS STATE ROADS...</th>
<th>18:39:10, MATT EVANS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TRANS</td>
<td>((TRANS))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WE GO TO KOMU8'S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JENNIFER LONG WITH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>THE LATEST FROM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MODOT.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A15 - 1 V-STATE ROADS...

BP FULL
*CG [1]
NEWS_STANDUP_LIVE:JENNIFER
LONG
*CG,[1] 2LINE_LIVE:HIGHWAY
63[COLUMBIA
*CG [1] LIVE_BUG:

18:39:10, MATT EVANS

((BP FULL))
HEY ANGIE I'M HERE
OVER HIGHWAY 63 IF
YOU TAKE A LOOK
DOWN YOU CAN BARELY
SEE THE ROAD IT'S
COMPLETELY PACKED
DOWN WITH SNOW.
MODOT TRUCKS
HAVE BEEN OUT ALL
MORNING AND EVEN
INTO LAST NIGHT TO
TRY TO DEAL WITH THE
SNOW ON THESE
ROADS.
((TAKE VO))
MODOT HAS MORE
THAN 200 PLOWS OUT IN
THE MID-MISSOURI
AREA.

THOSE DRIVERS
ARE ON ROUTES THAT
FIRST TAKE CARE OF
THE MOST HIGHLY
TRAVELED ROADS LIKE
I-70, INTERSTATE 44,
HIGHWAY 50 AND RIGHT
HERE ON 63.

EACH TRUCK GOES
ABOUT 100 MILES
BEFORE IT HAS TO GO
BACK TO JEFFERSON
CITY AND FILL UP WITH
MORE GAS, SALT, SAND,
AND BEET JUICE TO
KEEP THE ROADS SAFE.

AND SO FAR
MODOT HAS BEEN
HAPPY WITH THE ROAD
CONDITIONS AND
PLEASANTLY
SURPRISED YOU ALL
ARE DOING YOUR BEST
TO STAY OFF THE
ROADS.
"I'D LIKE TO THANK
FOLKS, A LOT OF FOLKS
DID TAKE THE ADVICE
OF THE HIGHWAY
PATROL AND OTHER
FOLKS AND STAYED
HOME TODAY OUR
TRUCKS ARE MAKING
THEIR ROUTES REALLY
SMOOTHLEY TODAY
INDICATED BY OUR
FIELD PEOPLE...BUT IF
YOU DO HAVE TO GET
ON THE ROAD WE JUST
ASK THAT YOU GIVE THE
OTHER DRIVERS
PLENTY OF ROOM GIVE
OUR SNOW PLOWS
PLENTY OF ROOM, SO
TAKE YOUR TIME, JUST
TAKE IT EASY OUT
THERE."
BP FULL

*CG [1] LIVE_BUG:

18:39:11, MATT EVANS

((BP FULL))

MODOT HAS BEEN USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO GIVE LIVE UPDATES ON THE ROAD CONDITIONS OUT HERE.

MODOT HAS AN APP THAT YOU CAN DOWNLOAD FROM APPLE AND ANDROID THAT WILL SHOW YOU THE ROAD CONDITIONS. RIGHT HERE YOU CAN SEE MOST OF THE ROADS IN THE STATE ARE COMPLETELY COVERED.

BUT IF YOU ARE DRIVING KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE ROAD AND GO SLOW BECAUSE THERE'S STILL A LOT OF SNOW OUT HERE.

REPORTING LIVE IN COLUMBIA, JENNIFER LONG, KOMU8NEWS.
STUCK AND OUT OF LUCK... IF YOU ABANDONED YOUR CAR IN THE SNOW YESTERDAY, YOU MAY BE PAYING FOR IT TODAY... GOOD EVENING, I'M MEGHANN MOLLERUS. ((JIM)) TOWING COMPANIES ACROSS MID-MISSOURI HAVE BEEN WORKING THROUGH THE DAY TO GET THE CARS OUT OF THE DITCHES ... BUT THE BILL FALLS ON YOU. ((WINTER STORM TRANSITION)) KOMU8’S JENNIFER LONG JOINS US LIVE TO TELL US MUCH IT CAN COST YOU-- TO GET YOUR CAR BACK!
((LIVE FULL))

IF YOU HAD TO

LEAVE YOUR CAR OUT

YESTERDAY ON A

HIGHLY TRAVELED

ROAD... ODDS ARE

YOUR CAR IS ALREADY

GONE.

THE COLUMBIA

POLICE DEPARTMENT

AND MISSOURI HIGHWAY

PATROL ARE CALLING

TOW COMPANIES

ACROSS MID-MISSOURI

TO GET ABANDONED

CARS OFF THE ROADS.

NOW, AS FOR THE

COST OF THE TOW IT

REALLY DEPENDS ON

WHERE YOUR CAR IS

AND IF THE TOW

TRUCKS NEED TO DIG

OUT.

I TALKED TO ONE

WOMAN WHO SAID SHE

PAID MORE WHAT SHE

EARNED YESTERDAY TO

GET CAR BACK TODAY.
**A07 - 1 P-6 CAR IMPOUND...**

TAKE PKG
RUNS = 55
*CG [1] 2LINE:NEBRASKA AVENUE|COLUMBIA 1-5 ,
*CG [1] 2LINE:KARLA DORMAN|DRIVER 5-8

---

**18:36:41, MATT EVANS**

((TAKE PKG))
IT'S A SIMILAR STORY EVERYWHERE.
"WE WERE JUST TRYING TO GET HOME TO OUR FAMILIES AND TRYING TO BE SAFE..."

KARLA DORMAN HAD TO ABANDON HER CAR YESTERDAY...
MY CAR OBVIOUSLY COULDN'T MAKE IT THROUGH VERY MUCH SNOW...
SHE PLANNED TO COME BACK FOR IT TODAY.

BUT BEFORE SHE COULD GET IT IT TIGER TOWING DID.
HOW MUCH DID IT COST HER?
"WHOPPING 180 DOLLARS TO TWO IT FROM MIDWAY TO HERE."

TIGER TOWING OWNER DAVID DEBATES TOLD ME HIS CREW HAS TOWED AT LEAST 20 CARS TODAY... AND THE PRICE...

COULD RANGE FROM 60 DOLLAR...
WENCH OUT TO 300 DOLLARS IT JUST DEPENDS ON WHAT THE RECOVERY IS IF IT'S AN ACCIDENT RATE OR ROLL OVER THERE ARE SO MANY DIFFERENT VARIABLES ON PRICING.

KARLA UNDERSTANDS... BUT THE PRICE SHE PAID DOESN'T SIT WELL ...

A LITTLE BIT JIPPED WE JUST CAN'T AFFORD IT I WORKED ALL DAY YESTERDAY AND THIS IS COMING FROM THAT PAYCHECK JUST TO GO TO WORK IT
COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT TOLD ME IT'S AT LEAST A 2 HOUR WAIT FOR ANY OF THE TOW COMPANIES IN TOWN.

THE DEPARTMENT MAKES THE CALLS TO GET THE CARS TOWED BUT DOESN'T KEEP TRACK OF WHICH COMPANIES PICK UP WHAT CARS.

SO IF YOU BELIEVE YOUR CAR WAS TOWED YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO CALL AROUND TO SEE WHO HAS IT.

JENNIFER LONG, KOMU8NEWS, COLUMBIA.
C01 - 1 V-HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM...
CAM: 4/RPS

TAKE VO
*CG [1] 2LINE:KEENE
STREET|COLUMBIA

18:17:09, Brittany Pieper
((ANGIE ON CAM))
THE M-U CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL CELEBRATED THE OPENING OF A NEW WAITING AREA FOR ITS NEWBORN INTENSIVE CARE UNIT TODAY. ((TAKE VO))

THE HOSPITAL BUILT THE AREA TO MAKE PARENTS WHO HAVE NEWBORNS IN THE INTENSIVE CARE UNIT FEEL MORE AT HOME.

IT HAS A SHOWER FACILITY, FULL KITCHEN, LIVING ROOM, AND TELEVISIONS.

SOME OF THE BABIES IN THE INTENSIVE CARE UNIT CAN BE THERE FOR WEEKS AND EVEN MONTHS.

ONE DOCTOR SAYS IT'S IMPORTANT TO MAKE PARENTS FEEL COMFORTABLE.
C02 - 1 HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM...

TAKE SOT
RUNS=14
*CG [1] 2LINE: DR. JOHN
PARDALOS|NEONATOLOGIST

18:17:09, Brittany Pieper
((TAKE SOT))
"HAVING A WAITING
ROOM THAT CAN BE A
SANCTUARY FOR THE
FAMILIES TO GET AWAY
EVEN JUST FOR A FEW
MINUTES SO THEY CAN
REGROUP AND RELAX
FOR A FEW MINUTES
BEFORE THEY GO BACK
TO BE IN THERE WITH
THEIR CRITICALLY ILL
BABY IS A GODSEND."
C03 - 1 T-HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM...
CAM: 4/RPS

18:17:09, Brittany Pieper
((ANGIE ON CAM))

ACCORDING TO THE HOSPITAL, THE NEWBORN INTENSIVE CARE UNIT SEES AT LEAST 500 BABIES A YEAR.

THE NEW WAITING AREA COST MORE THAN 80 THOUSAND DOLLARS, AND WAS PAID FOR BY PASCALE’S PALS.
Work at KETC
Economic Impact of the Arts

Supers:
Sherri Williams: Museum Tour Guide: 14-19
Carl Hamm: Museum Deputy Director: 36-47
Jill McGuire: Regional Arts Commission: 1:09-1:15

(NATS: They’re waiting on one more family. Do you want to wait for them or just get started ... ?)

Tag along on a tour at the St. Louis Art Museum and you might just meet Sherri Williams...

(handing out pencils)
(Nats: “They’re new! They’re brand new”)

She’s admits she’s no artist ...

(Williams: Museum Tour Guide) “It does give me an opportunity to learn more about art to actually teach others about art.”

But she benefits greatly ... financially ... from the arts community in the region. Institutions like the St. Louis arts museum, as well as smaller galleries all contribute immensely to the economy.... with jobs. Something you might not think of when you walk into a museum for free...

(Carl Hamm: Museum Deputy Director) “The ultimate impact of the museum is not just in enriching people’s lives or the contribution to the arts community that we represent but in dollars and cents economically as well.”

(NATS – Sheldon Concert)

And those dollars and cents add up ... According to a study conducted by the Regional Arts Commission in 2010, the economic impact of arts in the region ... totals close to 600 million dollars. That comes in the form of jobs for people like Sherri, business for regional companies and revenue from tourism.

(Jill McGuire: RAC) “The arts are critical, to me, the future of St. Louis and the vitality of St. Louis.”

And the numbers show it - In 2010 – people going to arts events spent approximately 25 dollars excluding the ticket cost. And when you add up things like a hotel stay, a purchase at the museum gift shop (NATS: Receipt ripping) and a nice
dinner at a local restaurant... the amount an individual spends on an art experience totals much more than the admission price.

“For the last five years the impact has grown, it has grown in the face of the worst recession our country has faced. So the arts really do mean business they are there, they’re stalwarts. They provide those jobs.”

Expansion at St. Louis Art Museum translates to 200 jobs for the project. *(NATS: Construction)* And after the expansion is complete... the museum will add 25 new jobs to the payroll. In the last five years employment in the arts across the region rose 14% ... Sherri was hired during that time...

NATS:(Sherri explaining painting) “It's a really big painting which a lot of them if you look around the room we have very large painting and it’s the artist explaining just how great of an artist he is.”

...and is thankful for the opportunity to teach. But when it comes down to it ... the job ALSO pays the bills.

*(Sherri Williams: Museum Tour Guide)* “I appreciate being employed.”

And so the next time you have an art experience in St. Louis, which could be the next you time you head to the museum for a tour, or the next time you turn onto market street downtown. You might just think about the impact of that work, It’s much more than a masterpiece, much more than that for St. Louis. For Stay Tuned this is Jennifer Long Reporting.
Post-Secondary Education

0:21-0:26 Krista Germann - College Summit Teacher
1:08-1:11 Dewonna Ferguson - High School Senior (may be too quick to super)
1:12-1:14 Deionna Ferguson - High School Senior (may be too quick to super)
1:36-1:48 Alan Byrd - Dean of Enrollment Services at University of Missouri - St. Louis
2:18-2:23 Dr. Douglas Rush - Saint Louis University Professor of Education

Nat open: (announcements) there will be no girl's basketball today....

Navigating the halls of high school can be tough ...

Nats: locker slams

Then figuring out a path after graduation...? That's another story.

But seniors in the Saint Louis public school district get some help. A program called College Summit is one of many programs in the region that helps students prepare for post secondary education

Kristina Germann: “The simplest definition is I’m a counselor in the classroom”

College Summit teacher Krista Germann says the program gets students thinking about college.

Kristina Germann: Most kids go to college because their parents went to college and know how the process works and so this program was created to help the kids who don’t know the process and whose parents don’t know the process to guide them through it.

She helps her students understand the importance of a college degree. On average, college graduates in Saint Louis make twice as much workers with only a high school diploma. And in the next five years half of all jobs in the state will require some sort of post secondary education.

Twins Dewonna and Deionna seems to have that figured out.

Dewonna Furgeson: My career goal is to be a cardiovascular surgeon
Deionna Furgeson: I want to become a corporate lawyer and a medical attorney

Both know their dream careers require a REGULAR COLLEGE DEGREE PLUS ADVANCED DEGREES. And both have applied and been accepted to numerous schools across the country. Including right here at Saint Louis
University. What they may not know is their decision to stay in the ST. LOUIS region will impact more than just their futures.

Alan Byrd: “For St. Louis to continue to grow and prosper we have to produce more college graduates and we have to get more industry to move to Saint Louis to create more jobs. It all has a direct correlation to education.”

And the city has put a premium on a college education with programs like College Summit, and many programs in the region that help students get into higher education. Since 2009, the Saint Louis region had the highest rate of degree completion compared to 35 other METROPOLITAN regions across the country. But with the average college graduate swimming in more than 20,000 dollars in student loan debt, Saint Louis University Professor Dr. Douglass Rush says the push to get more students into higher education might not be the right one.

Dr. Rush: “It’s shortsighted just to say we want everyone to have a college degree.”

Research from the Center for College Affordability and Productivity shows that nearly half of recent college graduates have jobs that don’t require a four-year degree. And Rush argues many college students should rethink their majors.

Dr. Rush: “We need to get more realistic if you’re going to go to college, let’s plan on going to college in a field where you are going to be competitive in the 21st century, world, global economy.”

A lot of decisions for graduating seniors ... Some decisions that may seem big to them now.

Both: We want to be in the same dorm!

Others that could open doors for them and mean a lot for the city they live in.

For Stay Tuned this is Jennifer Long reporting.
Arch Tax

Lynne Hazelip, Geologist (Saint Louis Native) 19-22
Todd Patterson, Tourist 22-25
Nina Turner, Paralegal (Saint Louis Native) 40-44
Cody Dey, Biker 1:23-1:26
Frank DeGraff, Local Blogger 1:33-1:41

Nats: “Welcome to Jefferson National Expansion Memorial”

On sunny afternoons in the city ... all you have to do is look up...

And you can’t miss it....

(Too Quick to Super): Frank DeGraff: just look at it isn’t it gorgeous.

Visitors from near and far...

(Too Quick to Super): Todd Patterson: We’re from Carmel Indiana

(Too Quick to Super): Nina Turner: I’m here on a lunch break

All see it differently...

Lynne Hazelip: It’s one of the things that keeps us on the map that’s widely visible.

Todd Patterson: It’s such a beautiful day today and looking over the city it was fun

And while only about a third of the Prop P funds actually go to the monument grounds, it’s not surprising that it’s been branded the arch tax. So we decided to head straight to the source to ask people...

Jenn: What does the arch mean to Saint Louis?

Nina Turner: I think a lot of people view the arch as opportunity.

For the people who live here it might be a memory...

Lynne Hazelip: We were in elementary school when the last piece was put in and everything stopped and they rolled the televisions into all the classrooms and we got to watch the last piece go in which was really cool.

Nats: “All visitors to the Gateway Arch complex...”
And the people who come to visit think it’s pretty cool too...

Todd Patterson: I enjoy history and the whole westward expansion is something I’ve always been interested in

But the longer you’re here the more you notice it’s not just a monument...

Nina Turner: See it, enjoy it, walk, run, lot of people jog down here, walk their dogs, and stroll with their babies.

Cody Dey: Just very beautiful, its on the river. Very nice area.

It’s a place to gather and a place that sets us apart.

Frank DeGraff: Sometimes it’s hard to keep the skylines apart. The Saint Louis skyline is immediately recognizable, therefore we are immediately recognizable. It means a lot to the city.

And of course it means expanding westward... or maybe it just means expanding here...

For Stay Tuned, This is Jennifer Long reporting.
5. RESEARCH COMPONENT

Proposal
This is where I address the subject of my research. I believe narrative
journalism, a style utilizing fictional writing techniques to tell a non-fiction story;

I will also address the challenges narrative storytellers encounter in terms of
journalistic objectivity and truth telling. Many theorists have already asked this
question. “What is the relation between a narrative and the events it depicts?” (Carr
1986, p. 117) Some argue that narrative and journalism are essentially at odds with
one another. One writer labeled the relationship an “unholy alliance, if you have a
kind of pure view of journalism” (Lepore 2002, p. 53). However, scholars and
journalists have also argued that this writing technique is successful in not only
informing the news consumer, but engaging them as well. Through in-depth, semi-
structured interviews and the use of narrative theory I hope to address both sides of
this argument. I hope to uncover the struggle reporters and photographers as they
attempt to remain truthful and objective while using this technique.

Research Question #1: How can reporters and photographers use narrative
style in everyday operations of a television news station and in long-form
investigative and feature pieces?

Research Question #2: Do reporters and photographers who use narrative style
believe it is as objective and truthful as the straight news, inverted pyramid
story structure?
As Kovach and Rosenstiel explain in their book *Elements of Journalism*, one of the key jobs of a reporter is to “make the significant interesting and relevant” (Kovach & Rosenstiel 2007, p. 187). They argue that the effectiveness of any piece can be measured by how much it engages and enlightens the audience. No matter how hard a reporter works on a story, the end result will be somewhat worthless if news consumers cannot understand the information, relate to the subject matter and recognize why they should care.

This is what can make storytelling and narrative journalism essential characteristics of successful news stories. Al Tompkins, former television journalist and current broadcast and online faculty member at The Poynter Institute, said there is a stark difference between fact telling and storytelling in his book *Aim for the Heart: Write, Shoot, Report and Produce for TV and Multimedia*. He argues “that the power of great storytelling will connect with the viewer’s heart” (Tompkins 2012, p.2). KGO-TV reporter Wayne Freedman says this technique is what makes a good reporter. He writes in his book *It Takes More Than Good Looks to Succeed at Television News Reporting*, that “In a perfect world, every news story would affect everyone directly. In reality this rarely happens, but good reporters will always find ways to make the material compelling” (Freedman 2011, p. 33).

This is true across all mediums of production, not just television. Newspaper, magazine and web journalists must also make conscious efforts to involve the audience in order to be successful communicators. I would argue that this can be accomplished by simply telling the reader or viewer a story.
This research will be valuable because television remains the most popular and widely used medium for national and international news consumption in the United States. A 2011 Pew Research study found that 66% of Americans get most of their news from television (The Pew Research Center 2011, p. 2). “However, numerous scientific studies have shown that the content of TV news is quickly forgotten or misunderstood by audiences” (Machill 2007, p. 186). If we better understand how television journalists can use narrative style in the day to day news cycle, reporters may obtain a better understanding of how to best reach audiences while maintaining the core journalistic values of truth and objectivity.
Theoretical Framework

I will utilize narrative theory for the scholarly analysis component of this project. Theorists maintain a multitude of definitions for narrative theory, and furthermore “how one defines narrative theory shapes one’s understanding of how the different approaches are related” (David Herman et al. 2012, p.7). Theorists James Phelan and Peter J. Rabinowitz define narrative theory as simply “somebody telling somebody else, on some occasion, and for some purposes, that something happened to someone or something” (3). This broad definition of narrative theory explains the purpose of the narrative, and in my research I will address the concepts of narrative theory, including “authors, narrators, and narration; plot, time, and progression; space, setting, and perspective; character; reception and the reader; and issues of value” (7).

Narrative Theorist David Carr explains narrative theory and the narrative as a “universal form of human expression” (Carr 2008, p. 19). We see this in movies, plays and books. Carr argues that the relationship between actions past, present and future could easily fit into the beginning, middle and end structure of narrative form. He said narratives are simply an extension of what we see in real life. But Carr also explains that even though the narrative form is widely used in our culture, the concept of narrative and an explanation of its meaning has not been widely explored.

In many ways the narrative style has been utilized successfully in multiple forms of journalism and historical writings. But the technique does not come without its criticisms. One journalist said:
When you have something called ‘narrative journalism,’ both those things are being violated slightly by the other because the narrative, the story you're telling, would always be better if you didn’t always have to think of what had actually happened” (Lepore 2002, p. 53).

This article goes on to argue that the truth is “slightly violated" when using the narrative style because the writer must inevitably bend parts of the text to make it fit into the storyline. Other things are simply left out because they do not fit.

Theorists have long argued whether the use of the narrative is appropriate in literature. Some argue that the narrative is not a true representation of real life sequences. Historians say that real events do not “hang together” in the narrative way; having a beginning, middle and end. Utilizing narrative techniques, critics say, paints a distorted account of reality (Carr 1986, p. 117). Theorist Louis Mink remarked that the world does not simply produce well-made stories, we as humans create them and imagine them in the world ourselves. Mink argues that the narrative is the writer’s creation. Paul Roth echoes these statements offering this example: “... to the statement that such and such a happening is tragic; there is only a telling which so presents it” (Tamura 2011, p. 153). Hayden White asks this about narrative; “Does the world really present itself in the form of well-made stories, with central subjects, proper beginnings, middles and ends? Or does it present itself as a mere sequence without beginning or end?” (153).
But narrative theorist Hannah Arendt looked to narrative as a way to make coherence out of sequences and occurrences in life. She said, “action and speech are the two activities whose end result will always be a story with enough coherence to be told, no matter how accidental or haphazard the single events and their causation may appear” (Speight 2011, p. 116-117).
History of the Narrative in Historical Literature and Journalism

Theorist Lawrence Stone, a British historian known partly for bringing narrative writing back to academic history, defined narrative as the “organization of material in chronologically sequential order and the focusing of the content into a single coherent story” (Stone 1979, p. 3). He addressed the use of narrative style in historical writings and explained that the difference between structural and narrative history is the use of description instead of analysis. But for a while, the use of narrative style in historical writings was looked down upon. The use of the style has long been debated, and the discussion reached a head in the 1970’s. Historians traditionally focused on “quantitative history,” calculating numbers that showed growth or decline such as “death records, food supply, price fluctuations” etc. (Tamura 2011, p. 152). Description did not have a place in history. Stone challenged this thought by arguing that many historians viewed historical writings as a science, rather than an art – and that needed to change. He introduced the pregnant principle, that said narrative does not lack interpretation as long as there is a theme and an argument (Lepore 2002, p. 51).

Just as theorists and historians brought the narrative style back into historical writings, journalists began introducing the style into news reporting as well. According to literary journalist Jon Franklin, the late 19th and early 20th century was the time that reporters began what he calls “literary training” through writing short stories. He says when “short story writers turned to reporting, they brought a desk drawer full of literary devices, an economy of prose, an eye for detail and an ear for dialogue, and a keen sense of plot and resolution” (51). The
publication of Truman Capote’s *In Cold Blood* was a definitive example of this. Published in 1965, the book created a new genre, the non-fiction novel. Many journalists label this literary movement as the introduction of “new journalism.” And some have praised this form of writing as a successful technique used to better connect with readers. Author Fergus Bordewich labeled the struggle this way in 1977. He said the “audience is a restless bunch. Grabbing them, let alone holding their attention, requires one to reach out with much, much more” (Garber 2011, p. 117).

This fight to keep the news consumer interested is not isolated to print publications. National Public Radio, or NPR, started utilizing the “everyday person narrative” around the same time Stone was calling for a change in historical writings and storytelling in the 70’s (Butler 2006, p. 29). The organization’s *This American Life* draws more than 1.6 million listeners every week. The show centers around the idea that the audience wants to hear personal stories and that storytelling “is such a timeless and basic human activity” (30). This technique has also been used in television. The strength of the narrative is the literary techniques that audiences see in film. “Plot, dramaturgy, sound and visual effects together can form a whole which is difficult for the viewer to turn away from due to the ambience and atmosphere of suspense which has been created.” (Ekstrom 2000, p. 472). These storytelling techniques arouse emotions in the viewer and create suspense and excitement.
Literature Review

This theoretical discussion has sparked some valuable studies regarding the narrative and its use in journalism. Kovach and Rosensteil explain, “journalism’s first obligation is to the truth” (Kovach & Rosenstiel 2007, p. 36). But if narrative is not entirely truthful some critics say the style may be deceptive to readers. A West Virginia University professor of journalism argued that the narrative has created a new form of journalism. He writes that there is the traditional objective form of journalism and a modern form of what he calls “narrative realism” (Hanson 1997, p. 387). Objectivity, he says, is a normative idea in which reporters should be fair, balanced and impartial. He believes that objectivity is a form of writing in which the story is presented in a neutral tone. He labels “narrative realism” as an alternative to the objective form. This form includes scene-by-scene construction, use of dialogue, third-person point of view and symbolic details. He says the “point of this form is to use language to make the reader call forth his or her own experiences and emotions and apply them to the story at hand” (390). Hanson says objectivity and narrative realism are completely separate. He quotes writer Dwight Macdonald who dismisses narrative style to subjects that are sensational in nature. He calls narrative a “ bastard form, having it both ways, exploiting the factual authority of journalism and the atmospheric license of fiction” (393).

Kalle Pihlainen, a professor of cultural history, argued a similar point for the use of the narrative in historical writings. He says the historical narrative is in essence fictional. Because a writer has to select material and fit facts into the narrative form, he argues that the elements of history are changed. Pihlainen says
the narrator of the story plays too prominent a role in the story structure. “Any structure, then, is ultimately an imposition of the historian’s own values on the material used” (Pihlainen 1978, p. 8). Though historical writings clearly differ from journalism and the ethics reporters adhere to, it should be remembered that both areas of study rely heavily on facts and truths of events that happened in the past. Pihlainen, Hanson and multiple other theorists and writers have argued the narrative style simply does not coincide with principles journalists and historical writers are based upon.

However, other researchers have found the narrative is the best way to connect with the audience and say it furthermore does not jeopardize objectivity and truthfulness. Nieman Fellow and New York Times Miami Bureau Chief Rick Bragg said it this way; “A little bit of narrative, like sugar, just makes everything better. Narrative conveys emotion. Narrative shows, not tells” (Bragg 2000, p. 30). He argues that a reporter can weave story telling into any day-turn story and provides his coverage of the Oklahoma City bombing, written in two hours as an example. Show, he says, don’t tell the reader the story. Good writing and storytelling will keep the news consumer reading and coming back for more.

Researcher Jane Johnston conducted a pilot study of narrative writings in two daily newspapers in Australia. Over the course of a month, Johnston examined 2,435 stories on the front pages of The Australian and the Sydney Morning Herald. The study showed that the reporters at Sydney Morning Herald used the inverted pyramid style, which begins with a summary lead and then presents information in descending order of importance, the majority of the time in its news writing.
However, the news section of the paper did contain narratives. According to the study, one out of every five stories in the news section used the narrative style. This style was used in both soft and hard news stories at both of the papers.

It's important to understand how and why reporters use narrative style. Researcher Marcel Machill argues in his study that it's out of necessity. He says TV news programs are the way people find out about what’s happening in the world around them. However, he also notes that “numerous studies have shown that content in TV news is quickly forgotten or misunderstood by audiences” (Machill 2007, p. 186). Studies have shown that news consumers have a short recall of television news stories and often cannot answer questions about the content.

Machill conducted a study that shows this point, and furthermore argues that the narrative gives a clearer perspective to television news stories. His study involved 215 participants and analyzed how narrative style can improve retention and comprehension of news content. Results showed that the use of narrative can increase retention and understanding of news content. However, Machill also admits that this style is by no means objective in the traditional sense of the word in journalism. He argues in his conclusion that the:

Concept of narrative news presentation could thus lead to a renaissance in research in news journalism. It is clear that narrative news does not meet the conditions for a naïve claim to objectivity. However, overall journalistic quality could be improved. In conjunction with descriptive, commentary or advice-giving news items, narrative news contributions could enhance the variety of the
overall offering, thereby opening up the possibility of achieving objectivization by means of a change in perspective (200).

To further support this point professor of philosophical and cultural studies Slavka TOMAŠČÍKOVÁ argues that objectivity isn’t the right goal. He says television news reporters already relay messages about reality to the audiences. These messages are sent in signs and the audiences decode the signs in real social contexts. So news agencies and reporters are always constructing the meaning of news events. However, in narrative style, TOMAŠČÍKOVÁ says there are fewer possibilities for audience members to have their own interpretations of the narrative. He says multiple codes in a news story, including anchor appearance, voice, video, editing, influence the way the viewer perceives the information, regardless of style. He says the “facts and figures fulfill the role of narrative linked to the idea of realism and accuracy. Television news narrative does not display ambiguities or uncertainties, this makes television appear both authoritative and omniscient” (TOMAŠČÍKOVÁ 2010, p. 264).

This research and narrative theory show that there are conflicting beliefs regarding the use of the narrative in journalism. Though studies have shown the narrative to be effective in successfully engaging the news consumer, it is also debatable whether or not the style adheres to core journalistic principles such as objectivity and truthfulness.
**Methodology**

I will carry out this research by conducting interviews to answer my research questions. As Fontana and Frey explain, the interview is extremely complex and exists in multiple forms. I plan to utilize semi-structured, in-depth interviews in which I will ask “each respondent a series of pre-established questions with a limited set of response categories” (Fontana & Frey 1994, p. 363). Fontana and Frey set up the guidelines for this type of interview. Through my research and experience from working in a broadcast newsroom, I already have basic knowledge of narrative style broadcast news stories. During the interview I will not ask leading questions, interpret the meaning of questions or improvise in questioning (364). However, because these interviews will be “semi-structured” I plan to allow some room for open-ended questions to allow participants to elaborate on certain ideas. These interviews will be “in-depth” because I plan to talk with participants in person for at least 45 minutes. This will allow time to get to know the journalist and walk through their decision making in the construction of their stories.

I am IRB (Institutional Review Board) certified through the University of Missouri for my research, and the board has approved the proposed research for this professional project. I have attached my IRB completion report and my IRB exempt application.

I plan to contact both reporters and photographers in the industry who currently use the narrative style. My hope is to study three to five broadcast journalists. I want to conduct these interviews in-person and have the opportunity to analyze the journalist’s work with them. This may require some traveling or a
change in what I expect for my study. As I begin contacting reporters and photographers I will see what is feasible for the four-month time period I have allotted for this project. I also plan to conduct some of the interviews via Skype. This will broaden the amount of people I can talk to. I hope to get participants with varying job titles, including but not limited to local news reporter, national news reporter, one-man-band reporter, in-depth or long-form news producer/editor/writer, photographer etc.

I plan to contact KGO-TV reporter, and University of Missouri alumnus, Wayne Freedman for this study. Broadcast journalism students taking classes at the University of Missouri read Freedman’s book *It Takes More Than Good Looks to Succeed at Television News Reporting* that highlights his successes and failures in using narrative style. He is well known for his storytelling and has worked with University of Missouri journalism students in the past. If he cannot help me he may be able to connect me with other reporters or producers in the industry who would be willing to participate.

Other possible research participants are reporters Andy Choi of WISC in Madison, Wisconsin, and Jason Lamb who works in Nashville, Tennessee. Both are University of Missouri alumni. I will also contact Boyd Huppert of KARE in Minnesota. He is one of the best and most respected storytellers in the journalism industry. I will also be contacting Les Rose a photographer for CBS.

University of Missouri professors including members of my committee Greeley Kyle, Kent Collins and Randy Reeves are in constant contact with reporters
and producers in the industry. They will be consulted for candidate suggestions for this study.

Researchers used the method of semi-structured, in-depth interviews while conducting a study in India to explore women’s perspectives of medical abortion in 2010. The goal of the research was to find the reasons why women used this form of abortion and to gather reactions to the medical process. Researchers recruited participants (before patients knew the results of the abortion) during a follow up visit 12 days after the procedure. Researchers conducted semi-constructed interviews alone with the participant; interviews lasted approximately 30-45 minutes and included open-ended questions. Additional interviews were scheduled if participants agreed to it. The additional visit was a supplement to see if a women’s perception of her abortion had changed. Researchers coded interviews to analyze women’s perceptions of the process (Ganatra et al. 2010, p. 336-337).

Semi-structured, in-depth interviewing was the best method of research because women shared personal and intimate experiences in the study. This method allowed participants to explain emotions, expectations and individual circumstances (337). Semi-structured, in-depth interviews will also be the best method for my research because I am trying to identify what goes into a journalist’s decision making when using narrative style in broadcast news stories. I need to get at the heart of how reporters and photographers see the narrative and whether or not it aligns with core journalistic principles and values. To obtain personal opinions such as this and to allow reporters and photographers to open up about their work I must
speak with them in person. I believe this method will be the best way to gather research regarding this topic.
Recruitment and Interview Process

This research introduced me to some of the best journalists and storytellers in the industry. When I began the recruitment process for this research I decided I wanted to try to include a variety of different job titles and generations. My goal was to have at least one investigative journalist, one feature reporter and/or photographer and one general assignment reporter and/or photographer. Within those categories I also wanted a variety of experience. I wanted to include journalists considered to be experts in their field and those just starting out in the business.

The job title was fairly easy to specify, however, some journalists fell into multiple categories. For example Boyd Huppert is a general assignment reporter for KARE, a Gannett owned station in Minneapolis, but he is widely known for his feature franchise “Land of 10,000 Stories.” Other journalists were easy to categorize, for example John Ferrugia works almost exclusively as an investigative reporter for KMGH, a Scripps owned station in Denver.

Experience was a little harder to identify. Experience can be gauged by number of years in the business, market size one is currently working in, awards won and a multitude of other factors. I eventually decided on years working in the industry. If a journalist had been working for less than 10 years I considered them new. If a journalist had been working for more than 10 years I called them experienced. Admittedly, this is a vague differentiation between new and experienced journalists, however, I think the importance of showing the difference between the generations is to identify the general changes in the industry and how
things have changed because of advancements in technology. Also, all of the research participants are award-winning journalists and the market size they work in is not necessarily linked with experience.

I started contacting people for this research in early January. After consulting my professional project committee members, I had a number of people I wanted to reach out to. I decided I would send emails to 10 journalists and see who agreed to participate. All of the people I contacted agreed to participate in the research and I was able to interview all of them except for one. In sum, I interviewed 11 journalists for this project and met the criteria for diversity in job title and experience level. I made the decision early on in the data collection to do all of my interviews in person and request a job shadow if the reporter and station allowed it. I made this decision because I believed conducting semi-structured, in-depth interviews in person would garner better, and more honest results. I think this decision was the right one. Meeting and shadowing these journalists not only gave me extra insight for this project, but it helped me better understand some of the obstacles I came to face when using this story structure in my own work. The questions that I asked of these journalists were not easy ones. Doing interviews in person allowed me the exciting opportunity to watch these journalists think and wrestle with some of the ideas.

The interviews took approximately 45 minutes and included a set of pre-established questions. Before each interview I watched multiple examples of each participant's work so that I could include questions specific to each journalist. Through this research I sought to answer two questions:
Research Question #1: How can reporters and photographers use narrative style in everyday operations of a television news station and in long-form investigative and feature pieces?

Research Question #2: Do reporters and photographers who use narrative style believe it is as objective and truthful as the inverted pyramid story structure?

I changed these research questions slightly from the ones I had in my original proposal. In the first and second research question I changed “producers” to “photographers.” Throughout this research I was only able to interview reporters and photographers. The second research question deviated from the original question: “How do reporters and producers remain objective and truthful in news stories when using narrative style?” As I gathered data, I realized it was important to first address whether or not journalists who used storytelling in their work thought it was objective. I also thought it was important to compare narrative style to the inverted pyramid story structure, which is arguably one of the most common formats used by broadcast and print news outlets.

The transcripts of the interviews I conducted can be found in the Research Component Appendix section of this project. Below is a list of all of the research participants, their position, station they work for and their experience level.

Andy Choi, Daily Reporter, WISC (Madison, Wisconsin), new
Boyd Huppert, Daily/Feature Reporter, KARE (Minneapolis, Minnesota), experienced
Chris Vanderveen, Daily/Feature Reporter, KUSA (Denver, Colorado), experienced
Fritz Wetherbee, Feature Reporter, WMUR (Manchester, New Hampshire),
experienced

Jana Shortal, Daily Reporter, KARE (Minneapolis, Minnesota), experienced

Jeremy Nichols, Daily Photographer, WISC (Madison, Wisconsin), experienced

Jim Matheny, One-Man-Band Daily/Feature Reporter, WBIR (Knoxville, Tennessee), new

John Ferrugia, Investigative Reporter, KMGH (Denver, Colorado), experienced

Kevin Torres, Daily/Feature Reporter, KUSA (Denver, Colorado), new

Les Rose, Feature Photographer, CBS (Los Angelos, California), experienced

Mitch Pittman, One-Man-Band Daily Reporter, KSTP (Minneapolis, Minnesota), new
Definition of Narrative Storytelling

When I started analyzing the data I collected for this research, I realized it was important to first define narrative storytelling. What’s interesting about storytelling and narrative theory is that there is no one definition for this concept. Theorists maintain a multitude of definitions for narrative theory, and furthermore “how one defines narrative theory shapes one’s understanding of how the different approaches are related” (David Herman et al. 2012, p.7). Theorists James Phelan and Peter J. Rabinowitz define narrative theory as simply “somebody telling somebody else, on some occasion, and for some purposes, that something happened to someone or something” (3). Narrative Theorist David Carr explains narrative theory and the narrative as a “universal form of human expression” (Carr 2008, p.19). In my proposal I defined the narrative as “the use of fictional storytelling techniques in a non-fiction story.”

Many of the research participants likened the narrative structure to movies, books and plays. KARE daily and feature reporter Boyd Huppert said:

To me it's not unlike any good book or any good movie. Beginning, middle, end, characters, suspense, and surprises... those are the elements of all types of stories you're telling. I've come to believe that news stories can often be better told with the narrative style than without.

KMGH Investigative reporter John Ferrugia said, “I see narrative or storytelling as one of the most basic human interactions.” WISC photographer Jeremy Nichols said:
It's not just, ‘give me the facts and lead with the most important thing.’ If you do it correctly, and you leave the viewer with something to remember, that means you did something right. Frankly, I don’t know how people are successful in television news without telling good stories.

All of the research participants defined the narrative a little differently, however, they did mention four common elements (Characters, Emotion, Focus, Structure) that are important parts of narrative storytelling.

Characters:

Every participant in this research identified characters as an essential part of the narrative. Characters can be the people you interview, and sometimes objects or animals relevant to the story. For many respondents, finding a character to tell the story was one of the first thoughts in the reporting process. Ferrugia said the character is a porthole through which you can see the broader horizon. He explained the character as the tool that helps people understand the story on a personal or human level. KUSA reporter Chris Vanderveen argued characters are what help viewers identify and care about the subject matter.

Many participants said that you can’t have a successful narrative without a character or characters that help tell the story. WBIR’s Jim Matheny said, “You can have a humanized story that’s not necessarily some great artistic narrative, but you rarely have a great narrative that doesn’t have a compelling character with it.” CBS photographer Les Rose went further to say “you’re not going to like the story unless you like the characters.” These characters are essential vehicles to get the story moving. However, respondents also noted that it’s important to let the characters be
who they are. KARE reporter Jana Shortal said, “I prefer them to be the narrator and me say as little as possible.” WMUR feature reporter Fritz Wetherbee said, “I let the characters be who they are.” Allowing the characters to be the driving force of the narrative is arguably a reporter’s style; however, the concept of allowing the characters to be who they are will be an important piece in addressing objectivity in the narrative.

Structure:

Participants identified story structure as another part of the narrative. There isn’t one set story structure that defines the narrative, however, the idea of a “beginning, middle and end” came up on multiple occasions during the interviews. Structure is where the narrative differs the most from the inverted pyramid style. In the inverted pyramid, the writer starts with the most important information first and follows with facts explaining who, what, where, when, why and how. (Knowing the inverted pyramid style will be important in answering research question #2). Many of the research participants argued that the inverted pyramid story structure is not the best for broadcast news. Huppert said it works great for newspapers because many people don’t read to the end of every article. However, if a viewer gets bored with a television piece, moving on to the next story means changing the channel.

Huppert created what he calls the Christmas tree structure. He explained his structure as repeatedly revealing nuggets of information at the right times to keep the viewer interested in the story as it unfolds.
You're basically flipping the pyramid upside-down and you're adding these little points which are the surprises in the story. So you're building to the surprise, reinvesting the viewer, building to a surprise, reinvesting the viewer. You keep doing this through your story and when you run out of surprises or new information then the story has to end because I don't want people to lose interest so I have to continue providing surprises.

One popular story structure is the “hourglass.” You start the story with a big issue and then narrow in to one specific example. You end the story by going back to the big issue you started with. There’s also the pregnant “I”, which is essentially the opposite of the hourglass structure. Start the story with one specific example; broaden out to show the bigger picture and then end with the specific example you started with. The point is not to explain every story structure out there, but rather to show there’s more than one way to tell a story. Matheny likened the story structure to a tour through a museum:

You have to charter a path for the story. How am I going to share this information? It’s kind of like a tour. How are we going to start the tour? Like when you go to a museum, it’s like here’s the timeline, do we want to start at the beginning and progress? Or is it like, ‘hey look at this now and let me show you how we got here and then let’s bring it back.’ There are a million ways to tell it, and I don’t know that any are wrong or right.

Focus:

Structure brings us to focus. WISC reporter Andy Choi said, “Structure is a big deal, but then at the end of the day it’s all about the focus.” Many of the research
participants said similar sentiments. Huppert called focus the trunk of his Christmas tree. He said, “I don’t know how to write without having a focus at the beginning... focus is like the bag that you put all of the pieces of the story in.” Vanderveen said something similar. He said, “I’ll write one or two lines on the top of the log sheet and I’ll just try to keep with that theme.”

Focus is what helps keep the narrative going. Choi said a good practice is to sum up your story in a three-word sentence with a subject, verb and predicate. He said, “If you can’t do that then you don’t have a tight enough focus... The ones who can really hone in on a focus and commit to it can get to the narrative faster.” Rose said this three-word sentence is a good way to tell your own prejudice in a story. He says you find your own bias in the verb. Is the story, “bombers terrorize marathon?” Or is the story “runners help injured?” You can find your focus in a single word or a short sentence.

Choi, Huppert, Wetherbee and other participants also mentioned that focus is not exclusive to broadcast news. You can find focus in effective advertising, award-winning movies and legendary fables. Focus is what keeps a story strong. It's also what keeps a reporter from putting in things that aren’t necessary. Choi likened this to deleted movie scenes. He said:

That’s the product of people tightening their focus. They’re saying, ‘this scene does not belong. We love this scene but it doesn’t do anything. You lose the tension...’ We’re constantly doing that. We’re constantly making decisions like, ‘well there’s a fact here and it may be cool but do we need it?’
Emotion is probably the most complex and controversial of the four narrative elements. Many participants said emotion is one of the most important characteristics of storytelling. “You tap into a different level when you find emotion,” Huppert said. “I always find it in a story.”

However, sometimes it’s a hard sell as a news reporter. Choi said, “I’ve always felt the viewer will always remember what they feel longer than what they learned in the story. Which seems kind of counter intuitive because we’re in the business of fact telling. But you know, if that fact doesn’t last long enough in the head then what kind of an experience is it?”

Many research participants argued that emotion is part of the human experience and leaving emotion out of a story would make it less true. Matheny said, “you’re doing a disservice to someone by pretending to be the detached eye in the sky with no emotional involvement in anything.”

Respondents said sometimes when journalists strive to be impartial they forget their humanity. Journalists are human begins too and it’s important to show it when it’s appropriate. Choi described his emotion as his compass. He said:

I trust my emotion. I trust how I feel in that moment when I hear someone describe a loved one that they’ve lost or a loved one that they’ve just seen since they went to war...I think it does determine the way I write things and I lean on that.

But emotion is a powerful thing. Vanderveen said television does emotion and immediacy better than any other medium because you have visuals and sound. He said that’s why it’s so important to do it right. He said, “Super emotional stories
you just get out of the way. Don’t overwrite. That person is being honest with you on camera so you have to make sure their point is getting across.” Wetherbee said something similar. He said, “They don’t want to see how sad the reporter is. First, because it calls attention to the reporter and you’re not important in this story. What you’re telling me is important. If you tell me, I will weep.” A lot of the time it comes down to a journalist’s ethics. KSTP’s Mitch Pittman said, “I think you could abuse the facts just as easily as you could abuse the facts with emotion. It just makes it more interesting to watch while being responsible.”
Use of Narrative

Now that we have defined the important elements of the narrative, we can address the first research question:

*How can reporters and photographers use narrative style in everyday operations of a television news station and in long-form investigative and feature pieces?*

To do this we first have to break down each part of this question into the two different news concentrations: daily assignments, and long-form investigations and features.

Daily:

All of the research participants said narrative storytelling could be used in daily assignments; however, it’s important to identify when and how to use the style. Reporters can create strong narratives in daily news, but there are many factors that impact how well they can do that. Participants identified deadlines, limited resources, breaking news, story assignments and station ethos as elements that can impact how well a reporter can put together a narrative in one shift.

Respondents identified deadlines and story assignments as the two biggest factors in deciding when or how to use the narrative in daily assignments. Pittman said, “Sometimes you’ll be limited by time. I think you shouldn’t be limited by your efforts. If you care you can make it interesting.” Many respondents agreed by saying you can always try and incorporate at least one or two elements of the narrative into your work on a daily basis. Choi said, “I know a lot of people say don’t try to hit
the home run, but get the base hit and see if you can do one thing well.” Pittman also said, “Not every story is going to be ‘Duck in a Truck’ or something like that, but you can always do something a little bit more just to make it better.”

Under the time constraints of a deadline and the responsibility of covering all of the daily news, respondents said it can be difficult to structure and focus stories, and find good characters and emotion. But many respondents said it’s also important to look at your story assignment and evaluate whether or not the narrative style is the best approach for your story. KUSA’s Storytellers segment producer and general assignment reporter Kevin Torres said, “I think that you can use the narrative style towards anything, but … sometimes it’s best to just give the people the story the way it’s supposed to be done.” He mentioned in breaking news situations sometimes it’s better to just give the viewers the facts.

KARE’s Shortal and KUSA’s Vanderveen both said they’ve turned away from the narrative style for some assignments. Shortal said:

I think your obligation is to tell them the news. If you have the opportunity to do a narrative then great, but I’ve kind of reverted back to news actually. I leave the narrative stuff for when I can, but it’s not my first priority.

Vanderveen said you have to be careful with volatile issues. He said:

If you’re doing a day-turn you don’t want to get too cute with the abortion story, or the same-sex marriage story or the presidential election story. The country is incredibly polarized anyways. You’re going to make a lot of enemies if you’re trying to get too cute with certain stories.
But Huppert said, “It works everywhere. I did a story on gun control at the legislature yesterday.”

Reporters in this study responded differently on when and how to use the narrative on a daily basis, however, it’s important to recognize what goes into their decision making when deciding whether or not to use the style. From the data I collected most reporters make this decision on how much time they have to put the story together and what their story assignment is.

Long Form Investigations and Features

Respondents said long-form feature assignments and investigations usually allow for more control over the two elements that are sometimes uncontrollable in daily assignments: time and story topic. Reporters and photographers usually pitch their own story ideas for special features or investigations. They also generally have more than one day to work on their piece. Having control over these two factors allows the reporter or the photographer to incorporate elements of the narrative they might not otherwise include in a daily story.

Huppert may be the best example of the time element because he is both a daily assignment and feature reporter. Three days of the week he works as a general assignment reporter and two days he works on the KARE feature franchise “Land of 10,000 Stories.” He argues that you can use narrative style in any story assignment. Many of the stories Huppert produces for the “Land of 10,000 Stories” franchise would be considered features, however he does tackle public policy and political issues in some of his pieces.
When Huppert explained the process of putting together one of his “Land of 10,000 Stories” pieces, it’s clear that time is one of the major factors in the production process. He said on average each story takes two or three days to complete. He said he and a photographer usually shoot the story one day, log the interviews and write the script one day and then edit on another day. Huppert said most of his time is dedicated to logging interviews and tape. He said he usually has 12 to 14 pages of typed notes for one “Land of 10,000 Stories” piece. He said:

If someone takes a heavy sigh I’ll log that. I need that. I break my track up a lot so I need those little nuances. ‘Takes a look at his watch.’ That will be a note. I might need that some place. ‘Rolls his eyes at something a student says.’ I might need that somewhere. So I log everything.

Even though reporters may have more control over story topics in features, Vanderveen said features are some of the hardest narratives to do. He said:

It’s easy to make someone care about death or make somebody empathize with someone losing a house in a fire or losing a child to an accident. That’s easy. But when you’re talking about a dog with a weird thing going on, it’s not as easy to make the viewer empathize or care about that story and that’s why the words are so critical and the story structure is so critical because if you don’t give the viewer a reason to care… it’s going to be like what am I doing? Why am I wasting my time with this?

Ferrugia was the only investigative reporter to participate in my research. He said the narrative is a crucial part of almost all of his investigations, however he did say the narrative doesn’t usually work for the “You Paid for it” or budget stories. He
said, “If you said to me for the next month you cannot tell a story using a character or using the narrative I’d say, ‘OK, why are we putting it on TV? Why does anyone care about it?’” Ferrugia also said a broader context is what separates a narrative feature from a narrative investigation.

A lot of people will use narrative to tell an individual story. But what’s the broader context of this story? What’s the broader lesson? What’s the broader public policy issue? What’s the broader implication? You can do great storytelling but that, I think, is what separates features, or daily stories from investigations.
Objectivity in Narrative

Here is where we address the second research question:

*Do reporters and photographers who use narrative style believe it is as objective and truthful as the straight news, inverted pyramid story structure?*

In the literature review for this project I outline some of the arguments for and against the use of narrative style in news stories and historical writings. Both scholars and journalists have argued how objective and truthful the story structure is in comparison to fact telling or the inverted pyramid style. Because of this, it was no surprise that the journalists who participated in this research had differing opinions about the style.

Before we answer the second research question, regarding the objectivity of narrative style in comparison to the inverted pyramid style, we must first have a working definition of objectivity in journalism. For this research, I will refer to Ralph E. Hanson, a journalism professor at West Virginia University, who defined objectivity as a normative idea in which reporters should be fair, balanced and impartial. (Hanson 1997, p. 387). Hanson said Americans have held the idea that news outlets should relay information by giving objective accounts of events. Hanson said there is a growing trend of reporters turning away from an “objective” or “neutral” tone by using narrative story structure. The reporters and photographers I interviewed for this research said they believe this is true. Many respondents said narrative is not completely objective. Many stories are not completely fair, balanced or impartial and respondents said they believe that’s OK.
Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel address this point in their book *Elements of Journalism*. Their tenth element explains journalism’s “practitioners much be allowed to exercise their personal conscience.” They explain, every journalist must have a sense of his or her own ethics and morals. It’s also extremely important for journalists to be in touch with their own biases and beliefs. No matter how objective a journalist aims to be, their own ethics, morals, personal beliefs, political biases and world experiences will affect how they cover a story. Not only is this fact unavoidable, Kovach and Rosenstiel argue that it’s a good thing. They write:

> Every journalist, from the newsroom to the boardroom, must have a personal sense of ethics and responsibility – a moral compass. What’s more, they have a responsibility to voice their personal conscience out loud and allow others around the to do so as well (Kovach & Rosenstiel 2007, p. 231).

Many respondents argued that no matter what story structure you’re using, whether it be the inverted pyramid, the hourglass or the pregnant “I”, you are making decisions about what to emphasize, what the message should be, what’s most important for the viewer to take away etc. Wetherbee said:

> By just writing it, putting it in any kind of form changes it. If you pyramid it, you are saying this is the most important thing because I’m telling it first...

> We choose our words carefully. Nobody is absolutely flat on their view of things, everyone is biased some way.

Vanderveen agreed by saying:

> The idea that a journalist can be unbiased to me is BS. Every person has a bias. The goal of the journalist is to not let that bias come out and to know
what your bias is and to sort of acknowledge it and make sure people don’t know.

Huppert and Pittman said they believe the narrative structure can be more objective if the reporter uses the style correctly. Huppert said his job is to be the interpreter. Instead of creating a story, he said he’s always interpreting what’s going on so he can relay that experience to the viewer. “As a storyteller, and as a narrative storyteller, I’m just trying to do a better job at interpreting and helping put this into a context for the viewer that wasn’t there.” Rose argued the role of the journalist isn’t actually to interpret, but rather to be a vocal platform for the characters in the story. He said, “the truth is you’re allowing them to tell their own story. That’s the trick.” Pittman agreed saying there are certain editing and writing techniques you can do to help bring the viewer to the scene. He said, “our job is to bring them there and if I’m covering a house fire and I can create an urgency and if I can show people that’s what’s happening that’s a lot more responsible than showing it as humdrum.”

All of the journalists in this study mentioned that being completely objective isn’t possible in any story structure, however some respondents said the narrative can lead to the journalist taking more liberties. “It certainly opens the window for less objectivity,” said Vanderveen. “And that’s why I said with more controversial stories you have to be careful with how you word it.” Respondents who talked about less objectivity in the narrative also talked about story topic. Many reporters and photographers mentioned giving more time to one side is ok when you’re doing a feature story, however some topics are too delicate, controversial or political to use narrative. Shortal said:
I think a lot of people would say it’s biased or it’s soft. And that’s another reason why you need to be really careful. When I feel strongly about something I could be accused of that... But that’s a dangerous place and I guess it depends on the subject matter.

Matheny said incorporating certain elements of the narrative like emotion and characters can be dangerous when you're covering contentious issues. “If you're attaching something emotional to one side of the story, and usually it's a central character, I can see how someone would say well they were totally sympathetic to one person.”

This research question was harder to answer because each journalist had different opinions about objectivity, it’s role in journalism and the impact narrative has on “fair, balanced and impartial” coverage. However, I did notice respondents who said the narrative style could be used everyday for every story topic, also said the narrative is just as objective, if not more objective than the inverted pyramid style. I saw this in my interviews with Huppert, Pittman, Ferrugia, Rose, and Wetherbee. Those respondents who said it’s hard to use the narrative everyday because it shouldn’t be used for every story topic also said the narrative opens the door to less objectivity. I saw this in the interviews with Choi, Vanderveen, Shortal, Matheny, and Torres. All of the respondents mentioned total objectivity is not the goal or job of a reporter, however respondents had varying opinions about how the narrative fits into daily coverage, especially with controversial or political issues.
Conclusions, Research Limitations and Future Research

In my project proposal, I predicted many reporters would say the narrative style is useful in the construction of daily stories and long-form features and investigations. However, the analysis of this data showed a divide between respondents. All of the respondents said you can strive to include some elements of the narrative in daily assignments; however, some believed there are factors limiting how well or when you can or should do that. Some respondents said journalists can theoretically use the narrative style every day, but sometimes reporters should decide against using the style because of a story assignment or a deadline. Other research participants said the style can be used every day, no matter what the story topic. The majority of respondents said you can use the narrative in long-form stories because you have more time to construct them and more control over the story topic.

Research participants also said the narrative is an effective tool in communicating information to the viewer. Many respondents mentioned the phrase, “Viewers remember what they feel longer than what they know.” Reporters and photographers said if you can incorporate some elements of the narrative like characters, emotion and focus, the viewer might remember the story longer. Kovach and Rosenstiel identify this concept as an element of journalism in their book. They say a journalist must strive to make the significant interesting and relevant. Respondents said incorporating elements of the narrative in daily work and long-form pieces can give the viewer a reason to care and remember the story longer.
In answering my second research question, I expected to find that total objectivity is unattainable when using narrative style. I believe that is what I found through the analysis of this data. Kovach and Rosenstiel argue that this is actually OK for journalists. They say it’s more important to be transparent and practice a discipline of verification. They say it is a reporter’s job to must interpret facts; that is his or her job. When using the narrative style a journalist does that, but goes further to put the information into a storyline. This requires active participation of the narrator, however, so does the inverted pyramid style. A reporter decides what is most important and how to present it. In looking at it this way the narrative style is not that much different in principle than other story structures.

All of the research participants said total objectivity is unattainable because of a journalist’s own biases and world experiences. However, the data analysis showed there was a divide between respondents about using the style for pieces that are more controversial or political. There was a link here with research question one. Respondents who said the narrative style could be used everyday for every story topic, also said the narrative is just as objective, if not more objective than the inverted pyramid style. Respondents, who said it’s hard to use the narrative everyday because it shouldn’t be used for every story topic, also said the narrative opens the door to less objectivity.

Through my own experiences at KOMU and KETC and my own reflections of this research, I believe the narrative style is a useful communicator in daily and long-form pieces. I believe elements of the narrative like characters and emotion can help the viewer better understand a subject, however I do not believe it should be
used every day for every single story topic. I agree with the research respondents would said you should evaluate every story assignment on a case-by-case basis and decide whether or not the narrative story style is the best way to construct and tell that story. I believe what makes the narrative special is that it’s different from the way many stories are constructed; therefore it should not be used in every single story in a newscast. I also agree with research respondents who identified time as a limiting factor. Deadlines were often a challenge when I tried incorporating multiple elements of the narrative into one daily assignment. Some days you just don’t get what you thought you would. On other days just getting the facts right is a struggle. I think it’s important to try to incorporate elements of the narrative if you can. This provides you a daily challenge or goal. However, it’s important not to get discouraged on the days things don’t fall perfectly into place. I’ve found those days are bound to come and they’re just part of the business we’re in.

I also believe total objectivity is not attainable when using the narrative style or any other type of story structure. Our backgrounds, experiences, political and religious beliefs impact how we approach any story. What’s important is to cover each story as fairly as you can. If you’re showing a bias, I think it’s important to address that in the story. I believe transparency, rather than total objectivity is the goal. I believe narrative is less objective than a straight news piece because of the characters we chose to include, the emotion that’s there, and what we chose to focus on, however I believe that’s what makes the narrative more truthful to the events and stories we cover.
One of the limitations I put upon myself was deciding to interview all of the research participants in person. This limited the journalists I ended up talking to. In my original proposal I said I would conduct some interviews by phone or video chat. I decided it was important to do these interviews face-to-face because I believed I would get better answers. In my proposal I thought I might not get honest responses because “objectivity” and “truthfulness” are such important characteristics of good journalism. I believe my decision to conduct these interviews in person helped research respondents be honest when answering my questions.

Another limitation I put on myself while conducting this research was the decision to only include journalists who use storytelling in their work. I deviated from my original proposal here by not including anyone who was against using narrative in broadcast news. Because I didn’t include opponents of narrative style I think that could be an important topic of further research.

Other topics for future research could include the importance of narrative in the digital age. Many respondents commented on how important narrative is to broadcast news because people now get their news from the Internet and social media sites. Broadcast journalists now have to fight for their viewers and many said the narrative can help make their work different. Some respondents noted that their news stations assume their viewers already know 90% of the daily news. The question is how to advance the story and make it a valuable experience for the news consumer. Could narrative be the answer?

Other possible research regarding this topic could explore how objective audiences believe the narrative style is. Is the narrative more engaging? It would be
interesting to see whether or not news consumers find this style more or less credible than the traditional inverted pyramid news format. Research could be conducted through qualitative methods, (focus groups of viewers, textual analysis of online story comments) or quantitative methods (such as online surveys). This research could be extremely beneficial for both news generators and consumers. All of these studies aim to better understand the narrative style, how it can successfully be used in broadcast news, how well the form connects with audiences and whether or not it is objective and truthful.
A. Interview Notes KOMU Gun Crime.

Jerry East
*Columbia PD Crime Analyst*

A crime analyst looks at the types of crimes that are happening around Columbia. Looks for a series of sprees and trends. So like for example in case of burglaries, if a certain set of burglaries are happening in a certain area what I will look at is the MO’s, where it’s happening, time of day area of town and see if there are any links that can be brought between those. And as I see those links what I will do is I will take those pieces of information and I will try to feed that information to patrol or to the investigation and say you might want to look for this person if I have enough information there or this type of vehicle or this type of activity happening at a certain time. So it basically helps them just get to a certain area at a certain time to have a better chance at catching somebody. It doesn’t always work. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn’t.

The majority of gun crime we have happening in Columbia are people who know each other. It’s not a stranger on stranger crime, which is what the majority of people out there really have a worry for. Somebody is going to a certain person for a specific purpose whether it’s for drugs, guns or money or whatever. In most cases it something to where that person is going to a specific place for a specific reason. To get those items from that person.

Traditionally people think of like the Crips and bloods from east LA. We don’t really have that specifically around here. It’s not territorially based. Most of them, some of the older people, they might have known each other as kids but they’re on opposite sides now it’s more of a trade. It’s more of a business if you want to say that. They’re looking for making money for selling drugs or guns or whatever. But gangs in Columbia, the traditional sense of the word, it’s more of a definition now as in a group of people who participate in elicited activities together. We have that here in some cases. Where three, four, six, ten individuals get together and start doing burglaries together or they’ll start doing larcenies of motor vehicles together. Or they’ll start doing home invasions of people who have drugs, guns or whatever, which is the gun crime connection that we’re talking about. So those types of issues are really what we have here. We don’t have the traditional territorial gangs where this is our block, you come here we’re going to hurt you. We don’t really have that. Some of the gang members here might go to school together. They might have friends together. They might be acquaintances. They might have even grown up together. But certain things in terms of how they make their money or because of certain people they know they tend to associate with those people, it just happens to be on the other side of people they might have grown up with.
Columbia really is a city now it’s not your normal little town, where if something happens on one side of town before you get home your mom knows about it. It’s not that anymore. It’s more of the, as we grow those same issues are happening here as are happening in a big city. **Columbia changed a long time ago. It’s not changing, it’s changed. Columbia has changed.** To get across town it still only takes 15-20 minutes to get across town but in terms of the people who live here. This is a destination area, Columbia is a destination area because of the university because of the different businesses we have here, it’s not a small bedroom community that it might have been at one time. The businesses we have here are international in some cases or national in some cases. We don’t have the small town atmosphere anymore. Instead of one business center we have several business centers. Instead of certain areas of town that have crime, which was twenty, thirty years ago one certain area of town might have had the majority of crime. **Now there are pockets around town where certain things happen. It’s not just one area anymore. So as we grow and as Columbia grows and expands there will be some thing that are more associated with a big city than with a small town.**

Majority is **what you give you get. If you’re involved in elicit crime then things are probably going to happen to you because of the nature of which you are involved in. if you’re just a regular citizen out there the majority of the bad gun crimes, the majority of it you’re not going to have to worry about that.** Because most of that stuff deals with drugs or other issues, because of the lifestyle that you lead, not because of who you are. If you are a standup citizen you might have somebody in your neighborhood take something out of your car if you left it in there or somebody might, there might be another issue like disturbances in your area. But for the most part if you’re a standup citizen, gun crime is not going to happen to you.

**Lorenzo Lawson**  
*Youth Empowerment Zone*  
It has to the point where I had to do something. I just felt so convicted of just constantly watching it on the news and hearing about youth and the violence and young people losing their lives especially to gun violence. So last year around this time a friend of mine Bishop Woods and I got together and we said let’s do something. Let’s at least raise the awareness and see what we can do. So we did the silence the violence march. Which surprised us. It was a bigger turn out than what we thought it was going to be. And from there we have formalized some committees and different things to see what we can do. We started asking the youth themselves what is there some things we can do to try and help sometimes to stop participating in this violent behavior. And so we are currently working on trying to find a facility for the Columbia boxing club. One of the young men that got killed last year he was in the boxing club and doing well and when that club closed down in the Columbia housing authority that’s when he began to hang out with the wrong people and he ended up losing his life. So those are some of the things they’ve expressed to us. We
need more positive activities and places to go. We put on a series of activities during the summer last year. It was pretty successful. Block parties and things. We at least made sure there were no incidents. We started off at Oakland swimming facility. There was one incident there but from that point on we didn’t have any more incidents and according to the Columbia Police Department they seen a decrease during that period of time. It was not sustaining. Those in my opinion were just quick fix. We have to do stuff that’s sustaining long term. Get them back engaged in the educational system. I’ve been talking to Dr. Belcher about some different things about how to get them reengaged in the education system because the majority of these men and women that are committing these crimes they have that in common that they have either been suspended or dropped out of school. And it makes it very difficult for them to do something positive for them like earning money. And I believe that a lot of it is tied to economics, drugs and drug territories stuff like that so those are some of the things we’re doing personally to try to lower that rate.

When we started the youth empowerment zone we were looking between 15 and 21. We are now seeing through requests, we are working with middle school kids. They are becoming very violent. We have been asked to come to some of the middle schools and offer some anger management training and stuff like that. We are also looking at the early 20s because a lot of them again in our opinion they are still young mentally and for maturing they are very young again with all the disadvantaged things that have happened in their life it’s very difficult for them to process and think through a lot of things that normal two parent middle class things they get that training in their home and they’re missing that.

**It’s a big issue here in Columbia. I mean it seems you never go two days without some type of shooting. It’s just on the news all the time and it’s constantly rising.** I have done more young funerals in Columbia than I have in my whole entire lifetime just in the last you know ten years. When I was growing up. You know I’m old. Murder was not a thing in Columbia. It just didn’t happen here. If it was it was by older people. Now young kids are killing each other. And even those who are not into the gang it’s just kids who want to have a normal life they’re afraid to go to school or they’re definitely not going to any type of activity where young people are gathering because they’re afraid they’re going to get shot or something. And that’s appalling to me that our kids are living in fear like that. So that motivates me to try and do something.

In my opinion one of the biggest things I’ve seen that have contributed to the rise in violent crime is the migration of families from inner cities. There’s been a lot of migration from Saint Louis, East Saint Louis, Kansas city, Memphis, and these kids they are bringing that mentality where they have actually been raised in that type of environment. Our kids wasn’t raised in that type of environment but now they’ve got to resort to it to protect themselves and to survive. So in my opinion that’s a great contributor to this increasing violence.
I think if I had that I’d probably get rich. This is not just a Columbia issue this is all over the United States. It’s happening everywhere. In Chicago there’s over 600 murders The president is talking about it. That’s why this whole gun issue is on the table politically because we don’t know. We’re grasping at whatever. Let’s try this let’s try that, and that’s all we can do try things to see I wish I did know that answer. What can we do. Violence seems to be a great part of this society I mean you can’t even look at a cartoon now without violence being involved. And these kids are being inundated with the notion that it’s alright. They’re desensitized them to another human beings life. It’s just like being on the TV they do it. Go on and have a glamorous life. And young lives can’t discriminate and sypher out that this stuff is not the way it’s got to be. They look at it and they taking it and they go and get a gun. And this is the way we answer our problems is through violence. I believe the media plays a big role in it and there needs to be some responsibility taken on that end.

It’s still a part of this society and I don’t know what its going to take but we are just going to do our part do as much as we can.

Robert Lee Brooks
Columbia Citizen

I’ve seen a lot of gun crime. When I first moved here you barely hear anything about gun violence. Maybe once or twice a year. And now it’s getting worser and worser its like it’s starting to turn to Saint Louis and Kansas City

A lot of people outside of Columbia see that Columbia’s a nice city that it’s a peaceful city so people from Saint Lousi Kansas City all over is moving here. The bad thing is that we’re getting a lot of those bad guys and I’m not an expert or nothing like that but it’s what I see.

I heard a few things I haven’t seen a lot though to be honest with you.

It bothers me, it bothers me all the time that’s why I try to do the best I can like I teach hip I try to motivate youngsters to try to do something constructive with their life. Just trying to do my part. Yeah it does bother me it’s scary. There’s crime everywhere, everywhere you go.

I think forreal, in my opinion there’s no comparison but I mean so long it’s not going to be that situation it’s probably going to be worse than Saint Louis or worse than Kansas City with the crime. I just hope we stop it before we get to that point.
Benito Mendez
*Columbia Citizen*

It makes me nervous, because my kids and not just my kids but all of the kids in school and it’s pretty nuts and it’s not safe. Kids are growing and you don’t know who’s around the neighborhood that makes me nervous too.

Nervous and we just need to do something to stop this crime that is going on.

Latisha Stroer
*Columbia Police Department*

I know that 2011 was probably our highest year in all three categories that we looked at. Assault with a gun, robbery with a gun and shots fired. 2012 year the old category that stayed the save besides going down was robbery with a gun.

We work a lot with a lot of different agencies, Boone County Sherriff’s Department, University police department so we’re trying to get a handle on some of the gun violence that is occurring in our cities.

The UCR reporting is for the state and federal government. It’s nationwide and that way we can see what crime is doing in different states and different communities. So we report quarterly and then at the end of the year as well with our numbers for the crimes that they ask for. They don’t ask for every single crime just the major crimes. And in looking at the UCR for 2012 we did go down in violent crimes where nationally everyone else went up.

We keep track at the Columbia Police Department. It’s just those numbers are not specifically asked for except for in robberies does it ask for a specific weapon that was used.

Well I think you saw that throughout the year in 2012 we did a lot of proactive patrols that we did early on with the gun violence that was happening around February and March. And then we had it again in the summer time and so we had a two man unit that was placed in and around Douglass park as well as in beat 30 which is in Northeast Columbia. They also had a two man unit in that area.

Columbia is transit a lot of different people move to different parts of the city and so that could be some of the reason. Maybe we had some violence that happened central we put some more officers in that area and then people moved out of that area and moved to a different area.

Gerbes pays for off duty officers there off Paris road. They have an officer that they hire us off duty from 4pm to midnight. So several times we’ve had people in that
community that know an officer is there that will come and report things or come straight to the police department through that avenue.

When we looked at the robbery with a gun you’re looking at different types of robberies. Some of them are bank robberies, where a stranger went in robbed a bank and left. We’ve also had robberies where it was a home invasion robbery... really not stranger related typically it’s drug related, drug rip offs and then we have some robberies that occurred at businesses at gas stations around Christmas time around the holidays. So that was another one where strangers went in and robbed a gas station and left. It doesn’t differentiate between which robberies occur.

Early on in 2012 we saw a lot of shots fired downtown near Boone Tavern. At the time that’s what it was called. And then Chucky cheese and so you saw those and that was gang and drug related at that time as well as the home invasions. So that was people who knew each other who were involved in criminal activity.

That’s a lot of what the robberies in 2012. ...

Just like you saw in 2012. We did a lot of different things we didn’t want to stay the same we did proactive patrols we made a lot of arrests very quickly in those 2 to 3 weeks that we did proactive patrols. We did the two man officer units in central Columbia as well as north east that not only made arrests but built relationships in the communities and that’s really what we’re looking for as well as build trust so people do come forward because we were having a hard time getting information from victims and witnesses at that time. And we also did the cease fire initiative and we did different things hoping that we would build relationships in the community and build trust so that people would report the crimes to us and get people off the street.

We’re just trying a lot of different things to see what’s working and to try to build those relationships in the community.

Hurricane Katrina we saw some increases and also crime increases at that time. Again its transient so we see a lot of people that come through STL and Kansas City and New Orleans.

**Derek Tarwater**
*Columbia Resident*

In this neighborhood there’s only been the one real incident that was in the back apartments behind here a couple of windows got shot out. But for the most part it’s a safe neighborhood it always has been. Most of the incidents people see are people that are involved in things that they should be and they don’t want to talk about it after the fact so it gives the impression of an unsafe environment when it might not actually be.
I feel safe. I've always felt pretty safe. I wouldn't leave my doors unlocked. Maybe that's a little bit of paranoia but I've always kinda been that way.

This neighborhood has always been one of the safer ones I feel even with the little tiffs we have every once in a while it does seem pretty mellow. It does seem like it's on this side of town more often that not but you know. I do really feel like it's people involved in something they don't want to talk about with the police.

We heard what I thought was firecrackers. Just a bunch of random noise and I stuck my head out the back door to see what was going on because it was election night I actually thought they called the election and we hadn't seen it on the news. About ten minutes later we saw the neighborhood fill up with police cars and they had someone apprehended on the ground over here and then the whole street was blocked off and everything.

Did that surprise you? Oh yea definitely because I didn’t know. There was no arguments or anything that we had heard. It sounded just like firecrackers because there were so many shots right away.

In the last three or four years it seems like every couple weeks you hear about some incident but it doesn’t necessarily make me feel unsafe just because it’s happening around me because I don’t feel that I’m involved in anything that’s going to put me in harm's way.
B. Interview Notes KETC Arts.

Notes: Sherri Williams/ Associate Educator/ Family Programs Coordinator

Came back to St. Louis after grad school

“People, especially families that come in with multiple kids really appreciate the fact that we have free programming.”

“For me I work here I appreciate being employed and to find an arts job is difficult. And so I feel really fortunate and I’m from the city of St. Louis so it was really me coming home.”

“I grew up coming to the museums, school trips, I went to Washington University which is right down the hill so I came during my undergrad so I was really looking for a job in the area and I was fortunate enough to come back to a place that welcomed me with open arms.”

“I am not an art historian but it does give me an opportunity to learn more about art to actually teach others about art and to provide them an appreciation.”

“So I work with our smallest literally our smallest audience and hopefully instill in them a passion for the arts and a desire as I had to come back to the museum as they get older and older.”

“Art is cultural, it teaches kids about the past it also very important in St. Louis because we try to tell the kids this is their museum this is a public institution you don’t have to pay to get in. City taxes pay to keep the door open so you have some ownership. This is the next generation the people that will keep the museum going, the patrons in the future who will hopefully bring their kids and their grandkids.”

“the doors are open all the time.”

Carl Hamm: deputy director

Expansion that will open June 2013

“People don’t often think of the arts museum as a business that’s open every day. Six days a week throughout the year which is quite a substantial business here.”
“As a result of this expansion we’ll add 25 new positions to the payroll so when you think about the fact that the museum generates an economic impact of more than 50 million dollars a year for our regional economy, this building project alone will generate more than 250,000 million dollar economic impact on our community.”

“People don’t think of that necessarily when they think about coming to the free art museum where they might not have a financial transaction walking through the door, but the ultimate impact of the museum is not just in enriching people’s lives or the contribution to the arts community that we represent but in dollars and cents economically as well.”

“The museum represents a transitory moment for people when they walk through the door and they’re transported to another place in time they’re not necessarily thinking about the here and now.”

“People should realize that for the museum to be the dynamic progressive institution that it has been for more than 150 years that has relied on the support of many and millions of people who have supported the museum.”

1500 tradesman worked on the new building. 200 jobs were created specifically for the project. 25 new jobs to the payroll. More than 20% of visitors are outside of the St. Louis region. More than a million dollars in tourism.

Jill McGuire
Regional Arts Commission

“We are the best arts city in the nation. And I would only qualify that per capita I don’t think we’re better than New York or Chicago. But per capita I believe St. Louis is the best arts city in the United States.”

“The arts are critical, to me, the future of St. Louis and the vitality of St. Louis.”

“We have amazing institutions and we have so much support. Our institutions are frequently in the top five.
“Higher education is very important to the economic development and the future health of our community. For the most part, we already know that nearly 60 percent of the jobs over the next ten years will require some sort of post secondary education. And right now in Missouri only 37% of our population has an associates degree or higher. So in order for us to meet the future demands of the work force and to continue to be a place where businesses would want to relocate to we have to increase the number of people who are earning college degrees.”

“Everyone does not have to earn a college degree, however they will need some sort of post secondary education for jobs. Whether they want to go to a technical school, or whether they want to just get an associates degree from a community college, there are different avenues to reach the end goal, however, most end goals will require some type of education so I think we just need to do a better job of very clear paths for students to achieve that education and reach their career goals.”

“The best thing about being in a metropolitan area is that you have access to so many job opportunities while you’re in college.”

“70 percent of our graduates will live and work in the Saint Louis region.”

“The number of college educated people we have directly impacts the median income for our communities. Which affects our tax base and everything else so in order for St. Louis to continue to grow and prosper we have to produce more college graduates and we have to get more industry to move to Saint Louis to create more jobs. It all has a direct correlation to education.”

“We already know that a student who earns a college degree will just about double their earning potential over their lifetime. It has a huge impact on their standard of living in terms of where they live and how they live. As more students realize that correlation between their standard of living and their education, we’ll see more students aspire to go to college.”

“It’s an investment. A college education is an investment in your future and unlike a lot of other investments, as long as a student follows through there’s not a lot of risk. Most of our students tend to find jobs and gainful employment.”

85 percent of our students are from the Saint Louis metropolitan area
“For students who want to stay close to home, for students who want to take advantage of both our social opportunities and professional development opportunities in Saint Louis for the cost I think we are a great deal.

**Dr. Douglass Rush – SLU Professor of Education**

“Graduates in the year 2000, only half of those graduates got jobs that needed a college degree.”

“I see a revolution going on or will go on in colleges in the next few years, how many parents want to send their kids to college to get degrees in literature, English, history, political science, theater, arts, philosophy, all these things for which they’re not going to find jobs.”

“If we’re moving to an economy of the 21st century, we’re going to need more college graduates in the stem fields, which is science technology and mathematics, and fewer graduates in a lot of these other fields.

I’ve been saying for 10 years now the college diploma has become more like the high school degree. It’s considered an entry-level requirement at a whole lot of jobs but people don’t physically need the diplomas to do that work, to be physically capable of doing the work.

You gain a lot by going to college by interacting with people and growing up, getting away from your parents, going out and growing up, that’s a very important part of going to college, but the other important part of going to college is getting a degree in a field in which you are going to get a job.

We can show you statistics over the years where students who have a college degree make more money in their lifetime than students who don’t. That’s based on an era looking twenty years in the past when maybe only 25 percent of the people graduated from college.

“I think if you start looking now and you ask, ‘is a college degree worthwhile?’ Should we just go and get it should we be like president Obama says and be the leading country for college graduates?’ That’s not the right question to be asking.”

Russia leading with college degrees.

“There really isn’t that link between saying, just get a college degree and having a strong vibrant economy. You have to have a college degree in a field that’s important for the new economy that’s developing out there.”
"What does it mean for them? Well if they're not in the right fields it means they spend a lot of time and money getting a degree that’s not going to prepare them for a job."

"It’s shortsighted just to say we want everyone to have a college degree. That says nothing about whether that person that gets that college degree is gong to get a job that that degree has prepared them for. Many people would be far better off, instead of going to a four year college, go to a trade school or go to a two year college and get a degree in heating and air-conditioning repair. Something along those lines where they will have a skill that will have much better employment opportunities for them. Rather than spending four years of their life and racking up, I think the average now is 30-plus-thousand dollars in debt to get a degree that they’re not going to find a job in.

Educators in elementary school through high school are saying ‘go to college, it will be the key to your success... the president is saying, go to college, go to college, everybody should go to college and people fall into that and say, yeah I’m going to go to college.’ So what? You spend four years and a lot of money yes you are going to gain some non-cognitive growth you’re going to learn to socialize with people and learn how to live away from your parents but are you really setting yourself up for a career? A career in an economy that is much different and changing very rapidly from the economy 20 years ago or even ten years ago.

The need for a lot of managers managing a bunch of blue collar workers is going away

College is not for everyone and we need to do some serious rethinking about this goal of everyone should go to college. We need to get more realistic if you’re going to go to college, let’s plan on going to college in a field where you are going to be competitive in the 21st century, world, global economy. There’s only a need for so many people with English, history, the traditional liberal arts majors.

The jobs in the future, the jobs right now are healthcare jobs

I think we’re going to see a real revolution in the way colleges work and the need for a lot of departments and degrees that don’t necessarily lead to employment in this economy. That’s not going to change.

Colleges need to be straight with people.

Do you think SLU or UMSL or Washington University of university of Missouri, tells prospective students well here’s our employment rate of our students who graduated with English majors, here’s our employment rate of students who graduated with engineering majors. Here’s what an English major makes. Here’s
what an engineering major makes. Here’s the percentage who got jobs. They’re not giving people that information.

Well they’re becoming consumers of educational services. There are a lot of different choices out there for them. Traditional colleges, online colleges, whatever, but the one thing that nobody is telling these consumers that they’re going to have to dig out on their own is when I get this degree, what’s going to happen?

I see that we are on the verge of another revolution as big as the change from the old classical curriculum to the broader curriculum in the 1800s. I think we’re going to see a lot more emphasis on science, technology, engineering, mathematics. I think the drive to make everyone go to college is misdirected in many ways. If everyone went to college and everyone got a degree in engineering there’s not going to be jobs. Just like if everyone goes to college and everyone gets a degree in English there’s not going to be jobs for them either.

The drive to get everyone into college some people would say it’s going to create a more informed public. But is it going to create a happier public? And is it going to create a public that have real meaningful jobs? I kind of doubt it.

**Faith Sander – Saint Louis Graduates**

The Saint Louis metropolitan region compared to 35 other regions has had the greatest rate of degree completion in the last 3 years over any other region. That’s cause for celebration. We’ve come farther faster than any other metropolitan area of the United States. What is less worthy of celebration and actually more worthy of concern is there are still parts of our community terribly underrepresented in the post-secondary education process. That would be communities of color and in particular that are low-income.

It’s not just wages but it’s also the likelihood that companies will relocate to Saint Louis and see a workforce that has potential. It is whether or not young people will stay in this region and can raise their families here rather than leaving this region for employment or for an opportunity elsewhere.

Post secondary education is really the rallying cry for the Saint Louis community. It’s going to matter to everyone we have a degree or our children have a degree it’s going to matter that the individual next to us has the opportunity as well.

**Dewonna Furgeson – Northwest Senior**

My time at Northwest High School was fun I was able to participate in all of the activities, sports, volleyball and soccer and academic activities like the debate mock trial youth and government. So I had fun in High School.
I'm happy and I'm proud of myself that I finished that's how I feel I'm kind of nervous to go out but I'm happy.

I want to go to college and I recently got accepted to Saint Louis University, Old Miss, Mizzou, University of Illinois at Chicago.

I want to go to college to further my education because my career goal is to be a cardiovascular surgeon and so I have to go to college to do that.

.... Because the women in my family have heart problems so I wanted to go into the heart field and so I was able to go into the hospital this summer and I was able to be an intern where I worked in the hospital I got to see the different fields and I decided I wanted to be a surgeon from that.

College Summit has prepared me tremendously. I was able to make a college list create a portfolio and resume and find scholarships

I believe college will open a world of new opportunities I will be able to see different cultures and be able to meet new people and network. Further my education so I’m happy.

I dunno yet I’m still waiting on more acceptances.

_Deionna Ferguson Northwest High School Senior_

It’s been great I’ve had a lot of opportunities to do everything that I want. I’m a part of mock trial, debate. My sister and I we’re one of the best debaters at the school. We broke records. Youth and government, Everything that’s law related I’m in. I’m a competitive person so that’s what I do

We compete with everything.

It means that I’m achieving my goal in life. It’s where I’m going to meet new people and have fun and learn more and so college means I’m opening up and becoming and independent person.

SLU I want to become a corporate lawyer and a medical attorney. My sister wants to become a doctor so I might have to become her lawyer later on in life

Well the one that’s offering the most money right now is the University of Illinois at Chicago but it’s cold there so I’m still deciding.

Finances are causing me to have to fill out a lot of scholarships
Both:
We want to be in the same dorm! So we won’t meet anyone new

We’ve only gotten accepted into two schools together.

In debate we’re teammates. We both get to act as one. She’s good with the facts and I’m good with persuading

Right now we’re like connected we’re in the same room we see each other 24/7. So if we don’t go to the same college I’ll call her everyday.

Catina Jones:
I always knew I was going to college I didn’t know what college or where but I always knew I was going to go to college

Krista Germann Social Studies Teacher/College Summit Teacher

The simplest definition is I’m a counselor in the classroom and so I see the kids every other day on our block scheduling and I walk them through the college process and so College Summit as an organization, because it’s nation wide was started to create a college going culture where there wasn’t one

This program was created as a safety net to get kids going so that’s why it’s only in certain areas.

Most kids go to college because their parents went to college and know how the process works and so this program was created to help the kids who don’t know the process and who’s parents don’t know the process to guide them through it.

2005 piloted in STL public schools. 2006 implements in 2 schools. Currently in all public schools in the city.

Now the kids come in and they know what they want to do and they have an idea of where they want to go to school and it’s completely changed the culture and it’s a lot more positive when it comes to college and post secondary plans

This helps them set a plan of action and they’re ready to implement it

It helps them plan their future because that is very overwhelming to not know what you’re going to do next and I think a lot of people just shut down or you do what the people around you are doing which might be just get a job somewhere and not go to school

It’s so helpful that the kids want to be in it all the kids see the reason to be in it because the class is all about them
I’m speechless there really are no words to say what that is like. You’re just speechless. It’s kind of overwhelming but the purpose of this class and so I know I’ve succeeded and they’ve succeeded and we went on this process together because I can only as the adage is lead a horse to water and they want to do it so it’s fun to go through that with them but it’s always hard to see your seniors leave

I don’t think I would have stayed in the public school system if it wasn’t for college summit it’s a very positive program they’re a great organization to work with

It’s just positive. Every day to come in and help these kids plan their future and to see how happy they are and to see how excited they are that they have a plan in place and I’ve helped them onto the next part of their life
D. Interview Notes KETC Arch Tax

Todd Patton  
_Carmel, Indiana - Tourist_

We’re from Carmel Indiana which is just north of Indianapolis and we’re here for a short spring break with our girls

There’s some unique things to do obviously the arch was something interesting for the girls to do

We walked around the museum after we went up in the arch ... The girls enjoyed going up there and seeing the view but it was really neat it’s such a beautiful day today and looking over the city it was fun

I enjoy history and the whole westward expansion is something I’ve always been interested in and obviously Thomas Jefferson and learning about it and what it means and how its kind of brought up the riverfront area from 50 years ago. It’s a neat idea and its something that’s renown worldwide.

Frank DeGraff  
_STL Community Blogger_

It means a lot just look at it isn’t it gorgeous. The arch is iconic obviously I think actually we should do more to promote the arch worldwide because I have a feeling here in the region and nationally the arch is very well known but internationally I think it could use a boost so I would definitely be promoting the city through the iconic image of the arch even internationally.

It kind of distinguishes us from a lot of other cities. There are a lot of other pier cities about the same size. Sometimes it’s hard to keep the skylines apart. The saint Louis skyline is immediately recognizable, therefore we are immediately recognizable. It means a lot to the city.

I think we’re overestimating that a little bit. When you go visit a city are you going to that city to just see the icon. Are you going to Paris to just visit the Eiffel Tower? I think it adds to the image and it makes it more marketable. But I think once people are here they are here for a reason. They’re going to be here for a convention maybe visit family or any other reason to visit. And I think if they can they will take in the arch. So it definitely helps in taking in that experience. In that respect I definitely commend city arch river front for renovating the arch grounds because as we all can see it looks a little tired it needs a little renovation. So in that respect I absolutely agree with them.
I think the arch tax is the wrong way to do it. It’s basically this idea proposed by a small group of people, very powerful people and there’s nothing wrong with that they want to put their legacy on saint Louis... they said we’re going to fund this with federal money and private donations. This didn’t work so well possibly had something to do with the very down economy right now... I think it’s not consistent...

Obviously the arch is a huge part of downtown so I’ve been following it from the start basically.

I don’t think anyone who voted for the arch tax yesterday actually knows what they voted for. Because I haven’t seen the latest plans in awhile.

Nina Turner
Paralegal

I grew up in north Saint Louis went to school in north saint Louis that was my predominant area. The only time we really got down to the arch was during field trips

Growing up here has been a great experience there’s a lot to do a lot to see a lot of things to do on the weekends. Everybody loves it when people come into town you don’t have to worry about trying to entertain your guests because you always have somewhere to go. And a lot of things are free and that’s what I love about Saint Louis because the STL Zoo you don’t have to pay to go in...

The arch is free, except for when you want to go up and take the ride, which I have never done, will never do I’m too afraid of hights and too claustrophobic.

I think a lot of people view the arch as opportunity. It’s the gateway to the west umm so that has always been a symbol of opportunities. Just able to reach your goals a place where you can go an do almost anything. So I would say my word would be opportunity if I had to use a word it would be opportunity.

I got the information late so when I actually saw it I didn't know what it was but I got the phone calls the automated phone calls and that's how I knew what the issue about the tax on the arch grounds and the memorial park areas. As far as I’m concerned I think these are beautiful areas that we all take advantage of in saint Louis. I think it’s something that I appreciate. Especially because I’m here on a lunch break and I like to come to a clean area it’s safe down here.

It’s always well kept. Of course there are some repairs that does need to be done but those are things, if we want some place nice and safe to be able to experience on a daily basis, see it, walk run a lot of people jog down here people walk their dogs and stroll with their babies. I think this is a beautiful place.
Those are things we enjoy and they're free we don't have to pay for them so I think at some point to maintain it in this economy at some point we're going to have to pay it in one way or another.

Lynne Hazelip
Field Geologist

Born in Saint Louis I lived most of my life in Saint Louis except for a little stint for college. We were in elementary school when the last piece was put in and everything stopped and they rolled the televisions into all the classrooms and we got to watch the last piece go in which was really cool.

My dad ran the steel mill that made a lot of the steel in this edifus.

There is a time capsule and everyone in my elementary class got to write their names on a piece of paper so we all have our names on the time capsule.

I think it’s a very very good thing for Saint Louis. It’s one of the things that keeps us on the map that’s widely visible.

This is here and it helps keep us on the map and as a breast belt city that’s something.

Cody Dey
Biker

You just moved to Saint Louis what do you think of Saint Louis so far? I love it it’s a very nice city

Half on the streets half on the trails.

It’s very beautiful it’s on the river. Very nice area.

I think it’s just what really stands out for Saint Louis. Everyone everywhere knows Saint Louis has the arch. Just the fact that it symbolizes the westward expansion. It’s a great bit of history.

I think anything that can improve parks and trails is good.

How many days a week do you bike? I would say five days a week
How many miles? I would say 20-40 a day.
Use of Narrative Style in Broadcast News

Jennifer Long

University of Missouri
I fell in love with journalism as an eager freshman, sitting in a squeaky bucket chair in a rundown lecture hall at Stony Brook University. What I didn't know about that preliminary news literacy course was it would be the start of an incredible journey. During my time at Stony Brook I learned the technical skills it takes to be a great reporter. Very quickly I learned that no matter what story or report you do as a journalist, it touches someone. One of the most moving experiences I had during my time at Stony Brook was on a reporting trip to the Gulf of Mexico a year after the BP oil spill in 2010. I take a look back now at an excerpt from one of my blog posts during that trip:

The story was the oil. The spill. The national media descended on this community and had the story: the biggest unintentional release of oil into a body of water in the history of the world.

But now there’s a different story and no ones reporting it. Months later, the networks are gone. The local papers and television stations cover small stories, but in comparison to the summer, when reporters and cameramen swarmed the area, it’s a starkly different world. Though the national media is physically gone, it continues to leave an impression.

Many, including myself before I came down here, believe the gulf is drowning in oil. But is it? From what I’ve heard people are trying desperately to get back to normal. These people aren’t looking for tons of media attention. It seems what they want is for the world to see that they’re trying to get back on their feet. That they’re not knee deep in oil. Fish are abundant and people
eat whatever they catch. Businesses, hotels, charter services and restaurants are open. But those who would usually come for vacations believe the beaches are black and the water is slimy. Will they be back in the spring? That’s the 20 billion dollar question.

It’s hard to have a real consensus on the impact of the oil. I don’t know. Scientists don’t know. We may never truly know the full impact of the Deepwater Horizon explosion. However, one thing is for sure. The situation down here is not as bad as I thought.

During that trip I began to realize people are at the heart of every story. It’s a simple principle known from childhood bedtime stories, fables and even some common jokes. I continued to discover the importance of humanizing stories throughout my time as a graduate student at the University of Missouri School of Journalism. Broadcast faculty at the school such as Greeley Kyle and Kent Collins taught me how important narrative storytelling is and how effective the method can be in communicating with the viewer.

For the past six months, I’ve had the privilege to work at KOMU-TV as a reporter, and practice narrative style storytelling in broadcast news. Elements of the narrative, including characterization, point of view, plot, conflict and sometimes (but not always) resolution, have helped me look at each assignment as an opportunity to tell a story to the viewers, rather than a report.
This is where I address my subject of research. I believe narrative journalism, a style utilizing fictional writing techniques to tell a non-fiction story; can be used effectively and successfully in the day-to-day operations of a television newsroom and in long-form investigative and feature pieces. Through this research I will also address the challenges narrative storytellers encounter in terms of journalistic objectivity and truth telling. Many theorists have already asked this question. “What is the relation between a narrative and the events it depicts?” (Carr 1986, p. 117) Some argue that narrative and journalism are essentially at odds with one another. One writer labeled the relationship an “unholy alliance, if you have a kind of pure view of journalism” (Lepore 2002, p. 53). However, scholars and journalists have also argued that this writing technique is successful in not only informing the news consumer, but engaging them as well. Through in-depth, semi-structured interviews and the use of narrative theory I hope to address both sides of this argument. I hope to uncover the struggle reporters and producers face in an attempt to remain truthful and objective while using this technique. If producers and reporters are successful in remaining objective, I hope to better understand what methods they utilize to ensure truthful storytelling.

Research Question #1: How can reporters and producers use narrative style in everyday operations of a television news station and in long-form investigative and feature pieces?

Research Question #2: How do reporters and producers remain objective and truthful in news stories when using narrative style?
As Kovach and Rosenstiel explain in their book *Elements of Journalism*, one of the key jobs of a news reporter is to strive to “make the significant interesting and relevant” (Kovach & Rosenstiel 2007, p. 187). They argue that the effectiveness of any piece can be measured by how much it engages and enlightens the audience. No matter how hard a reporter works on a story, the end result will be somewhat worthless if news consumers cannot understand the information, relate to the subject matter and recognize why they should care.

This is what can make storytelling and narrative journalism essential characteristics of successful news stories. Al Tompkins, former television journalist and current broadcast and online faculty member at The Poynter Institute, said there is a stark difference between fact telling and storytelling in his book *Aim for the Heart: Write, Shoot, Report and Produce for TV and Multimedia*. He argues “that the power of great storytelling will connect with the viewer's heart” (Tompkins 2012, p.2 ). KGO-TV reporter Wayne Freedman says this technique is what makes a good reporter. He writes in his book *It Takes More Than Good Looks to Succeed at Television News Reporting*, that “In a perfect world, every news story would affect everyone directly. In reality this rarely happens, but good reporters will always find ways to make the material compelling” (Freedman 2011, p. 33).

This is true across all mediums of production, not just television. Newspaper, magazine and web journalists must also make conscious efforts to involve the audience in order to be successful communicators. I would argue that this can be accomplished by simply telling the reader or viewer a story.
This research will be valuable because television remains the most
popular and widely used medium for national and international news consumption
in the United States. A 2011 Pew Research study found that 66% of Americans get
most of their news from television (The Pew Research Center 2011, p. 2). “However,
numerous scientific studies have shown that the content of TV news is quickly
forgotten or misunderstood by audiences” (Machill 2007, p. 186). If we better
understand how television journalists can use narrative style in the day to day news
cycle, reporters may obtain a better understanding of how to best reach audiences
while maintaining the core journalistic values of truth and objectivity.

Professional Skills Component:

For the professional skills component of my project I will work as a news
reporter for the KOMU newsroom. When I start this project on January 21, 2013, I
will have completed all of the television reporting classes offered at the university,
courses such as advanced television reporting, investigative reporting and the
computer assisted reporting boot camp. I will have worked for nearly a year in the
KOMU newsroom playing multiple roles such as producer, anchor, web editor, and
live, general assignment and investigative reporter. For this project I will work 30
hours a week for 14 weeks at KOMU starting the week of January 21 and ending the
week of April 29. I will produce long-form investigative or feature narrative stories
for sweeps in both February and May of 2013. I will also work on occasion as a
general assignment reporter, also practicing narrative style in day-turn packages
and live-shots.
This project will take constant researching, reporting, writing and photographing. Some of these pieces will be investigative in nature, which will involve making open records requests to obtain documents and data, while others will be human-interest stories. I will endeavor to use narrative storytelling in every piece, no matter if it is hard news, feature or investigative.

To document my work for this professional project I will include important and pertinent aspects of the reporting process such as interview transcripts. I will also include links to the aired stories along with the scripts. I will work closely with my committee chair Randy Reeves to make sure I am on track to have projects completed in time for the rating sweeps periods. Reeves works in the KOMU newsroom as the executive producer so he will be easy to access. He will also aid me in the scholarly analysis component of this project. University of Missouri assistant professors Greeley Kyle and Kent Collins will serve on the committee as my editors. Kyle and Collins will approve story ideas, help in the reporting process and edit scripts with me. Both have extensive background in television news and are experts in humanizing stories and utilizing storytelling techniques to connect with the viewer.

At this end of this project I will be well versed and educated in using narrative storytelling techniques in both investigative and feature pieces. This will help me greatly as I search for my first job in broadcast television, as I will be seeking out stations that value, invest in and encourage narrative-style storytelling in their broadcasts.

Scholarly Analysis Component:
Theoretical Framework:

I will utilize narrative theory for the scholarly analysis component of this project. Theorists maintain a multitude of definitions for narrative theory, and furthermore “how one defines narrative theory shapes one’s understanding of how the different approaches are related” (David Herman et al. 2012, p.7). Theorists James Phelan and Peter J. Rabinowitz define narrative theory as simply “somebody telling somebody else, on some occasion, and for some purposes, that something happened to someone or something” (3). This broad definition of narrative theory explains the purpose of the narrative and in my research I will address the concepts of narrative theory, including “authors, narrators, and narration; plot, time, and progression; space, setting, and perspective; character; reception and the reader; and issues of value” (7).

Narrative Theorist David Carr explains narrative theory and the narrative as a “universal form of human expression” (Carr 2008, p. 19). We see this in movies, plays, books etc. Carr argues that the relationship between actions past, present and future could easily fit into the beginning, middle and end structure of narrative form. He said narratives are simply an extension of what we see in real life. But Carr also explains that even though the narrative form is widely used in our culture the concept of narrative and an explanation of its meaning has not been widely explored.

In many ways the narrative style has been utilized successfully in multiple forms of journalism and historical writings. But the technique does not come
without its criticisms. One journalist said, “when you have something called ‘narrative journalism,’ both those things are being violated slightly by the other because the narrative, the story you’re telling, would always be better if you didn’t always have to think of what had actually happened” (Lepore 2002, p. 53). This article goes on to argue that the truth is “slightly violated” when using the narrative style because the writer must inevitably bend parts of the text to make it fit into the storyline. Other things are simply left out because they do not fit.

Theorists have long argued whether the use of the narrative is appropriate in literature. Some argue that the narrative does not present a true representation of real life sequences. Historians say that real events do not ”hang together” in the narrative way; having a beginning, middle and end. Utilizing narrative techniques, critics say, paints a distorted account of reality (Carr 1986, p. 117). Theorist Louis Mink remarked that the world does not simply produce well-made stories, we as humans create them and imagine them in the world ourselves. Mink argues that the narrative is the writer’s creation. Paul Roth echoes these statements offering this example: “... to the statement that such and such a happening is tragic; there is only a telling which so presents it” (Tamura 2011, p. 153). Hayden White asks this about narrative; “Does the world really present itself in the form of well-made stories, with central subjects, proper beginnings, middles and ends? Or does it present itself as a mere sequence without beginning or end?” (153).

But narrative theorist Hannah Arendt looked to narrative as a way to make coherence out of sequences and occurrences in life. She said, “action and speech are the two activities whose end result will always be a story with enough coherence to
be told, no matter how accidental or haphazard the single events and their causation may appear” (Speight 2011, p. 116-117).

History of the Narrative in Historical Literature and Journalism:

Theorist Lawrence Stone, a British historian known partly for bringing narrative writing back to academic history, defined narrative as the “organization of material in chronologically sequential order and the focusing of the content into a single coherent story” (Stone 1979, p. 3). He addressed the use of narrative style in historical writings and explained that the difference between structural and narrative history is the use of description instead of analysis. But for a while, the use of narrative style in historical writings was looked down upon. The use of the style has long been debated and the discussion reached a head in the 1970’s. Historians traditionally focused on “quantitative history,” calculating numbers that showed growth or decline such as “death records, food supply, price fluctuations” etc. (Tamura 2011, p. 152). Description did not have a place in history. Stone challenged this school of thought by arguing that many historians viewed historical writings as a science, rather than an art – and that needed to change. He introduced the pregnant principle, that said narrative does not lack interpretation as long as there is a theme and an argument (Lepore 2002, p. 51).

Just as theorists and historians brought the narrative style back into historical writings, journalists began introducing the style into news reporting as well. According to literary journalist Jon Franklin, the late 19th and early 20th century was the time that reporters began what he calls “literary training” through writing short stories. He says when “short story writers turned to reporting, they
brought a desk drawer full of literary devices, an economy of prose, an eye for
detail and an ear for dialogue, and a keen sense of plot and resolution” (51). The
publication of Truman Capote’s *In Cold Blood* was a definitive example of this.
Published in 1965, the book created a new genre, the non-fiction novel. Many
journalists label this literary movement as the introduction of “new journalism.”
And some have praised this form of writing as a successful technique used to better
connect with readers. Author Fergus Bordewich labeled the struggle this way in
1977. He said the “audience is a restless bunch. Grabbing them, let alone holding
their attention, requires one to reach out with much, much more” (Garber 2011, p.
117).

This fight to keep the news consumer interested is not isolated to print
publications. National Public Radio, or NPR, started utilizing the “everyday person
narrative” around the same time Stone was calling for a change in historical writings
and storytelling in the 70’s (Butler 2006, p. 29). The organization’s *This American
Life* draws more than 1.6 million listeners every week. The show centers around the
idea that the audience wants to hear personal stories and that storytelling “is such a
timeless and basic human activity” (30). This technique has also been used in
television. The strength of the narrative is the literary techniques that audiences see
in film. “Plot, dramaturgy, sound and visual effects together can form a whole which
is difficult for the viewer to turn away from due to the ambience and atmosphere of
suspense which has been created.” (Ekstrom 2000, p. 472). These storytelling
techniques arouse emotions in the viewer and create suspense and excitement.

Literature Review:
This theoretical discussion has sparked some valuable studies regarding the narrative and its use in journalism. Kovach and Rosensteil explain that “journalism’s first obligation is to the truth” (Kovach & Rosenstieli 2007, p. 36). But if narrative is not entirely truthful some critics say the style may be deceptive to readers. A West Virginia University professor of journalism argued that the narrative has created a new form of journalism. He writes that there is the traditional objective form of journalism and a modern form of what he calls “narrative realism” (Hanson 1997, p. 387). Objectivity, he says, is a normative idea in which reporters should be fair, balanced and impartial. He believes that objectivity is a form of writing in which the story is presented in a neutral tone. He labels “narrative realism” as an alternative to the objective form. This form includes scene-by-scene construction, use of dialogue, third-person point of view and symbolic details. He says the “point of this form is to use language to make the reader call forth his or her own experiences and emotions and apply them to the story at hand” (390). Hanson says objectivity and narrative realism are completely separate. He quotes writer Dwight Macdonald who dismisses narrative style to subjects that are sensational in nature. He calls narrative a “bastard form, having it both ways, exploiting the factual authority of journalism and the atmospheric license of fiction” (393).

Kalle Pihlainen, a professor of cultural history, argued a similar point for the use of the narrative in historical writings. He says the historical narrative is in essence fictional. Because a writer has to select material and fit facts into the narrative form, he argues that the elements of history are changed. Pilhlainen says
the narrator of the story plays too prominent a role in the story structure. “Any structure, then, is ultimately an imposition of the historian’s own values on the material used” (Pihlainen 1978, p. 8). Though historical writings clearly differ from journalism and the ethics reporters adhere to, it should be remembered that both areas of study rely heavily on facts and truths of events that happened in the past. Pihlainen, Hanson and multiple other theorists and writers have argued the narrative style simply does not coincide with principles journalists and historical writers are based upon.

However, other researchers have found the narrative is the best way to connect with the audience and say it furthermore does not jeopardize objectivity and truthfulness. Nieman Fellow and New York Times Miami Bureau Chief Rick Bragg said it this way; “A little bit of narrative, like sugar, just makes everything better. Narrative conveys emotion. Narrative shows, not tells” (Bragg 2000, p. 30). He argues that a reporter can weave story telling into any day-turn story and provides his coverage of the Oklahoma City bombing, written in two hours as an example. Show, he says, don’t tell the reader the story. Good writing and storytelling will keep the news consumer reading and coming back for more.

Researchers have found this to be true. Researcher Jane Johnston conducted a pilot study of narrative writings in two daily newspapers in Australia. Over the course of a month, Johnston examined 2,435 stories on the front pages of The Australian and the Sydney Morning Herald. The study showed that the reporters at Sydney Morning Herald used the inverted pyramid style, which begins with a summary lead and then presents information in descending order of importance,
the majority of the time in its news writing. However, the news section of the paper did contain narratives. According to the study, one out of every five stories in the news section used the narrative style. This style was used in both soft and hard news stories at both of the papers.

It’s important to understand how and why reporters use narrative style. Researcher Marcel Machill argues in his study that it’s out of necessity. He says TV news programs are the way people find out about what’s happening in the world around them. However, he also notes that “numerous studies have shown that content in TV news is quickly forgotten or misunderstood by audiences” (Machill 2007, p. 186). Studies have shown that news consumers have a short recall of television news stories and often cannot answer questions about the content. Machill conducted a study that shows this point, and furthermore argues that the narrative gives a clearer perspective to television news stories. His study involved 215 participants and analyzed how narrative style can improve retention and comprehension of news content. Results showed that the use of narrative can increase retention and understanding of news content. However, Machill also admits that this style is by no means objective in the traditional sense of the word in journalism. He argues in his conclusion that the:

Concept of narrative news presentation could thus lead to a renaissance in research in news journalism. It is clear that narrative news does not meet the conditions for a naïve claim to objectivity.

However, overall journalistic quality could be improved. In conjunction with descriptive, commentary or advice-giving news
items, narrative news contributions could enhance the variety of the overall offering, thereby opening up the possibility of achieving objectivization by means of a change in perspective (200).

To further support this point professor of philosophical and cultural studies Slavka TOMAŠČÍKOVÁ argues that objectivity isn’t the right goal. He says television news reporters already relay messages about reality to the audiences. These messages are sent in signs and the audiences decode the signs in real social contexts. So news agencies and reporters are always constructing the meaning of news events. However, in narrative style, TOMAŠČÍKOVÁ says there are fewer possibilities for audience members to have their own interpretations of the narrative. He says multiple codes in a news story, including anchor appearance, voice, video, editing, influence the way the viewer perceives the information, regardless of style. He says the “facts and figures fulfill the role of narrative linked to the idea of realism and accuracy. Television news narrative does not display ambiguities or uncertainties, this makes television appear both authoritative and omniscient” (TOMAŠČÍKOVÁ 2010, p. 264).

This research and narrative theory show that there are conflicting beliefs regarding the use of the narrative in journalism. Though studies have shown the narrative to be effective in successfully engaging the news consumer, it is also debatable whether or not the style adheres to core journalistic principles such as objectivity and truthfulness.
Method

I will carry out this research by conducting interviews to answer my research questions. As Fontana and Frey explain, the interview is extremely complex and exists in multiple forms. I plan to utilize semi structured, in-depth interviews in which I will ask “each respondent a series of pre-established questions with a limited set of response categories” (Fontana & Frey 1994, p. 363). Fontana and Frey set up the guidelines for this type of interview. Through my research and experience from working in a broadcast newsroom, I already know basic knowledge of narrative style broadcast news stories. During the interview I will not ask leading questions, interpret the meaning of questions or improvise in questioning (364). However, because these interviews will be “semi structured” I plan to allow some room for open-ended questions to allow participants to elaborate on certain ideas. These interviews will be “in-depth” because I plan to speak with participants more than once, allowing time to get to know the journalist and walk through decision making in the construction of their stories.

I am IRB (Institutional Review Board) certified through the University of Missouri for my research, and the board has approved the proposed research for this professional project. I have attached my IRB completion report and my IRB exempt application.

I plan to contact both reporters and producers in the industry who currently use the narrative style in a day-to-day news operation. I also plan to interview people who do not use the narrative style. My hope is to study three to five broadcast journalists. I want to conduct these interviews in-person and have the
opportunity to analyze the journalist's work with them. This may require some
traveling or a change in what I expect for my study. As I begin contacting reporters
and producers I will see what is feasible for the six-month time period I have
allotted for this project. I also plan to conduct some of the interviews via Skype. This
will broaden the amount of people I can talk to. I hope to get participants with
varying job titles, including but not limited to local news reporter, national news
reporter, one-man-band reporter, in-depth or long-form news
producer/editor/writer, photographer etc.

I also plan to contact KGO-TV reporter, and University of Missouri alumnus,
Wayne Freedman for this study. Broadcast journalism students taking classes at the
University of Missouri read Freedman's book It Takes More Than Good Looks to
Succeed at Television News Reporting that highlights his successes and failures in
using narrative style. He is well known for his storytelling and has worked with
University of Missouri journalism students in the past. Again, if he cannot help me
for my project he may be able to connect me with other reporters or producers in
the industry who would be willing to participate.

Other possible research participants are reporters Andy Choi of WISC in
Madison, Wisconsin, and Jason Lamb who works in Nashville, Tennessee. Both are
University of Missouri alumni. I will also contact Boyd Huppert of KARE in
Minnesota. He is one of the best and most respected storytellers in the journalism
industry. I will also be contacting Les Rose a photographer for CBS.

University of Missouri professors including members of my committee
Greeley Kyle, Kent Collins and Randy Reeves are in constant contact with reporters
and producers in the industry. They will be consulted for candidate suggestions for this study.

Researchers used the method of semi-structured, in-depth interviews while conducting a study in India to explore women's perspectives of medical abortion in 2010. The goal of the research was to find the reasons why women used this form of abortion and to gather reactions to the medical process. Researchers recruited participants (before patients knew the results of the abortion) during a follow up visit 12 days after the procedure. Researchers conducted semi-constructed interviews alone with the participant; interviews lasted approximately 30-45 minutes and included open-ended questions. Additional interviews were scheduled if participants agreed to it. The additional visit was a supplement to see if a women's perception of her abortion had changed. Researchers coded interviews to analyze women's perceptions of the process (Ganatra et al. 2010, p. 336-337).

Semi structured in-depth interviewing was the best method of research because women shared personal and intimate experiences in the study. This method allowed participants to explain emotions, expectations and individual circumstances (337). Semi structured, in-depth interviews will also be the best method for my research because I am trying to identify the decision making in narrative style broadcast news stories. I need to get at the heart of how reporters and producers see the narrative and whether or not it aligns with core journalistic principles and values. To obtain personal opinions such as this and to allow reporters and producers to open up about their work I must have multiple discussions. I believe this method will be the best way to gather research regarding this topic.
Conclusion:

Through my research I expect to find that total objectivity is unattainable in the use of the broadcast narrative style. Kovach and Rosensteil argue that this is actually OK for journalists and that it’s more important to be transparent and practice a discipline of verification. They say in *Elements of Journalism* that a reporter must interpret facts; that is his or her job. In the narrative style a journalist does that but goes further to put the information into a storyline. This requires active participation of the narrator, however, so does the inverted pyramid style. A reporter decides what is most important and how to present it. In looking at it this way the narrative style is not that much different in principle than other story structures.

I believe many reporters and producers will tell me they believe the broadcast news narrative to be successful in every day hard news stories and in-depth features and investigations. However, I do believe I will find many reporters believe they have more of a creative license when constructing stories in the narrative style. I am guessing many do not think about objectivity as much as they would if they were using the traditional inverted pyramid style story structure. This can be a problem and it will be interesting to see if my findings reflect these predictions.

One of the limitations I may encounter in this study is getting access to reporters, or getting the kind of access I want. I have a feeling I would be able to conduct multiple phone interviews with reporters; however, I want to focus deeply on a few reporters and their specific stories. This may prove difficult because it
could require traveling and permission from participants to shadow their work and meet with them on multiple occasions. Although I do believe semi structured in-depth interviewing is the best method for this research I am aware that I will have to be very deliberate and careful with the wording and order of my questions. Because “objectivity” and “truthfulness” are such important characteristics of good journalism it may be difficult for reporters or producers to give honest opinions on the narrative style.

Future research regarding this topic could explore how objective audiences believe the narrative style is. Is the narrative more engaging? It would be interesting to see whether or not news consumers find this style more or less credible than the traditional inverted pyramid news format. Research could be conducted through qualitative methods, (focus groups of viewers, textual analysis of online story comments) or quantitative methods (such as online surveys). This research could be extremely beneficial for both news generators and consumers. All of these studies aim to better understand the narrative style, how it can successfully be used in broadcast news, how well the form connects with audiences and whether or not it is objective and truthful.
F. List of Questions for Interviewees

**Background:**
Why and how did you get into the field of journalism?
Please explain what the responsibilities at your current job are.
When did you first see narrative style used in broadcast news?
When and how did you start using narrative style/story-telling in your own work?
Explain the process and the experience.
Explain the challenges and the successes you experienced when first using this style of story crafting.
Did your producers, editors, news directors, colleagues etc. support this move?

**Present:**
How would you say you use narrative style in your work now as a more experienced reporter/producer?
Explain the process of story construction beginning with story assignment and ending with the finished product. What things do you consider during the interview, when capturing audio/video, writing the script and editing everything together.
What kind of stories can use narrative style?
What do you believe are important elements of the narrative. Do these elements change a news story?

**Opinion:**
How can reporters and producers use narrative story telling techniques in every day assignments and long form stories?
Why do you use the narrative style story telling method in your story crafting?
What do you believe the method conveys to the viewer?

**Objectivity and Truthfulness:**
Do you believe narrative style is true to the core journalistic values of truth and objectivity?
Why or Why not?
In story crafting do you try to convey a certain emotion or theme for the viewer?
Do you believe the narrative truthful to true events?
G. Campus Institutional Review Board (IRB) Documentation

Campus IRB Exempt Application

Project Number: 1205645
Review Number: 109507
SECTION A - Investigators

(1) Investigators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Dept.</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Educational Training Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer Long</td>
<td>TV Station</td>
<td>Pri-Investigator</td>
<td>11-10-2012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Restriction: All key personnel are required to be certified for completion of a protection of human research participants education program that is approved by the Campus IRB.

Restriction: All applications must have a Principal Investigator listed.

Restriction: Student applications must have an advisor listed and the advisor must complete the Advisor Approval Form.

(2) Contact Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal Investigator:</th>
<th>Jennifer Kristin Long</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Department/Division:</td>
<td>TV Station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone #:</td>
<td>573/882-4852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
<td>179C Gannett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Columbia, MO 65211-1200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-Mail:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:LongJK@missouri.edu">LongJK@missouri.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(3) In detail, cite the key personnel's qualifications and experiences with this type of research. *

*This includes all personnel on the IRB application.*

I obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism in 2011 from Stony Brook University's Journalism School. While I was a student at Stony Brook, I worked as an editor at the Stony Brook Statesman newspaper and interned at news outlets such as WMUR and WGIR located in New Hampshire, as well as NBCUniversal's long-form news magazine Dateline in New York City.

After graduating from Stony Brook I was admitted to the graduate school at the
University of Missouri and enrolled in the school’s journalism program. In the past year and a half I have worked at multiple news outlets in Columbia, Missouri including the NBC affiliate KOMU, the NPR affiliate KBIA and the internet application Newsy.

The most extensive work I have done is at KOMU. For the past year I have worked as a news anchor, reporter, online editor and producer for the station. Most of my time is spent reporting for daily and long form stories. I work to humanize every assignment I am sent on, and I do my best to utilize narrative storytelling techniques in my writing and crafting of stories.

While working at KOMU, I attended the 2012 Excellence in Journalism conference held by the Radio Television Digital News Association and the Society of Professional Journalists. I attended sessions conducted by expert storytellers such as Boyd Huppert of Kare 11 News in Minneapolis and Al Tompkins of the Poynter Institute.


(4) Describe any Conflicts of Interest a study member may have. *
N/A

SECTION B - Exclusions from Exemption

(1) Please check if any of the following will be included in your study. If you check an item below, the project cannot be Exempt.

___ Children
___ More than Minimal Risk
___ Pregnant Women
___ Prisoners
___ Use of Electrodes (physical sensors applied to the body)

SECTION C - Project Information

(1) Project Title *
Use of Narrative Style in Broadcast News

(2) Please provide a description of your project. *
Include the research question in this description.
I believe narrative journalism, a style that utilizes fictional writing techniques to tell a non-fiction story; can be used effectively and successfully in the day to day operations of a television newsroom and in long-form investigative and feature pieces. Through this research I will address the challenges narrative storytellers encounter in terms of journalistic objectivity and truth telling. Many theorists have already asked this question. "What is the relation between a narrative and the events it depicts?" (Carr 1986, p. 117) Some argue that narrative and journalism are essentially at odds with one another. One writer labeled the relationship an "unholy
alliance, if you have a kind of pure view of journalism” (Lepore 2002, p. 53). However, scholars and journalists have also argued that this writing technique is successful in not only informing the news consumer, but engaging them as well. Through in-depth, semi-structured interviews and the use of narrative theory I hope to address both sides of this argument. I hope to address how reporter and producers utilize narrative style storytelling in daily stories and long-form investigative and feature pieces. I also hope to uncover the struggle reporters and producers face in an attempt to remain truthful and objective while using this technique.

Research Question #1: How can reporters and producers use narrative style in everyday operations of a television news station and in long-form investigative and feature pieces?

Research Question #2: How reporters and producers remain objective and truthful in news stories when using narrative style?

(3) Describe the nature of the involvement of human subjects. *
* Please include duration of subject participation.
I will use the qualitative research method of in-depth, semi-structured interviews to complete my research. I will interview three to five reporters and producers. These reporters and producers must currently work in the news industry and utilize narrative style story telling in their work. I will ask these reporters and producers a series of questions that will help me answer my own research questions regarding this topic.

(4) Describe the subject population. *
(e.g. high school or college students, cognitively impaired persons, etc.)
Reporters, producers and editors who work in the news industry. These persons must currently work at a news organization and they must personally use a narrative method of storytelling in their work.

(5) Please identify the number of subjects that will be recruited to participate in your project and the rationale. *
* Note: Summarize briefly the statistical consideration or other considerations which determine the total number of subjects.
I will recruit three to five people to participate in this research because I will conduct multiple interviews with each person. The interviews will be in-depth and offer me a significant amount of data to work with.

(6) Describe the recruitment and collection procedures. *
Include criteria for inclusion and exclusion, if applicable. * Please be sure to include a statement that the study involves research in the recruitment materials.
For this project I will contact reporters, producers and editors who currently work in the news industry to participate in this research. These persons must currently work at a news organization and they must personally use a narrative method of storytelling in their work. I will contact multiple people for this project but will only end up interviewing and researching three to five people. I will make decisions about who to include in the research depending on what kind of work they do and
what news organizations they work for. I would like a variety of different positions and news organizations included in this project.

(7) What is your proposed start date for subject recruitment? *
You cannot recruit until after IRB approval is obtained.
12-06-2012

(8) What is your process for informing subjects about the research? *
Upload the script, cover letter, etc. that will be used to inform subjects of the research.
*A signature should not be requested if it is the only record linking the subject to the research. Remove the signature if not necessary to link the participant’s name with the study or data.
I will be contacting possible participants via mailing to ask them to participate in this project. This will be the email I sent to them.

Dear ________,

My name is Jennifer Long and I'm a graduate student at the University of Missouri School of Journalism. This semester I am working on my graduate professional project and am contacting you to request your participation in my research.

My research will address the use of narrative style storytelling in broadcast journalism. Through in-depth, semi-structured interviews and the use of narrative theory I hope to identify how reporters, producers and editors like yourself utilize narrative style storytelling in daily stories and long-form investigative and feature pieces. I also hope to uncover the struggle reporters and producers face in an attempt to remain truthful and objective while using this technique.

I would love to include you in my study. This would include me shadowing you in your own work environment and at least two sit down interviews regarding your work.

Please let me know if you would like to participate in my study. If you have any further questions regarding my research please feel free to contact me.

(9) Does the project involve deception? *
Consider both deception by omission (an important aspect of the study is withheld from the participant) and deception by commission (the participant is deliberately given false information about some aspect of the research). Note: Deception by commission cannot be Exempt.

If you answer yes, an additional form will automatically populate for your completion at the end of this application.
__Yes  X  No

(10) If you will be interacting with subjects, what methods will be used to ensure protection of the privacy interests of participants? *
Does the research involve observation or intrusion in situations where the subjects have a reasonable expectation of privacy? Would reasonable people be offended by
such an intrusion? Can the research be redesigned to avoid the intrusion?
Nothing will be confidential. All participants included in the study will be made fully aware that the information they provide will not be confidential.

(11) Where will the research take place? *
Please upload a letter of permission or justification if no permission letter is provided. Research will take place at the newsrooms the journalists participating in my study work in.

(12) Is this a collaborative/multi-site study? *
If you answer yes, an additional form will automatically populate for your completion at the end of this application.
__Yes  X  No

(13) Is this an international research project? *
__Yes  X  No

(14) Check if any of the items below will be included in your study
If you mark an item, an additional form will automatically populate for your completion at the end of this application.

__X  Audiotapes, Videotapes, and/or Photographs
__  Non-English Speaking Persons
__  Subject Compensation (including monetary compensation and extra/course credit)

(15) If you will be using a call center to collect the data, please identify the call center.

(16) Will you be accessing personal health information for this research project? *
If yes, an additional form will populate at the end of this application for your completion.
__Yes  X  No

SECTION D - Funding Information

(1) Grant Proposal Information
(SKIP this section if your research is not funded.)

A. Please select the name of your sponsor from the drop-down menu.
University of Missouri - Columbia
B. Select the source of sponsorship.

C. Grant Proposal Number:

D. Grant Proposal Status
No Funding Sought
You must upload your funding proposal for IRB review.
SECTION E - Risks to Subjects

(1) Check any that apply to your study.

__ Private records such as educational records will be accessed  
__ Private records such as medical charts will be accessed  
__ Subjects may experience physical, psychological, legal, social or economic risks  
__ The study involves collection of information that would be reportable to authorities or collection of information that might render the subject prosecutable under the law (child abuse, alcohol abuse by pregnant women, danger to self or others)  
__ The study involves major changes in diet, exercise, or sleep  
__ The study uses voice, video, digital, or image recordings for data collection that may place subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability, or be damaging to the subjects’ financial standing, employability, or reputation  
__ The study will manipulate physical, psychological, or social variables, such as: sensory deprivation, physical stimuli, social isolation, or psychological stress  
__ The study will probe for or present materials in which subjects might consider sensitive, offensive, threatening, or degrading

(2) Please describe any potential risks for subjects associated with the research. *

No potential risks

SECTION F - Confidentiality

(1) Confidentiality

A. Describe the specific methods by which confidentiality will be protected. *

Participation will be optional. The interviews will be public and on the record. Anything participants say can be used in the project.

B. When you collect and store the data, will it be:*  
   ○ ( ) Anonymous  
   ○ ( ) Coded (with link to identity)  
   ○ (X) Identified

(2) Data Security

A. Mark all protections that apply for Electronic Data:  
   ( ) Secure Network  
   (X) Password Access  
   ( ) Coded (master list kept and secured separately)  
   ( ) Other

B. Mark all protections that apply for Hardcopy Data:
( ) Locked Suite
( ) Locked Office
(X) Locked File Cabinet
( ) Coded (master list kept and secured separately)
( ) Data de-identified by PI or Research Team
( ) 24 Hour Personnel Supervision
( ) Other

C. If OTHER, please explain

(3) Data Sharing

A. Indicate positions, other than members of the research team, who will have access to study data:*
   (X) No one/ Not applicable
   ( ) Sponsor
   ( ) Colleagues
   ( ) Colleagues through NIH data sharing requirement
   ( ) Data, Tissue, Specimen Registry(s)
   ( ) Other Research Laboratory(s)
   ( ) Coordinating Center
   ( ) Other

B. If OTHER, please explain

C. Indicate how the data will be shared*
   ( ) Without any Identifiers
   (X) With Identifiers
   ( ) With a Linked Code
   ( ) As a Limited Data Set
   ( ) Other

The IRB will need to review all documents subjects will be presented with during the course of the research study. This includes recruitment materials, cover letters, instruments, etc. Please upload these documents to this application.

Research Involving the Use of Audiotapes, Videotapes, and Photographs

SECTION A - Research Involving the Use of Audiotapes, Videotapes or Photographs

(1) The research will require the use of images that are identifiable. *

Identifiable information is information that contains distinguishing characteristics
that would make the individual recognizable to anyone outside the research team. This includes voice patterns, accents, speech, unusual mannerisms, tattoos, scars, or other markings, etc. If identifiable characteristics are removed or blocked out, the information is not identifiable.

___ Yes  _X_ No

(2) Please justify the use of identifiable media.*

I would like to use audiotapes to record interviews with the people participating in my research.

(3) Specify if you will be using audiotapes, videotapes and/or photographs? *

(4) Describe how the audiotapes, videotapes, or photographs will be kept confidential.*

Audio files recorded on audiotapes will be kept on a password protected computer and hard drive.

(5) Describe how the tapes and/or photographs will be stored. *

Audio files recorded on audiotapes will be kept on a locked computer and hard drive.

(6) Please specify who will have access to the tapes or photographs. *

Only me.

The above information may need to be included in the consent document. A copy of the consent document must be uploaded with the IRB Application for review.

MU Policy: All audiotapes, videotapes and photographs must be kept with the research records for seven years following the completion of the research.

http://www.umsystem.edu/ums/fa/management/records/guide/academic#research
Dear __________,

My name is Jennifer Long and I’m a graduate student at the University of Missouri School of Journalism. This semester I am working on my graduate professional project and am contacting you to request your participation in my research.

My research will address the use of narrative style storytelling in broadcast journalism. Through in-depth, semi-structured interviews and the use of narrative theory I hope to identify how reporters, producers and editors like you utilize narrative style storytelling in daily stories and long-form investigative and feature pieces. I also hope to uncover the struggle reporters and producers face in an attempt to remain truthful and objective while using this technique.

I would love to include you in my study. This would include me shadowing you in your own work environment and at least two sit down interviews regarding your work. If you choose to participate in my research, I will use your name in my final report. I will also use an audio-recorder to record the interviews.

Please let me know if you would like to participate in my study. If you have any further questions regarding my research please feel free to contact me.

Thank you for your time,  
Jennifer Long
Dear ________,

My name is Jennifer Long and I’m a graduate student at the University of Missouri School of Journalism. This semester I am working on my graduate professional project and am contacting you to request your permission to include (name of reporter/producer) in my research.

My research will address the use of narrative style storytelling in broadcast journalism. Through in-depth, semi-structured interviews and the use of narrative theory I hope to identify how reporters, producers and editors utilize narrative style storytelling in daily stories and long-form investigative and feature pieces.

I would love to include (name of reporter/producer) in my study. This would include me shadowing (him/her) in your newsroom. I would conduct at least two sit down interviews regarding (his/her) work at your station. This would include at least two or three days of on-the-job shadowing. Your station would also be listed by name in my final report.

Please let me know if you would allow (name of reporter/producer) to participate in my study. If you have any further questions regarding my research please feel free to contact me.

Thank you for your time,
Jennifer Long
November 28, 2012

Principal Investigator: Long, Jennifer Kristin
Department: TV Station

Your Application to project entitled *Use of Narrative Style in Broadcast News* was reviewed and approved by the MU Campus Institutional Review Board according to terms and conditions described below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IRB Project Number</th>
<th>1205645</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Funding Source</td>
<td>University of Missouri - Columbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial Application Approval Date</td>
<td>November 28, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRB Expiration Date</td>
<td>November 28, 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Review</td>
<td>Exempt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Status</td>
<td>Active - Open to Enrollment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulation</td>
<td>45 CFR 46.101b(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Level</td>
<td>Minimal Risk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The principal investigator (PI) is responsible for all aspects and conduct of this study. The PI must comply with the following conditions of the approval:

1. No subjects may be involved in any study procedure prior to the IRB approval date or after the expiration date.
2. All unanticipated problems, serious adverse events, and deviations must be reported to the IRB within 5 days.
3. All modifications must be IRB approved by submitting the Exempt Amendment prior to implementation unless they are intended to reduce risk.
4. All recruitment materials and methods must be approved by the IRB prior to being used.
5. The Annual Exempt Form must be submitted to the IRB for review and approval at least 30 days prior to the project expiration date.
6. Maintain all research records for a period of seven years from the project completion date.
7. Utilize the IRB stamped document informing subjects of the research and other approved research documents located within the document storage section of eIRB.

If you have any questions, please contact the Campus IRB at 573-882-9585 or umcresearch@missouri.edu.

Thank you,

[Signature]

Charles Borduin, PhD
Campus IRB Chair
CITI Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI)

Campus SBR Curriculum Completion Report
Printed on 11/12/2012

Learner: Jennifer Long (username: jenniferkristinlong)
Institution: University of Missouri-Columbia
Contact Information: Department: Journalism
Email: jenniferkristinlong@gmail.com

Campus SBR:

Stage 1. Basic Course Passed on 11/10/12 (Ref # 9151794)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Required Modules</th>
<th>Date Completed</th>
<th>Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of Missouri-Columbia</td>
<td>11/10/12</td>
<td>no quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>11/10/12</td>
<td>no quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belmont Report and CITI Course Introduction</td>
<td>11/10/12</td>
<td>3/3 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students in Research</td>
<td>11/10/12</td>
<td>8/10 (80%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History and Ethical Principles - SBR</td>
<td>11/10/12</td>
<td>no quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining Research with Human Subjects - SBR</td>
<td>11/10/12</td>
<td>5/5 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Regulations and The Social and Behavioral Sciences - SBR</td>
<td>11/10/12</td>
<td>5/5 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessing Risk in Social and Behavioral Sciences - SBR</td>
<td>11/10/12</td>
<td>5/5 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informed Consent - SBR</td>
<td>11/10/12</td>
<td>4/5 (80%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privacy and Confidentiality - SBR</td>
<td>11/10/12</td>
<td>5/5 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research with Prisoners - SBR</td>
<td>11/10/12</td>
<td>2/4 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research with Children - SBR</td>
<td>11/10/12</td>
<td>4/4 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools - SBR</td>
<td>11/10/12</td>
<td>4/4 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Research - SBR</td>
<td>11/10/12</td>
<td>1/3 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet Research - SBR</td>
<td>11/10/12</td>
<td>3/5 (60%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research and HIPAA Privacy Protections</td>
<td>11/10/12</td>
<td>4/5 (80%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vulnerable Subjects - Research Involving Workers/Employees</td>
<td>11/10/12</td>
<td>4/4 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflicts of Interest in Research Involving Human Subjects</td>
<td>11/10/12</td>
<td>2/5 (40%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For this Completion Report to be valid, the learner listed above must be affiliated with a CITI participating institution. Falsified information and unauthorized use of the CITI course site is unethical, and may be considered scientific misconduct by your institution.

Paul Braunschweiger Ph.D.
Professor, University of Miami
Director Office of Research Education
CITI Course Coordinator
H. Changes to Project

In the professional skills component of this project I deviated from my original proposal by adding my work on KETC’s public affairs show Stay Tuned to my weekly work. Throughout the course of the semester, I realized that my work on Kent Collin’s Reynolds Journalism Institute fellowship project would be an important addition to my final product. The goal of Collins’ project was to create a public affairs broadcast on the Saint Louis PBS affiliate KETC. The show, Stay Tuned, utilizes social media to engage the public on community issues during the weekly, hour-long show. My role on the project was to produce the setup piece for each week’s broadcast, and every week I rotated between the jobs of reporter, photographer and field producer.

Our team of reporters found narrative storytelling to be a great method of story structure for those setup pieces, however, we found that the narrative wasn’t always an easy sell to the producers and organizers of the show. I believe this is important to include in the final version of this project because it was very different experience than the one I had at KOMU.

Another deviation from the original proposal came in the research section of this project. I made the decision early on in the data collection to do all of my interviews in person. I made this decision because I believed conducting in-depth interviews in person would garner better, and more honest results. I think this decision was the right one. Meeting and shadowing these journalists not only gave me extra insight for this project, but it helped me better understand some of the
obstacles I came to face when using this story structure in my own work. The questions that I asked of these journalists were not easy ones. Doing interviews in person allowed me the exciting opportunity to watch these journalists think and wrestle with some of the ideas.

I also decided to include many more journalists in my research than originally planned. In my proposal I guessed I would include three to five journalists in this project. By the time I had collected all of the research I had met with and interviewed 11 different journalists. I believe this was important because by including more research participants I was able to get perspectives of different markets, generations, job titles, geographic areas and most importantly opinions. Including all of these people was not an option of mine but rather a necessity. When I initially sent out emails to potential research participants I decided I would see who got back to me and start from there. Remarkably all of the people I contacted agreed to participate. What is even more amazing is I was able to meet all of these journalists and conduct interviews in person except for one. To me this shows sincere dedication and passion for narrative storytelling and should not be overlooked.

Finally, I slightly changed my research questions from the ones I had in my original proposal. In the first and second research question I changed “producers” to “photographers.” Throughout this research I was only able to interview reporters and photographers. In the second research question I changed the question. I deviated from the original question, “How reporters and producers remain objective and truthful in news stories when using narrative style?” As I gathered data, I
realized it was important to first address whether or not journalists who used storytelling in their work thought it was objective. I also thought it was important to compare narrative style to the inverted pyramid news story structure, arguably one of the most common news formats in broadcast television.
I. Andy Choi Interview Transcript, February 17, 2013

00:25-05:00
I mean it’s for the most part it’s general assignment reporting. Anchoring on Sundays, Mondays through Thursdays I’ll report on the day’s events. It could be anything from something that I generate through sources or just different ideas I have to different events that are happening that day. So general it’s 50/50. Sometimes there’s just a lot more stories that need to get done. We get in this room and we go around and pitch but yeah were out there juggling anywhere from one to three stories with one of them being a package.

Back in ’08 and ’09 we were all asked to shoot and in a pinch we will shoot. There are still a few people here who will shoot alone. But it’s been a while since I’ve shot. I started here in ’05 as a bureau reporter and I lived and worked in Janesville, which is 50 minutes away. So there’s a bureau down there, there’s a tiny little office I had my own gear I had to learn tape to tape because it was all non-linear. I was there for about 18 months and learned a lot. Obviously working at KOMU helped a lot you know I wasn’t afraid of it because that can be daunting. But when it was a good day you felt good because it was all you. When it was a bad day it was all you too. That’s how our bureau works, they work alone, and it has improved now that the bureau is in the local newspaper so they don’t work with them but they work alongside them so it’s not as lonely.

So you know it’s been a while since I’ve worked on my own but I look at those days as really cutting my teeth and learning a lot. So that was a nice baseline. But basically when we got out on a story, the goal of crews together is how is this day going to go? What is our focus? You’re just bouncing ideas back and forth. You start the day by just making some calls but for me personally though I just like making calls but if I can help it I just like getting out, just go. Sometimes you just can’t do that there’s a lot of hurry up and waiting as you know but yeah I mean it’s about making contacts. You go and interview folks and long story short you interview them log it, bring it back put it together and the photog edits it. Pretty standard day. There are certain days when you have a special story and you have something that might kind of work long form and you could take some time to maybe spend the whole day shooting, maybe planning, writing or logging. Those days are few and far between with staffing levels kind of low but that said, I think the station has recognized that there is value behind stories like that so we all do get a shot to do that sometimes.

05:00-08:15
I think for me the thing that I kind of lean towards is I can influence the way a story is remembered by the way I write something. And that’s not so much ‘oh the viewer will remember my line,’ but I’ve always felt the viewer will always remember what they feel longer than what they learned in the story. Which seems kind of counter
intuitive because we’re in the business of fact telling but you know if that fact doesn’t last long enough in the head then what kind of an experience is it? That’s where the narrative comes in and for me it’s about honing in on a certain writing style and knowing when to change things up. It first started, ‘well if I move this word from the middle to the end it feels a certain way. Or if I move this word here it’s a completely different sentence.’ I think Al Tompkins talks about this in his seminar and it made a lot of sense to me when I heard him talk about this. So in the beginning it was sort of like how do I structure certain lines to make it the most effective as far as memorable and to me that’s narrative. How do you move that focus that you have along the thread of the story you have. That to me is the thing I can do the best. From a photographer’s standpoint it can be completely different. It could be about sequences, composition, capturing sound and things like that. Well for me the big thing is, ‘how can I use this line to emphasize what I want to emphasize the most. So it starts with writing for me. Structure is a big deal but then at the end of the day it’s all about the focus. Did we focus on a certain theme, or something that the viewer can really latch onto or follow with us. It’s kind of like, ‘I won’t tell you everything but if you come over I’ll let you know.’

When you have a good story, you look back and think this worked because we had this. That dialogue should be happening all day with multiple people, probably with yourself as well, but obviously with the day to day stuff it can be hard to do that. I know a lot of people say don’t try to hit the home run, but get the base hit and see if you can do one thing well. On those busy crazy trying days you got to have something to hang your hat on.

08:35-11:45
I think I had always sort of liked looking at things from a different perspective or writing something to the periphery. I always kind of like to think that if ten people are looking at one thing the same way, I like to sort of shift the focus just a little bit or to see it from a different angle. From the writing perspective I like to do that. I don’t think I consciously knew what I was doing maybe until three or four years in to work where I can really think, ‘well if we start here from a structural chronological standpoint we can really make the narrative work towards our advantage.’ I really wasn’t having conversations like that until I think my third or fourth year here.

Jeremy Nichols. I think he saw that I appreciated that kind of thinking, the narrative style, at the time I wasn’t quite sure what I was doing. No one really knows quite what they’re doing when they start out, but Jeremy saw that and he really wanted all of us to think about that. And Jeremy has been in the business a lot longer than me and you know it was when he would ask me on those assignments he would say, ‘well what are you trying to tell with this story? What are we trying to show? What are we trying to tell? What do we want the viewer to take away?’ Those basic questions I think really set up the narrative. You make the narrative work for you. Because if you look at the inverted pyramid style. IF you look at the style for spot
news, breaking news you know it’s tell me what’s going on. Who, what, where, when, but if you have a luxury to tell a story all of those rules are out the window. It’s just boundless the things you can do. So Jeremy was the one who really got me thinking about that on a deeper level, on a conscious level because he taught me everything I know. Jeremy would always send me stories of Boyd’s work, and I would watch it and I would be like wow this is crazy. You know it’s kind of like when you first see it you say ‘this doesn’t feel like a news story to me. This feels like an experience to me. Like I’m experiencing what Boyd had experienced when he was out there talking to people.’ I just think it’s more engaging that way. You can’t do it every day, you can’t do it with every story but what a treat for everybody. It’s fulfilling for the crew, I think a better product for the station and a real experience with the viewer. That’s where I wish we could do some more storytelling across the board.

12:00-14:00
I think its emotion. It’s just those gut feelings that we all share universally about the human condition, just about different experiences. I don’t have to be a firefighter to know the kind of dread that a firefighter might feel if a fellow colleague were in danger. I know as a human being we share those experiences as fear for a loved one’s safety or something like that. There are so many common threads that connect us and to me the narrative really highlights what we all share emotionally. We don’t have to have the same life experiences, but in our experiences we share so many of the same emotions. So I feel like the narrative approach really taps into that. We’ve all dealt with loss, happiness, surprise; it’s all there. We’ve dealt with it on certain levels and the narrative helps connect that with everyone. So viewers across the board, whatever their life experiences are, can feel that. And not only is that advantageous to attract more viewers but it’s just a no brainer if you want to connect with you audience.

14:10-16:00
It is a little strange to think that this style could potentially lend itself to taking liberties and facts and stuff like that, but I got to believe that ethics comes into play with all of this. There are certain rules just like rules with different styles as well. But I can see where there is criticism behind that. But to me it’s the same with any kind of ethics test, with any kind of situation you really have to ask yourself, it the point is to minimize harm with anything, and you want to make sure they are true facts, and we are just packaging them in different ways. I personally don’t have a problem with that but I can see where people think that are we sort of exploiting the emotions of it or are we kind of over emphasizing certain things? I can see the criticism behind that. But to me there is a certain greater good in engaging people through the narrative style, but it is tough because ethics can be so black and white sometimes but it’s pretty grey so it’s hard.

16:10-16:40
In my professional experience it’s very hard to take that sort of j-school mentality and follow every rule to a T. And I don’t know it it’s me not trying as hard. I mean to be completely candid with you it is very hard to remain ethical in those guidelines and I’m not saying I’m doing things that I can’t sleep at night over. I mean simple things like that. But it’s tough.

18:20-20:25
A style I like to use sometimes is you take the irrelevant and you make that significant and then somehow you sort of connect that to an overall theme. To me it’s more interesting that way. The one story I think about a lot it there was a boy who died in a car accident and the family was wiling to talk to us about who he was. It was going to be just a profile piece about how he was, his life and his friends. We went to the school and all of his friends had gathered at his house there were just tons of them. This kid was so popular. And I remember it was a house where you had to take your shoes off. And when you got to the front of the house there were shoes everywhere. This was back when I was shooting on my own. So I shot that and to me when I got back, it was so poinient to me how many shoes were there, but there was one pair missing. And I wrote to that. And to me, the shoes weren’t very significant. There could have been a shoes on rule and there wouldn’t have been a pile of shoes there, but to me, in my mind as I was there it dawned on me there are so many shoes here and they’re all here for the one pair of shoes that’s missing. So I wrote to that. I was really proud of it because we were really able to dive into how much he was missed just by describing that scene there. So yeah you have to make the significant relevant, but sometimes its that little insignificant detail in the peripheral that can really be the catalyst for the narrative and really set things in motion. I like looking at little details.

20:50-23:00
I like to think that I’m constantly thinking about characters. You hear that a lot among crews, ‘oh that’s a great character.’ What that means in the TV world is great sound bites, great moments, just great personality. So it’s not like I look at if from a fictional standpoint like ‘oh this would make a great heroin for our story or something like that.’ But we’re constantly thinking about characters and how they fit and asking who should we focus on? Who should we make our lead character, the first person we hear from or the first person we see and you know I could tell you between Jeremy and I we’re constantly talking about who should we start with? As far as plot goes it’s hard because it’s the nature of the brevity in the newsroom. It’s hard to think about feature length and thinking the climax will be right here and then bam. I think the great storytellers can do that in a minute thirty, two minutes but I don’t think I’m there yet. I don’t think I’ve mastered to really, it’s like keeping the tension throughout, and the plot if you will, keeping it really taught so you can move through in a nice smooth way. I still have trouble with that. It’s just hard because I think for me I end up, I like to end things really well. So it may be a little slow going, or slow in the middle but then you have a big finish. So I think if we’re
talking about plot, I think it’s about pacing. If could pace stories better I could really utilize the narrative more. But I think characters are a big thing.

23:00-25:00
You have to ask yourself if you are bored watching your story or bored putting YOUR story together then how flippin' bored are the viewers? It’s a hard thing to do. That’s the other thing I think about the narrative, it’s very hard to do and to do it in a way that’s going to be powerful and meaningful because you run the risk of it being very trite. If you don’t do it right it comes off folksy, cheesy and trite. Which, all words have been used to describe what I’ve done over the years.

I think I commit to it. I think you have to say, ‘this belongs in our newsrooms.’ This style belongs somewhere. It may not belong in every story, it may not belong in our lead story it may not belong throughout the story, but this type of work is meaningful to me, I hope its’ meaningful to the viewer. You just have to believe in it and at some point say it’s valuable enough that I’m willing to make mistakes along the way and do it.

25:30-28:00
It just starts with asking yourself, ‘what is the focus of this story?’ I think that’s what he would say because he hammers that home a lot. And it’s so basic, it really is. It’s like when you’re in broadcast one and they say, ‘sum up your story in a sentence or in subject, verb, and predicate. It’s just about summing that story up.’ If you cant do that then you don’t have a tight enough focus. And I honestly believe that. The ones who can really hone in on a focus, commit to it can get to the narrative faster. Now that doesn’t mean you’ll have all of the Boyd Huppert bells and whistles along the way but it will at least move in that fashion. I think for folks who are just starting out. For folks who just want to give it a shot, for folks who just want to do good work, if you want to get at the narrative at some point you have to ask yourself what is the focus of this story. The focus will help drive the narrative along. The narrative itself is a series of different styles and techniques, whether it be writing or shooting and editing. But focus is a universal conversation that your newsroom, the reporters, the photographers, the producers, should all be having to make sure the story in itself has that tight focus, that tension along the story that Al Tompkins talks about. Think about films when you see all of those deleted scenes you know, that’s the product of people tightening their focus. They’re saying, ‘this scene does not belong. We love this scene but it doesn’t do anything, you lose the tension, you lose whatever.’ We’re constantly doing that. We’re constantly making decisions like, ‘well there’s a fact here and it may be cool but do we need it? Or oh this byte is awesome but we need to lose it.’ We’re constantly cutting and editing and redoing and that’s a huge part of the narrative, writing and rewriting.

28:30-30:20
I think it’s hard for people outside of the business to know like from a technique standpoint what we are doing. So it might be, ‘I’m not sure what you’re doing but I
like it. It's tough because if folks have a problem with your work it will be a random comment about how something was weird or wrong. The folks who don’t like it would never tell it to your face. The folks who do like it will say, 'that was a really nice piece, that was a lovely piece I really enjoyed it.' But if I were to ask, 'well from a technical standpoint what did you like about it?' They wouldn't have a clue. That’s another thing that’s frustrating and magical at the same time it’s kind of like, we’re the ones that sort of know all of the back door parlor tricks and things like that that make it special but it’s hard to exactly describe what we’re doing. But if I were to describe it in layman's terms it would just be, you’re just trying to make it an experience for them. Somewhere where they’re invested into it, not just taking it in, it’s like we’re all sort of experiencing it together. That’s the only way I can really explain it. So when somebody says, ‘wow I could really feel for that person that you were talking to. Or I feel like I know him better.’ For me the ultimate compliment from the viewer is I feel like I know you. That means I have some how engaged them with my work and we’ve shared in this relationship. So to me that’s what the narrative does too it helps connect people in the way that the pure facts can’t do.

30:50-32:30
I think if you don’t feel it, there is really no place for you in this business. That’s how invested I am in the emotional aspect of it. Because, it’s tough, from an ethical standpoint it’s like do you have to feel it? Well no. from an objective standpoint it’s not a requirement that you feel the pain a parent feels about their child. It’s not a requirement that you’re happy for the team that won some game. But I trust my emotion, I trust how I feel in that moment when I hear someone describe a loved one that they’ve lost or a loved one that they’ve just since since they went to war. I trust my emotions you know. It’s like my compass a little bit. I think it does determine the way I write things and I lean on that. I think well how did I feel in this moment. And a lot of times I’ll just be going through the raw tape and I’ll be re-experiencing things and there’s that feeling again. Maybe it’s when two people embrace for the first time in a long while. There’s that feeling again and it’s on tape. Or when a boy is talking to his mother about something. Or when some city leader is angry about something. How am I reacting to that? And I do think good journalists have the kind of universal emotional reaction that they can lean on, tap into and somehow translate that into their work.

32:30-34:45
Do you think that’s ok?
Yeah I think so. I think it is. There is obviously certain things where I don’t like it when people cheer for teams, or sports teams, we’re not fans. So it’s weird because in that sense is that ok? For a sports reporter probably not, especially for a sports reporter that's going to be critical for certain teams and stuff like that. I think it is, within reason. I mean look at all of the political stories. So if I feel like it’s ok then philosophically it means if I don’t believe something that a politician says from a political standpoint then it will reflect in my writing. Well, in that moment I have to gut check myself. I think it’s so hard for people to remove all of that from their
emotional being but if you can recognize that you can have a detrimental influence on the way you report things based on your emotional reaction that yes, that’s not ok you need to sort of, I’m merely acknowledging that it’s there. It’s ok for you to utilize that and to lean on that for inspiration to write and craft a story. But obviously there are instances where you have to let your emotions go. But I think from a narrative standpoint it’s few and far between and the biggest challenge is political stories. You have to be so careful with that and you know from the get go you have to be so careful.

But that’s a really good question. Is that fair? Is that the right thing to do? It’s hard. I’m talking more from a feature side, but what gives us the right as feature reporters to feel that way?

35:00-38:30
You have to be responsible about it. But to be so desensitized that you can always paint by number the story, it’s so predicable. Half the viewers that watch us can write the story so think about all the times that these stories are lampooned or parodied. Why, because we use the same old formula over and over again and it’s not their fault. We’re the ones right the same story over and over again with the same words and phrases and clichés. But it’s tough to get away from.

It’s hard to do it everyday. There are some days where you just have to get it done. Things are falling through you have a million things to juggle. Maybe you’re just having a bad day. And you just get through it. Are those my proudest days? No. but the thing I can tell myself is, ‘I got through this day and I still believe in what I do.’ It’s just you have to look at it cumulatively. That’s the thing that’s different from say a professional newsroom and channel 8 where you’re out there once a week it’s not all encompassing. To do this on a day to day basis, day in and day out it’s hard. You have to develop the type of work ethic and enthusiasm to push yourself to do that. And peoples’ tipping points are all different and their work ethics are all different and maybe that’s something from a management perspective that might be able to give some insight into that. Because there are some people who are constantly going the distance and trying to craft the best story possible and there are some people who are going to get it done and it might not be the most fantastic thing. And there’s nothing wrong with that and that’s one thing that you have to recognize in a professional newsroom is you know things get done a certain way and the important thing is that it gets done and that’s the other thing you can’t miss slot you know. So you know would I like to be honed in and focused everyday? Yes. But the reality is it’s very hard to do.

39:40-43:45
It’s the lethargic nature of a professional work environment. A lot of news operations are in rough shape from a morale standpoint and it just drags things down. Culturally speaking, the newsroom culture just doesn’t lend itself to going the distance the narrative style needs. So you end up with the same mistakes, clichés,
and hack stuff that is parodied. So the one thing that I always think of is what would I have done at channel 8 when money was not a driving force at all. It was purely from a passion and education standpoint. You work a little different. It’s always very valuable to just look at it that way because it changes things when you work with people when their number one priority is not the newsroom. There are many people in here that are married and have children and obviously that’s priority number one. But it’s tough you have to make it work somehow. This is more of a managerial tangent that were’ going into. The narrative needs that perfect bubble that culture to start your own. People always ask what are the best shops to do storytelling work? KARE, KING, they’re developed a culture, they’ve said, ‘this is what we’re buying into if you’re not buying into it then chances are you won’t be here.’ It’s tough to develop that culture.

Attitude. If you’re having a bad day, chances are your story is going to suffer. It goes back to this idea how much are we leaning on our emotions. And it’s hard to sort of break away from your mental state to make sure you’re doing things right. I think it’s attitude, work ethic, people who do well in this business are grinders, they’re the ones who are going to make the extra call, they’re the ones when the other reporters are knocking on the two doors next to the house where something happened and then that’s it, the good reporter will knock on every door on that block or make the extra phone call or take the extra step or whatever. It’s attitude, work ethic and the ability to care. The ability to be like, ‘this is important not only to my job, but for my community, for my family, for my faith, or my health or whatever. It’s got to go beyond this going on my reel. It’s got to go beyond that.

44:00
The longer you do this the more you realize that. I’ve always sort of thought after getting out of the Missouri J-School, ‘as long as I stay on this very, tight, objective compass I’ll be fine.’ Well once you start working you run into all of these issues and ethical dilemas. I think that’s probably why the j-school does this to clamp you down real hard so that you at least have a shred of that while you trudging through these murky waters. It’s hard.

That’s the beauty and magic of general assignment reporting it’s like what are we going to find tomorrow.
00:00-00:55
I got into journalism accidentally. I was in high school. I grew up on a dairy farm in Wisconsin so I didn’t know if my future was in agriculture or somewhere else. While I was in high school an English teacher at my high school who also did play by play by the local radio station approached me in class and said hey the owner of the radio station is looking for a high school kid to come to the radio station on Sundays and play commercials during the green bay packers games. And I said ok I could do that. So that was my first job in anything to do with broadcasting and it was just part-time job until it became something I really started to like.

01:50-04:10
So I started this radio station job. I probably couldn’t go to a TV station as a 16-year-old and get a job. So I started there and I just started picking more hours up, working summers and then realized at some point that this might be a fun career. I thought I was going to do radio but when I got to college I had a couple of internships at tv stations, just because I couldn’t find radio internships I started going to television stations and I thought wow this seems a lot more interesting. I knew the pay was better and I just liked the collaborative process. So I made the transition into television then but I had no concept of storytelling or what that was all about. That didn’t really come until later. I was a few years into the business and I was working in Milwaukee, it was my third station so I really didn’t have an idea of what storytelling was until I got to Milwaukee. A photographer I worked with there had worked in Louisville at WAVE-TV, which is a good storytelling station, and he started talking to me about doing more things. Why don’t you come with me to the NPPA conference in Oklahoma? And I said sure that sounds great. It was Jim Wilson, he’s the chief photographer there now. So we went together and we paid our own way, and it was really there that changed the way I do everything. They were doing things that I didn’t know was possible. I didn’t know you could do things like that I thought you had to go into movie making or something to do stories like that. People ask me where did the light bulb come on for you and it was really there. I didn’t know how to do it yet but I was exposed to it there and I went back over the next few years and tried to figure out my style based on what I had seen there.

04:10-05:30
They didn’t discourage it. I think my boss at the time was Jill Gisler, she’s at the Poynter Institute now, and she was a great writer, that to me was where I had figured it out. I just wasn’t exposed to that before. So when I came back and started... And it was good because Jim had been there too and we had learned together so as soon as we got back we refocused our efforts on doing those kinds of stories and continued going to workshops and exchanging... it’s nice now we have that storytellers (Facebook page), back then people just traded stories. There was a reporter in Spokane who had been at that workshop too and we started exchanging
stories back and forth. So she’d get three or four stories together, put them on a beta tape and send them to me. I’d critique her stories and then do the same and send them to her and she’d critique my stories and I think that’s where I really started to learn through that process.

05:40-06:30
It is much easier to do that. Back then it was much harder to expose yourself. It probably sounds quant to say I’d never seen work like that before but it wasn’t easy to get exposed to that. There were people there who were speaking like Bob Dodson, John Larson and Scott Renberger, John Gohein, these were people speaking at that workshop and now it would be so easy to find their work but back then you just didn’t have access to people’s work like that. So that in itself was an eye-opener. And then just the recognition of ‘oh that’s out there I just need to figure out how to tap into it.’

06:30-07:10
John Larson, he was a reporter in Seattle. He was at KOMO in Seattle and then went to Dateline NBC. I saw Kim Reiland, the reporter in Spokane, who was one of his disciples, and she introduced me to some of his work. And then Bod Dotson was another one that I really looked up to. The people that really knew how to do it right were the people I tried to emulate.

07:15-07:40
I do daily too. I’m usually daily two or three days a week, two or three days a week Land of 10,000 stories. Usually every Monday and Friday I’m daily news because we’re shorter staffed on those days and during the middle of the week I’m working on Land of 10,000 stories. So we shot one yesterday and I’m writing that one today and it will be edited next week.

08:00-08:40
To me it’s not unlike any good book or any good movie. Beginning, middle, end, characters, suspense, surprises… those are the elements of all types of stories you’re telling. I’ve come to believe that news stories can often be better told with the narrative style than without. And when I say news stories, particularly visual stories lend themselves well to narrative style.

08:45-14:30
If you look at the inverted pyramid it really works against good television storytelling. The inverted pyramid looks like that and it works great for a newspaper. It works great for a newspaper copy editor because you can lop off the end of the story and you’re losing the least important part of the story. It’s great for a newspaper reader because I may read every article in the paper, but I don’t read every article all the way through every day. If I’m reading about the new pope and I get to here and I’m not as interested any more I can move to the next article. But it doesn’t work in television news because if I get bored with this story here and I
move to the next article that’s on another channel. That’s what I’ve come to
believe about the inverted pyramid style in television news. Most of the time it’s not
a good story frame. The one I made up just for myself looks more like that. So you’re
basically flipping the pyramid upside-down and you’re adding these little points
which are the surprises in the story. So you’re building to the surprise, reinvesting
the viewer, building to a surprise, reinvesting the viewer. You keep doing this
through your story and when you run out of surprises or new information then the
story has to end because I don’t want people to lose interest so I have to continue
providing surprises. And this is just the frame that I use but it really needs this too
and that’s the focus of the story or the spine of the story and all of the surprises are
connected to the central focus. And that’s where your beginning, middle and end
come from. The story I wrote and Jonathan is back editing is about two lesbian
women who were in a relationship and one of them was severely brain injured and
this is back 30 years ago and so I needed a focus. Before I write that story I need a
focus. And so I decided the focus is commitment. Their commitment to each other
and so my opening line is about commitment. I touch on commitment throughout
the story and I come back to commitment at the end and it turns out one of the
woman has started a relationship with a third woman and now they’re caring for
this disabled woman together. And somehow it all fits into the gay marriage debate.
It was a really hard story to write in that they were committed to each other, the
exchanged rings, but because gay marriage is now allowed she is now free to take on
another partner. It’s a story that you can come on from all different directions. For
some people it’s going to be there you go. So I really struggled with, ‘how do you put
a bow on that?’ And I finally just got to a point where at the end I came out and said
it would be a lot more tidy to wrap this story up right here at the point where she’s
still just caring for her partner but life isn’t always like that. The life isn’t always like
that is another surprise and you think ‘now what?’ And then we introduce the third
character in this story. The woman who is her partner now. But I came back to
commitment again, she’s still committed to her but in a different way. I wrote
something about commitment being black and white. ‘Some people want their
commitment black and white, you won’t find that here. This story is about the gray
between the shades of the rainbow.’ So I don’t know how to write without having a
focus at the beginning. If I don’t sit there and figure out what it’s about and say this
story is about commitment, I don’t know what to write. I always have to have that.
Otherwise I’m just spewing and it’s not focused, it’s not satisfying to watch, it’s
disjointed. So focus is like the bag that you put all of the pieces of the story in. It
holds it together and makes it feel cohesive. It really is the trunk of the tree. It’s the
foundation that this story has been built on. SO if I look at any good story that I’ve
done it has a strong central focus. If I look at stories that I don’t feel worked out very
well it’s because the focus wasn’t strong. If I can come up with a good focus I can
always tell a good story. It I can tap into that.

15:00-15:50
This is my way of looking at focus. I think every good writer uses focus and does
focused stories. I think we all get there in a different way. This is just mine it helps
me to think about this. So I may have come up with a little Christmas tree
diagram, but I think we all practice this. If I look at some of John Larson’s great
stories or Bob Dotson’s great stories, they all have this in one way or another they
just all come at it in different directions. If I read a great piece in Sport Illustrated it’s
got focus. If I go to a great movie it has focus, if I read a good book it’s got focus.
Everybody just gets there in a slightly different way.

16:10-17:45
It works everywhere. I did a story on gun control, a debate on gun control at the
legislature yesterday. That’s a good example of how focus saves me all the time
because we got the story assignment, got out to the legislature, got there late,
missed almost the entire hearing. It became a bigger deal than the station though it
would be so the station sent us late. There was this great debate going on outside of
the hearing room with people arguing and I thought, ‘shoot this is our story right
here.’ So I wrote some line about there were two debates going on at the capitol
today, the official one in the hearing room and the one going on out in the hall. And
there, I’m off to the races. I can build a great story around that and I wrapped it up
with something about the first amendment and the second amendment. Freedom of
speech and I forget the verbiage I used but it all came back to this discussion or this
argument that was going on between the sides of the gun debate. And it was so easy;
we shot it in about 15 minutes and got a minute and a half story. And I get a note
from my boss saying ‘I loved your story.’ But it really was nothing, but again because
we had a focus it really worked great.

18:00-18:30
It’s done every night on television hundreds of times. Any television commercial
with a story is a narrative. All those wonderful spots that people watch on Super
Bowl Sunday are all narrative storytelling done in 30 seconds. Probably not even 30
probably more like 25 because they have to put a little product pitch at the end. But
those are narrative, the Budweiser commercial with the dog, there are no words but
it’s a narrative, it’s narrative storytelling. It works beautifully for a minute fifteen, a
minute thirty, a minute forty-five, or five minutes.

19:00-22:22
I start thinking about it as soon as I get the email with the story idea. I start thinking
about what the focus is going to be. But I generally don’t find it, I just don’t know
enough until I get there. Yesterday was a case in point, we’re doing a story, the one
I’m writing today is about a 89-year-old professor at the university of Minnesota.
He’s the oldest professor at the U. A student sent me the note. Basically he went to
school of the GI bill and he stayed there. So I kind of like that as a story. But the fact
that he’s the oldest professor at the University of Minnesota that’s an assignment
but it’s not a story and I need to find a story. So sometimes I feel like I need to be
with someone for two or three hours before I feel like I can figure them out enough
before I can find the focus. But I think we finally did with him too. Part of it was just
in his office. He is very old school. He’s still got an old coffee pot like my grandma
had from the forties. He’s got the old fan that didn’t have screens. He has a typewriter that he’d rather use than his computer. He’s just from another era but he’s trying to stay relevant to students today. He doesn’t an enter lecture on a slideshow. But he loves to teach and he loves to tell stories and that’s his thing. He talked in the room, he said he feels like when he goes to teach he’s putting on a performance. He said he loves to perform. He has an audience. So somewhere in there are the makings of a good story. Here’s this 89-year-old guy who’s trying to stay relevant to this generation of students today and I’m still working on it a little bit to hone it even more. But I know there’s a focus in there now that’s much deeper and richer. An 89-year-old teacher isn’t a focus. I need to know what motivates him. Why is he still doing it? Why didn’t he retire? It’s his love for the stories that he gets to tell about geography. He loves to tell stories about geography. I found during the day that he’s written 17 books. Those are stories. His books are stories. And he loves to sit in the office and tell stories. You can bend and mold things to fit focus so those aren’t book any more they’re stories. It becomes a love to tell stories. Everything he touches in a way is a story. I’m just starting to log the tape and I’m trying to find more things. That focus may evolve a little bit but I know there’s one in there now. I know we have it in the tape and it’s my job to refine it a little bit more when I start to write.

22:30-23:30
I see a lot of them right away that I know are moments. And then you can do more with them sometimes if you spot them. Others I don’t really see until I’m back logging the tape. But things happen. He walks to class all hunched over. He walks real slow and I noticed that he stopped at the drinking fountain on his way to the classroom and then stopped at the drinking fountain on his way out of the classroom and I said to him, ‘I bet you do that everyday.’ And he said, ‘I do that everyday I get a drink before I go in and I get a drink before I go back to the office.’ And then I started thinking, ‘OK this guy’s got rituals that he does exactly the say way everyday.’ One of his students mentioned too that he starts his class exactly the same every day. Sitting in the exact same spot at exactly the same time. I thought, ‘Ok maybe there’s something with that too.’

23:45-24:35
Sometimes I come right back. The piece I did last week I come right back and put it together. Then it’s edited the next day. But I can spend the whole day logging. I’ll probably log this all day. I have a day to log and write. But what will happen is I’ll spend my whole day logging and then I’ll mess around with the writing this weekend. Logging is really important because there’s just so many nuances, things that I’ll miss if I don’t look at every frame of video. So I’m a really deliberate logger. I’ll have 12 to 14 pages of typed notes for a land of 10,000 stories piece. That would be on the low end.

25:05-25:30
If someone takes a heavy sigh I’ll log that. I need that. I break my track up a lot so I need those little nuances. ‘Takes a look at his watch.’ That will be a note. I might need that some place. ‘Rolls his eyes at something a student says.’ I might need that somewhere so I log everything.

25:35-26:30
The story we shot yesterday on this professor. We probably shot three hours of video. That would be on the low end of what we do. Jonathan free rolls a lot. He doesn’t shut the camera off. He keeps the camera rolling while he’s moving to a different spot because the guy might say something. Or you might clip the beginning of the next thing he says. So he’ll just keep the camera rolling which I like. While he’s moving I can fast forward and listen. But it’s lost if we miss it. It’s really hard to getting it back if we miss something but we can always do it as sound under something else.

27:40-30:30
Parallel themes. Opposing themes I use a lot. There’s a cadence that I like to find when I’m writing. Sentences sound right when words are put in the right order there’s a cadence that develops. I think that’s something where we’re writing for the ear as well as the eye that I think we need to recognize as important. It may not be as important as when you’re writing for print. One thing in the more recent years is to build my sentences to more powerful endings. I think about which word should be at the end of the sentence that’s the power position in the sentence at the end of the sentence. So I’m structuring my sentences for that to happen. The explosion happened on Sunday is backwards. On Sunday there was an explosion. That’s the way the sentence should be written because explosion is the most important word of that sentence. I really like suppositions, which is to assume something is true for the sake of an argument. If we chose our cars for what they say about us, that’s a supposition. I don’t know if it’s true or not but we can assume it’s true for the case of an argument. If voices could be cast in concrete... I used that one on a story about radio legends. If voices could be cast in concrete these would be monuments. That’s a supposition. I tend to stop myself sometimes from using too many of those. They’re just so much fun to do because there are no limits you can say anything when you’re using a supposition. Universal truths are really important to me. So I always look for universal truths or things that we can all relate to. Parents aren’t supposed to bury their children. That’s a universal truth. Hot dogs taste better at a ball game. That’s a universal truth. Statements of opinion but so universally engrained in the community that nobody would argue with it. Look for those because I think they’re powerful because they’re universal. Anyone that hears it will go.... Yup that’s true.

31:10-32:45
I’m always looking for. Yeah you tap into a different level when you find emotion. I always find it in a story. John Larson said something at a seminar I was at that I’ll always remember. He said, ‘your job as a journalist is not to make the widow cry, it’s
to make the viewer cry.’ And that makes a lot of sense. Emotion is powerful. We connect to it. Passion is a powerful thing. I can do a story about someone who collects paperclips but if they’re passionate about paperclips then there’s power in that and people will be interested in watching if the person who I’m doing the story about it passionate about it. On the other side of the coin I can take a really interesting topic but if the person is not passionate or able to emote about that topic, whatever it is, I can’t tell a very good story. Or I need to find another character to help me tell that story. Or somehow make that problem a solution. So maybe we’re at an exciting event but we’re with a guy who treats it academically and then maybe we go ok this guys is so deadly dull that’s going to be the focus of the story that he just can’t get excited. Take the thing that’s bothering me and say ok let’s make it work for us.

32:50-33:15
It’s like going to the gun hearing and we get there and it’s over. We could call back to the station and say we missed it. Or we can go ok what do we have? Ok there’s people arguing in the hall let’s go hang with them a bit.

33:30-35:30
I don’t look at it as creating I look at it as interpreting. I’m looking at this event and interpreting it for my audience. Unless we’re running a live camera of an event and we’re showing the entire thing we’re always editing it and we’re always to a certain degree making judgments about what to leave in and what to take out. So no story is completely objective ever unless we’re running it start to finish unedited. Some decisions are being made about what’s in the story and what’s not in the story. That’s a given. But as a storyteller and as a narrative storyteller I’m just trying to do a better job at interpreting and helping put this into a context for the viewer that wasn’t there for the whole day watching the gun debate. Or didn’t spend three hours with the professor at the university of Minnesota. Or four hours with the lesbian couple in the relationship. They weren’t there. So I’m just trying to make some sense of this, in that case a thing that’s very hard to get your arms around. ‘Ok, so you committed to her for life, but now you’ve got this other woman in the relationship and you’re caring for her together. You’re advocating for same-sex marriage but if you had been legally married you wouldn’t have been able to enter into this other relationship.’ It’s muddy and it needs some interpretation. And that’s what I’m there for is to try and make sense of it and put some context to it that’s useful to someone.

35:35-36:55
From a very practical sense right now... it used to be easy to get people to watch television. You didn’t have a lot of options we had huge audiences every night for newscasts. We don’t have audiences as large as we used to. We need to leave viewers satisfied when they watch our newscast and make them want to come back and watch another one. And I think it’s more important now than it’s ever been because we’re competing with so many other sources of information and if we don’t do a good job of telling stories and covering our communities and engaging our
viewers... I think some of the best investigative reporting also uses the narrative. Some of the things I see on 60 minutes. Those are stories.

38:00-38:45
You’ll find the best stations. Seattle is a good market. KING is doing a lot of great things. KUSA is a good storytelling station. This is a good storytelling station. WBFF in Baltimore. And I’ve forgotten the station in Nashville. There are little pockets around the country where they’ve reached a critical mass and gained this reputation around the country. But then there are also other stations where there are other stations where there’s one person who’s really got that niche at their station.

39:15-40:30
I didn’t start out of the gate at understanding this or knowing this. So you coming out as a student... I never had that thought but I was just trying to figure out how to type a script and maybe that was a good thing I figured some other things out before I started putting too much pressure on myself to do things different. But at some point I realized I needed to grow and do something different. Some people aspire to be anchors, I never really did. I never really thought that was my strong suit. I doubt I would still be reporting anymore if I hadn’t found this niche. I think it would have become very unsatisfying. You know 51-years-old just doing the daily grind, inverted pyramid. But conversely I could worth a 12, 15 hour day whatever it takes for me to write a story and if I know I’m writing a good story time flies. I love it. I’ll stay all day all night.

41:20-43:15
It’s a dance and you learn to dance together over the years. Jonathan is very perceptive he’s always listening. If the professor says something about the old fan, Jonathan knows instantly that he needs to frame a shot with the old fan in it. And he’s asking questions. He’s involved in the process. I might ask a question where the old professor gets that close to saying something profound and Jonathan will come in and say, ‘so you mean like this?’ He just knows. He’s just very in tuned to the whole thought process. He’s as much a journalist as I’m a journalist. I do work with other photographers. We have a number of good photographers here. The story I shot last week Jonathan was on vacation so I worked with someone else. I’ve got the same sort of working relationship with him. I’ve never been an MMJ. I could become one. I think my station would love it if I became an MMJ, but I don’t think I could do my job as well. Part of it is I didn’t’ come up that way. It’s not the way I’ve been trained to work. I think it would take a number of years for me to get back to a point where I’m at now. And I’m 51 years old. I’m at a point where I can make that choice for myself and if my station insisted on it here I could probably go to another station where I wouldn’t have to. So I guess I’ve drawn a line in the sand for myself.

45:30-46:30
It’s not a fair fight in some ways. We have three MMJs here. The work 10 times as hard and it’s not fair. They’re dealt the worst hand everyday because I can go out
and work with a great photographer, I can stay later at the shoot, I can write and log in the car, I can bounce ideas off of other people. Two sets of eyes are better than one. I just feel bad for them. If you take time out of the equation I think we can compete more evenly. If there was no such thing as an eight hour deadline... If you throw the deadline in there it's tough.

46:50-48:00
My observation over the years... the pendulum swings back and forth. It's cyclical. Storytelling becomes more of a buzz again. I feel like we're heading into that cycle again. And then it becomes a dirty word and news directors don't want to talk about it. I think we're coming out of a period like that usually it often goes with the economy. I think bad economic times are bad for storytelling because it takes more time often. You invest more time and I would argue that it doesn't take more time but I think the perception is that it does. Because I can turn a story if it's focused sometimes I can turn it more quickly. But I've just sensed over the years that storytelling becomes more of a buzz and news directors are all of the sudden looking for a storyteller and then in the other cycle nobody wants a storyteller. I think we're heading into a more positive direction now.

48:10
Find something you're good at and I know that seems kind of basic. I don't think you necessarily have to make storytelling you niche but make something your niche. The thing I've noticed from being in a lot of newsrooms is the worst place to be is in the middle. You're competent but not excellent at one thing in particular. If you own the police beat you'll be a valued employee. If you are immersed in politics and you have great contacts at the capitol then you'll be a valuable employee. You can make storytelling your niche and you'll be a valuable employee. But people who are kind of in the middle are in a bad spot. You want to be irreplaceable at whatever you're good at.
K. Chris Vanderveen Interview Transcript, March 26, 2013

1:25-04:05
I am purely a generally assignment reporter. I'm a Monday through Friday meat and potatoes kind of guy. I am responsible for everything from court cases to snow storms to fires to political stories of the day. That’s basically my job in a nutshell. As most reporters do, I wish I had more time for this, I wish I had more time for that but I was hired mainly as a general assignment reporter so that means you get thrown in the mix. My joke with people when they ask me well what do you do I say, 'I'm a jack or idiot on the side of the road during snowstorms.’ But yeah its kind of a mixture when you’re a general assignment reporter you have to be an expert in everything which means its tough. You can get thrown into a story with complex issues on a moments notice. So be ready for that. We do have a brand here that we’ve had for a number of years which is called Storytellers which is a sort of ... KUSA has been known for decades as a strong photography shop. And strong photography means almost that narrative style of storytelling. We don’t just say who, what, where, when, why, we give more of a here’s a story here’s a reason why we hope you should care. And it’s a little more personal. I’m a big believer that television does not do in-depth very well. Television can’t get as in depth as a newspaper story can for example but we do emotional and immediacy better than anyone else and because of that it really lends itself to that narrative type storytelling structure. We have for a number of years here tried to focus at least one story a week in terms of that sort of highlighting what I think we do best here. Its open for anybody and everybody and usually its our way to highlight the non-traditional news story and giving them a little extra time as well.

04:10-05:00
They end of being a lot of features. I wish they weren’t as much. I always tell people I love a good feature as much as anybody but I think features are the most difficult story to tell well. And there’s nothing worse than 2:30 minutes of wasting my time. So not only have you told a worthless feature and you have told me absolutely nothing about what’s going on in the world, but you’ve wasted 2:30 minutes of time or three or four minutes of my time. So if you’re going to do it it better be done really really well. But it’s difficult. Spot news is the easiest story to tell because you’re in one spot, there’s always going to be someone there to tell you what’s going on. Feature stories are by far the most difficult stories to tell.

05:05-05:55
They might have a focus but you really have to... it’s easy to make someone care about death or make somebody empathize with losing a house in a fire or losing a child to an accident. That’s easy. But when you’re talking about a dog with a weird thing going on, it’s not as easy to make the viewer empathize or care about that story and that’s why the words are so critical and the story structure is so critical because if you don’t give the viewer a reason to care... a poorly written spot news
story people are still going to care, a poorly written feature it’s going to be like what am I doing? Why am I wasting my time with this?

06:00-09:05
I was the high school dork who went to the newspaper staff at my local high school and I loved it. I remember the first time, I was editor of the newspaper and I went to sell the newspaper in class and I remember people would be reading the newspaper in class and I’d be like oh my god they’re reading my article. And I thought that was really cool. It just sort of took off from there. I think probably since 7th or 8th grade I probably knew I wanted to do journalism. That was probably that moment for me in high school but it started earlier. I used to watch this station as a kid. And we had sort of legendary local television reporters here that just did an amazing job and I just said that’s what I want to do. Storytelling has always been a work in progress.

My first job was at the CBS affiliate in Casper Wyoming market like 190-something. There it was just a lot of trial and error. Just trying to get stuff on the air, trying to get facts right and then I still kept what I had learned from watching this station for years in there but it wasn’t great, good or even passable. And then I went to Colorado springs and worked at the NBC affiliate there and worked for a guy of the name of Dan Dennison who was the news director there but he used to be the Mountain Bureau reporter for KUSA. I learned a lot from him and then I came here. And the learning curve when I came here was like boom. I always tell people you learn more in the first six months of a job than you’ll learn in the next years on that job. I came here and all of the sudden I was working with great photographers. It was like holy cow these guys really know what they’re doing and I learned so much. A photographer came to me and said what’s our moment in this story we don’t have a moment. And I thought what’s a moment? I didn’t know what a moment was. He sat me down and started explaining it to me a little bit and then it started making sense. It started to click, things like character development, looking for moments, building up to moment in writing and that sort of thing. And that’s really when it sort of started to gel a little bit. But also I’m a big believer that in this business no one has perfected it. No ones figured it out like that’s THE style. Number one, there are a hundred of different styles that work and two everyone’s just trying to get better everyday.

09:10-11:20
I hope it’s different. I always want to be the one story in the newscast that people remember longer than 15 minutes. It sounds like a weird goal and it sounds like a modest goal, but I feel like if I write a story that people remember 15 minutes after they’ve watched the newscast, that’s a good sign. If they remember it the next day, then that’s fantastic, but just give me something memorable. My style at the beginning was when I really started focusing on this was it was a lot of short track, short bite, short track, short bite, a lot of nats and it was sort of quick, and it would get a lot of attention. People in the business would say oh that’s great, and then you’d show it to people at home and they’d say I don’t know what that story’s about. Our chief photographer here is a guy by the name of Eric Kay and he’s amazing. He’s won NPPA photographer of the year before and he just says storytelling is sort of
peaks and valleys and it can go really fast but then it’s got to slow down and give me time to breathe and then it can speed up again. Good storytelling kind of goes in that flow. It might not always be quick, quick, quick, quick... you’ve got to then slow it down a little bit. So I don’t know if that really describes the style because I want it to be unlike anything people are used to seeing on television news because 90% of television news is throwaway journalism that people just forget or it’s silly. I do plenty of silly meaningless stuff, I try not to but it happens.

11:30-12:00
Yes and no. I mean the key is any good story will have a good character or characters that people can identify with quickly. It will have emotion, it will have conflict and then usually, although not always it will have resolution. It’s always tough sometimes to do 1:15, 1:30 story, but those are the elements that you shoot for in a good narrative, storytelling structure.

12:10-15:25
You try for it. It’s hit or miss and sometimes, and this is something that I’ve recognized as I’ve gotten older, sometimes it’s just get to the point. Not every story has to or even should be a meandering sort of up and down sometimes you just need to get to the point and give me the facts. Sometimes you need to recognize that and get to it. But sometimes a story will lend itself to... like yesterday I covered the memorial service for our head of corrections who was murdered last week and by now people are sort of versed in the story so you can get into a little more of who he was without sort of saying who, what, when, where, why. We already know the when he was murdered, or you can remind people pretty quickly an then get to the whole point of his wife who got up and spoke yesterday. It was the first time anyone had heard her speak and she was with her husband, he goes to the door answers the door and then he’s shot right there. So she was the last one with him alive besides the killer. And she talked about little things. She did a wonderful job telling their story. She said she met him, he was sitting in the front row of our college juvenile delinquent class. So you’re talking about two sort of idealists instantly you already know, they’re both sitting in the front row of a sociology course on juvenile delinquency, they already have this connection. She said we were the people who wanted to save the world and little tidbits like that tell a whole lot about what a person is about. And so you get into that kind of stuff. Most people would write that story and say 500 people came to a church to say goodbye to their fallen friend. And that’s obviously and the beauty of television is we have that extra element of video. Radio is kind of stuck they just have audio and sometimes they can set the scene a little better but we’ve got two levels we have video and audio. The best writers in this business, Body is an amazing writer and he will say write with the video, give me something else that corresponds with what we’re seeing but don’t tell me there were 500 people packed in a chapel.
15:30-17:30
You have to anticipate. I learned this from the photographers here. The best photographers always anticipate the moment. Sometimes the moment never happens. But be in the right place at the right time. And there’s nothing worse than seeing a moment with your eyes and knowing you didn’t get it on camera, because then it’s nearly worthless because I can’t write to something that you’re not going to see with video. But you show up to a scene and what I do a lot of is I tell the photographer to start shooting a couple of things or the photographer will already do it on their own and I will kind of just look around and I’ll listen. If I hear any sort of sound that I’ve got to get in terms of natural sound. Sometimes I’ll have out a notepad and make a list of things I want to get in terms of natural sound and then you sort of look around and see who looks interesting who looks like they care. A lot of times people come to you and ask you what you’re doing. And maybe they’ll say oh yeah I heard about that. What do you think? And it might be a good interview. You wait for good interviews. You listen for your sound and then you just sort of try ... at the end of the day I think we’re just trying to capture what’s going on anyways. I think sometimes we show up on a scene and we’re just so rushed to do the story that we sometimes don’t just take a moment to take a step back and sort of say oh maybe this story isn’t what I thought it was. Maybe it’s different but that’s ok.

17:25-19:30
I wish I could say that I sort of write in the field. Most of the really great writers write in the field. Or at least they get a couple of line. I just can’t do it. I can’t write until I log and if I write something that I’m particularly pleased about its usually because I took a significant amount of time logging the video, I still log the old fashioned way on a piece of paper with a pen, which a lot of people make fun of. That’s how I do it and I just sort of write a line. I’ll start logging and then I’ll write this story is about dedication. I’ll write one or two lines on the top of the log sheet and I’ll just try to keep with that theme. And then I really still wont even have it until I sit down at a computer and start writing. I spend way too long on opening lines and not nearly enough time on closing lines and my closing lines suck because of it. It’s a struggle. A lot of stories if I have time to write it and the photographer has time to edit it, I’ve done this to a lot of photographers here I’ll change the last line like five times when they’re still editing. There are photographers around here that hate me for it because I’ll just say I got to change that. A consultant, and I almost never listen to consultants but a consultant told me along time ago that closing lines should put a nice little bow on the piece. And it should also give us something to remember or a thought to ponder. And so you try to do that with the closing line but it’s really hard.

20:05-21:10
What happens around here typically because I’m a general assignment reporter that I won’t get a lot of time to shoot long form stuff but that photographer went three times to shoot that story to three different locations. I went once for about an hour so I could at least meet the family. I only met the main girl I never met the other family ever. I talked to them on the phone to get a better idea of who they were but I
never talked to them personally. So a photographer by the name of Michael Driver, he’s new here, he’s really good shot the whole thing. And I just remember for me when I write a piece a lot of times one line will stick out in my mind. And for me this piece was about one in a million. Because they were told they had a one in a million disease and as the writer I thought well I can build on that. So it’s a one in a million meets a one in a million, what are the odds of that? And to me that was the story.

21:25-23:35
Really contentious issues, while they can be done ... when given the time, I’ve seen Body do this and there’s a guy by the name of Joe Fryer he works out at KING TV and he did a really nice piece on their state-wide initiative to legalize same-sex marriage. But it was a five or six minute long piece. If you’re doing a day-turn you don’t want too cute with the abortion story or the same-sex marriage story or the presidential election story. The country is incredibly polarized anyways you’re going to make a lot of enemies if you’re trying to get too cute with certain stories. And I also think death. The immediacy of death is not a time to get cute. You don’t have to just give me the facts but you’ve got to tone it down a little bit. Because for me at least it’s not the time to get cute with words when a mother has lost her kids. And sometimes those stories are best when you don’t get in the way and you just let your sound and video tell the story for you. Just get out of the way of that story. Use as few words as possible to bridge from bite to bite but don’t get cute with that because it’s not cute. When people sort of latch onto a more storytelling structure they do that a lot and I did it too. You think you’re going to write flowery and then it’s horrible.

23:45-24:25
And we’ve all done it everyone that does this has failed miserably and you try to keep those failures to a minimum. Hopefully you work in a shop where someone will call you out on it and say Chris that just didn’t work. I needed more of the meat and you gave me the other stuff.

24:45-27:30
It certainly opens the window for less objectivity. And that’s why I said with more controversial stories you have to be careful with how you word it. There’s a challenge there particularly with controversial stories. The idea that a journalist can be unbiased to me is BS. Every person has a bias. The goal of the journalist is to not let that bias come out and to know what your bias is and to sort of acknowledge it and make sure people don’t know. We had a really amazing political reporter here who loved it when he got negative feedback from both sides because he said that tells me I’m doing my job. Now it’s not like you got the facts wrong but if both accuse you of being biased then that’s usually a pretty good sign. But yeah it’s a huge challenge and we’re not impartial observers. I think that those days are over, but it doesn’t mean that ... we’re still observers though we should become too apathetic. At the end of the day we’re just supposed to be reporting what’s going on and hopefully we still do a good job at that. It’s becoming more challenging though. Most
news that people watch today is meant to be biased and that’s tough. It’s a horribly charged environment right now more charged than I’ve ever seen it. And there’s a real danger in that. I think people are tuning us off. Not everyone, I don’t think the mean reason that we’re losing viewers is because people think we’re biased but I think there are people who tune us off because they think we are biased.

27:45-28:45
It’s a good thing. As long as it’s honest, as long as it’s read and the best emotional lines from a reporter are lines that aren’t said by the reporter. Super emotional stories you just get out of the way. Don’t overwrite. That person is being honest with you on camera so you have to make sure their point is getting across. Again we do emotion better than anybody else. Emotion is what makes people care and want to listen. There’s nothing wrong with emotion you just have to be honest about it don’t manipulate it.

28:45-29:30
Because you see it and you hear it. There are two levels there. Radio works too, some of the best writers are in radio because they’re forced to sort of paint a picture. We can be a little lazier because we’ve already got that video there. But you don’t see the emotion in a newspaper story. You can write about it and there are wonderful writers that do write all sorts of great things. But the best emotions to me are ones that you see with your own eyes and hear with your own ears. That’s how you connect the best way. It doesn’t mean it’s going to connect with the newspaper story but it connects better when you see it and hear it.

29:40-30:55
It’s incredibly important because we are quickly moving to an age where everyone’s a journalist. And there’s nothing wrong with that but if television stations are going to survive they’re going to have to do it in a way that’s deeper and more meaningful than they can get from a 16 year old down the street. The 16 year old with the camera can record the fire, the 16 year old with the camera can do lots of things that they couldn’t do ten or fifteen years ago, but to me the only way you’re going to survive is if you’re different than that and you provide more context more information more emotion more just ‘I didn’t know that.’ And if we don’t do that we’re going to fail miserably because we’re going down that... we’re not going that way we’re going that way right now.

31:00-33:15
There are a million different sources to get news from and everyone is a journalist now but the role of the journalist is to be deeper, dig deeper, provide context by something that they’re not going to get. I compare it to the sixteen year old on the street but the sixteen year old doesn’t know what they’re doing but they can still get it out there quickly. So if that’s our competition we’re done. We’ll lose. If we think we can compete with Joe blow on the side of the street we’ll lose because everybody
has a camera and everyone has the ability to upload stuff to YouTube. This is the idealist side of me I hope it works I don’t know if it will but it better because if it doesn’t we’re in deep trouble. Just sort of a deeper level to journalism in general... you know investigative. I’m also a big believer... I tell people if this newsroom is filled with a bunch of Chris Vanderveens then it’s the most annoying newsroom you could ever work in because the viewer would get to a point where they would just be like, get to the point Vanderveen! Stop wasting 30 seconds to get to that point. And every newsroom needs a healthy combination of different styles. Narrative style works sometimes and there are times that it doesn’t. Investigative pieces are critically important to newsrooms but a narrative style is less important in investigative than just uncovering it. That’s the most important thing when it comes to investigative. But give me a healthy combination of people with different skill sets. No one in the newsroom is great at every job in the newsroom. But a good newsroom is filled with people who have really great skillsets in one area and then work together.

34:05-35:30
The most important thing about a narrative structure or a storytelling structure is that if it gives the viewer a reason to care then you’ve done your job. To care and to remember then you’ve done your job. If you haven’t, like I said, if the viewer forgot your story 10 minutes later... and I guarantee 95% of news is that way then you have not done your job, then you’re just filling time. It’s built upon; give me one thing that somebody will remember. Most young reporters when they’re starting out feel the need to overload with facts because they want to go home at the end of the day and say look I was a journalist today! And 95% of the time they uncovered it by just Googling facts. Well great anybody can do that. But give me the one thing... 1:30 might just allow time for you to remember one thing.

35:45-37:35
The economic pressure is changing things dramatically. You do not have time like you used to anymore and it’s a huge concern of mine. There’s news all the time now and you don’t have ... my biggest concern is most reporters are losing time to be reporters. The worst reporters are regurgitaters of fact meaning they just talked to someone and they’re stating the facts that are already out there. But that’s slowly what the news business is becoming, particularly television news. And that’s bad. I don’t think there was a golden age in television because you talk about a time where there were a good chunk of journalists that were alcoholics, sexist, racist... but when reporters had more time they could at least be better versed in sourcing and getting great sources and having time to go to breakfast with a source and have time to just call people in the middle of the day and we’re losing that time. We’re just losing a lot of that time.

37:40
In healthy moderation they’re wonderful but I’m also a big believer in ... it’s very hard to do both of those jobs really really well. So if you look at the list of the great
reporters who are great writers in this country there are probably about 20 just really remarkable. If you look at the list of MMJ's that are remarkable it's like 4. They're out there but it's just so much harder to do that job really really well. It's becoming pretty customary for kids coming out of college to be used to that. And I was an MMJ before there were MMJ's in my first job and I just remember how hard it was. Interviewing is a lost art. Interviewing is really hard you need to pay attention. The best interviewers get the best sound and if you're paying more attention to the camera than you are to the person then you're going to miss that sort of window to that.
00:00-05:00 Credentials
I’ve been in this kind of business most of my life. I’ve got five Emmys, written seven books; I’ve been in media since I got out of the army in 1961. 61 is when I became a newspaper reporter. I’ve been a radio reporter, television reporter, I worked at channel 2 for three years, PBS channel 2 WGBH. So those are my credentials. I’m not an educated person; I’m self-taught although I have an honorary doctorate.

05:00-10:30
The reason I was fascinated by your request here is that back in 1976 I needed a local job. Actually I was having a custody battle with somebody; actually a wife and the lawyer said I had to be in town. I was working out in New York mostly so I came up and there was a brand new news station that opened up in Peterborough and I was coming down. They had brand new people from New Jersey up here and they were all butchering the local names. (WSLE.FM, WSCV.AM “News and information” NBC’s news channel out of New York and nationwide– Now it is WMDK) I went in and said ‘You’ve got to have somebody, if you’re giving New Hampshire news, local news, who knows how to pronounce the names.’ So they hired me at a very low salary. I mean extremely low. I don’t know if you’ve been in radio media but it’s very low. So I went to work with a whole lot of hot shots who did all the wrong things with complete assures and the person who owned it was all ‘we’re going to tear the wall down we’re going to put a new carpet in here and we’re going to put some new machines in, you’re fired, by the way we’re going to move... one of those guys.’
Anyhow “News and Information” only lasted about six months out of New York and it was not a big success, although this station as doing very well. You know, I picked up a lot... I had written for newspapers but the radio thing was new to me. And one of the things they had was the newsroom, or the broadcast room, they had those old teletype machines that went wonka-wonka-wonka, in the background. Walter Cronkite used to use them behind him. He liked the sound, people were yelling and people would come around, you’d be halfway through a story and somebody’s going on the air and they’d rip it right out of the typewriter – typewriters by the way. So I learned to concentrate under all sorts of conditions. So anyhow the thing went under and then they went back to just playing records –records again this was a long time ago ’76 – anyhow, I was the only person left out of all the news people. So I was there and they were paying me squat. In about four to five years I ended up as the general manager of the place. But anyhow, there I was at a station and we did a community news that is Peterborough and all the contiguous towns of Peterborough there are 14 of them. And I was on the phone everyday calling the selectmen, calling the school board members, calling the department of public works, police stations, and also the stuff around the state; and I wrote a three newscasts in the morning, which I recorded late at night. Then I did a newscast at noon I did a newscast at 5 in the evening. We did 5 newscasts in all, nothing rip and read, nothing off the wire. Everything was local and everything was written. And it was the best job I had ever
had. I had so much fun poking my nose into stuff in the community, making relationships – I figured, people have got to trust you. Well what was terrible was the paycheck, which was dreadful, what was wonderful was the freedom. There was nobody looking over my shoulder. I could do anything I wanted. And so I did what your thesis is titled here. I told the news in story form not in your regular pyramid form of reporting.

10:30-15:30
I was always a fan of 60 minutes. 60 minutes is not a news show, it's a magazine show. It does not tell the news it tells stories, and it tells them in story form. Every one of their stories – you have to meet their criteria for a story. Their criterion for a story is somewhere halfway through the story some huge change happens – it’s just a change in direction. Say, someone is a beauty queen and she’s winning all of the beauty contests around and she is making money and she’s doing all of these things and then somebody throws acid in her face. They wouldn’t say that up front. In a news story they would say ‘Beauty queen had acid thrown in her face this afternoon by blah, blah, blah...’ 60 Minutes would tell the story saying you know her name was, she lived here... and then boom. You're going down the way like this and somewhere they make you take a turn. And that’s their criteria. But they’ve also told it in story form, which is to say you do the who, what, where, when, why, how much, how many, on what authority, but then you tell the story not like it was in the newspaper because television and radio are a completely different form than the newspaper. But the Internet is not. The Internet is exactly the same form as the newspaper and so when you go to the Internet you go to USA Today and it’s just like the paper. It’s headlines. And the headline has the story. And then if you want to know what else is in the story you read the first sentence or two and you get everything you need in that. And the journalism courses that I’ve had say – You write a story, putting the new part of the story first, then never assume the reader has read yesterday’s newspaper so now assumptions there so you have to tell them what it’s about on a new thing, even the killings in New Town, there are some people who you still have to say what that was about, but whatever the new thing is in that, that’s what leads. And then you retell the story and you go out and it should be written where starting at the last sentence you can cut with a pair of scissors – and they’re still doing it like that. There’s an old adage that the New York Times said, “All the News That’s Fit to Print.” Well in the old hot type days where somebody actually laid those things down, they would say “All The News That Fits We Print.” Things like the New Yorker used to have these sayings and jokes and little funny incidents that were only two or three things long and they still have them but the reason for that was they came out weekly, it still does, and in the old hot type days they’d get a story and it couldn’t get to the bottom of the page and so they’d find a little thing and they’d put it in there and it ends up people were reading them. But there are a lot of things just left over from those days. That’s left over.
15:30-21:20

On the Internet you do it just like you do in the newspaper. But radio and television deals in time and you have given over that time to them. You make a deal with them when you tune into a station. You watch a commercial come on and you know it’s only going to be thirty seconds. You’ve seen it again and again and I’m so damn sick of that commercial because we know how long it’s going to take. And then something else will come on and we know how long it’s going to take. And sometimes they crowd them all together. If you watch Jeopardy, you’ll see before that last question they put in 12, count them, commercials in there. And we are attuned, we have been programmed from infancy, to allow that to happen and be all right with it. And so when a news story comes on, we will allot the person who is telling that news story, 2 ½ minutes, no more, but we will allot them that time, we give it over to them. Now, if you tell the story like you do in the newspaper, with the lead first, you say ‘oh I’ve heard that story I don’t care about that.’ But if you tell it like a story it goes back to sitting on daddy’s lap or sitting on mommy’s lap and the book comes out and you go through it... it’s a story. And a story is told by laying a premise, creating some kind of a dilemma, and resolving that dilemma; and that’s what a story is. And practically every news story can be told that way. Not all of them, some of them have to be told just the way you’re going to tell them anyhow because if I tuned in and want to know how much money the school board is going to spend of my tax money, if tune in for that I want to know right off – I do. I don’t want a story about that. But, if it’s anything that has any drama in it... Like the thing I said. Instead of – They stopped these two kids who had come up from Leominster. When I say kids one of them was 21, and I think the other was 18, the girl was 18. They were drunk. They were speeding. They were in a small town and to hell with it. When they pulled them over, the officer was all-alone because in these towns it’s like that. And they got lisence and information and while he is getting the information from the driver the girl comes around and begins kicking him in the shins, screaming like a banshee, drunk out of her mind, and you know he doesn’t even have time to get up he has to subdue this gal and they’re both arrested and the parents have to come and get them and well that’s the story. Well there’s a story. Oh my god! Every other news outlet said ‘two young people from Leominster were arrested at the top of Main Street last night by officer Ralph Sergeant who had to subdue the girl who attacked him while he was there.’ Now I told that story, and I didn’t tell that story that way. I said, ‘Officer Ralph Sergeant, it’s 3 o’clock in the morning and he’s almost asleep he’s at the bottom of main street. Down the street comes this car, it’s a Toyota and it needs work. It’s a little rusty. It’s going too fast, took that corner on two wheels. He said what the heck. He turns the gum machine on, the blue gum machine. Goes to the top of the hill and pulls them over. It’s some twenty year old guy and he’s got a passenger with him, an 18 year old woman. Well he’s looking at his ID she runs out of the car and starts kicking him in the shins.’ Now that is the way I told the story and that’s the way I did most of the news stories because nobody was telling me what to do. And I had by the time I was done there,
after 10 years, I had a huge following. Some woman down in Orange, Massachusetts got a special antenna just to hear the news. Another woman wrote me and told me she’d never been to Peterborough but she listened to the news every morning. Why? Because we’re telling stories.

21:20
Now that’s the thing that radio and television can do. Because if it only took 2 ½ minutes to tell the story which is about the time you need for a story, although at the job I had there I could take as long as I wanted. And frankly I did the three newscasts in the morning, the first newscast that came on at 6 went forever, sometimes it was a full half hour. I played everything the selectman told me over the phone or whatever. I just let it play out. Boring, boring. The second newscast was half the length of the first and the third newscast was a regular newscast for people going to work, just before 9. We had three in a row there. The other thing I did there, because it was a small town I used everybody’s first name. I would say the full name to begin with but then I would just use their first name.

23:30-25:00
60 Minutes – I remember when it came on. It knocked my socks off that they were doing sort of news in story form. And I was impressed. If you tell a story that’s years old, if you’re doing a documentary or whatever, you’re telling it like a story, so why can’t you bring that up into something that is current. You have to be careful. I say I use first names. If they’re in trouble I use the Mr. or the Mrs. Form or Ms. And if they were a minister I would say Mr. or Mrs. Or Ms. Or Dr. or whatever and school teachers were not on the first name basis unless it was a story about the Lion’s club. But yeah, that’s the way you tell a story. You lay a premise, you tell them where we are, sitting on a couch in Acworth New Hampshire, doing an interview about how news stories should be written in television and radio.

25:00-30:00
You got to create attention. You need a situation. Alfred Hitchcock famously said, ‘If the curtain goes up on the state and somebody enters stage left, you’ve got nothing. But if the curtain goes up and somebody comes in a window, you’ve got a situation.’ And that’s all you need for a story. You need a situation. So if you’ve got any kind of story that is a story, like I said some of them aren’t stories some of them are the budget was out today, but if there was a story about the president not wanting to talk about the budget you could say, ‘did you notice the president didn’t make eye contact, or changed the subject, what was that about?’ You’ve got your situation. Practically any story can be made into a story. It’s your story. You start with what you start with... All you have to do with a story is find out what the situation is and you start with that situation. All good stories are to begin with knots, and you use the rest of the story to untie them. Once it’s untied your story is over. And once your story is over.

30:00-31:40
What comes after the story? The dénouement. The dénouement is the thing that comes after the story is done. And the most classic dénouement is ‘they lived happily ever after’ or ‘from that time on no one in the happy little valley was ever sad again.’ That’s your dénouement. In one sentence after it was over. ‘And yeah they got married and had lots of kids and lived to be in their 80’s.’ And there’s your dénouement. But the story itself is a piece out of life that has a question in it that is answered, a knot in it that is untied, a situation that is answered, where the viewer/listener/reader, says ‘what’s that about?’ You tell them that and you’ve got a story. I write five stories a week, one story a night, 2,500 I’ve done in the past 10 years. In print I have 1,000 stories. And they’re stories generally. They have a thing and a thing and a thing.

32:00-36:00
You never ever on purpose change a story. What you can do is change what you talk about in the story, and in some subtle way that changes the story always. It may not be the important thing in the story but it’s what you’re talking about in the story and it’s what your story is about. As long as it’s not untrue, because stories are never really true they can’t be, they’re always from somebody’s point of view. Whoever’s the assignment editor is decided that was an important story, so you’re there, you look at whatever and you think that’s the lead and you take that and so it may not have been the lead and who you chose to keep in the story and who you chose to keep out of the story are your choices, because you can’t keep everything in, but in doing that then the story does not become true. The story is always untrue. How many times have you been to an event and seen it on TV or read about it on the newspaper and gone ‘where the hell were they?’ That’s not the event I was at. And the reason is they were but what you see depends on where you stand and it depends on who you are and what your interests are, and what you understand and what other people may not understand. What it can’t be is untrue. It never can be truly true. It can’t be there’s no way to do that. There’s miscommunication everywhere. But never put in anything that you know is untrue into a story, except on Halloween. On Halloween I make everything up because everyone wants ghost stories and every ghost story is a lie. But once you do that blatantly people understand the nod and the wink. But generally if I screw a story up my email loads up and it load up quite often because sometimes my sources are wrong and sometimes I blank on something. But you never make anything up. But telling it like a story that’s the way any of the news you have to give time to... Generally if people tune in for the news they’re looking for a particular thing. They’re going to give you that minute, minute and a half and if you can tell a story like you would a kid, it’s much more satisfying. My lead-ins on television is ‘I’ll tell you the story.’ It’s one of those things that just goes back to where we live. It goes deep, deep down because of those times when you’re going to sleep at night and you’re four.
Two newspapers were up against me (at the radio station) and one day one of them wrote ‘that big clicking sound that you hear at 8:04 is people shutting their radios off after Fritz Wetherbee’s newscast.’

Question: As journalists we want to be objective and when you’re putting things into a story format do you believe the story is altered in a way that damages truth?

It’s a good question. Just by changing what has actually happened, the reality of what has happened that you are reporting on, just in doing that changes it. As they say, if reporters are around it changes it. If photographers are around it changes it. I did a little piece for PBS, one of those fundraiser thing a few years ago about covered bridges of New England, a little one-man-band I went out and got a camera and did a little thing. I was at a covered bridge over in Vermont and there were some young guys there and I set my camera up and I looked up and they started jumping off the roof of this thing into the river that’s not deep enough. I put the camera back into the car so fast, so fast because I don’t want to, excuse me, they wanted some TV time and you can go and say don’t do that, but by that time someone may have gone and hurt themselves and this is crazy. So that changes it. You know I don’t know how much it changes it. It does seem to me that if you get too a formal story you got to be meticulous, if you have a story that means a lot. But regular news can be done in story form. Yes, yes it does change it. But just writing it, putting it in any kind of form changes it. If you pyramid it, you are saying this is the most important thing because I’m telling it first. Although, it should be the newest thing because I’m telling it first. We choose our words carefully. Nobody is absolutely flat on their view of things, everyone is biased some way. And sometimes it’s just what we choose not to report on. We see that all the time. I can’t tell you how many times I yell at the news and I mean, national news too, national public radio, or NBC, CBS or even PBS. I’ll find myself screaming at them some nights saying ‘that’s about as biased as you could get right there.’ But it’s all in degree.

But let’s face it if you’re working for a television station or a radio station your job is to tell the news. But your job is also to get eyeballs and ears. And I don’t think, the way I used to do it on the air for those ten years I was doing that that I was any better or any worse than anyone else telling the news when it came to objectivity. There are times when I was accused of an probably was guilty of, persiflage – making light of something that you shouldn’t be making light of. It’s not a bad thing. John Stewart doesn’t think it’s a bad thing. He tells the news. He tells the news in joke form. And you’ll catch somebody that will go ‘what was that about he winked.’ Yeah, I had a laugh on the air once because some woman went off the highway on route 124 and down through a fence and out into the middle of the field and killed a cow. Now that’s funny. And I put it out like that and it turned out the owner of the
cow loved that cow. He had a number of them and the woman ran into them. And his wife ripped me a new nostril.

43:30-45:00
There's an old adage in acting, which holds true always, 'play against the emotion.' If it's a sad story tell it as straight on as you can, don't touch it up. Worst thing in the world, if you want to see me screaming, the Shirley Temple delivery. It's a little touch...They don't want to see how sad the reporter is. First because it calls attention to the reporter and you're not important in this story. What you're telling me is important. If you tell me it I will weep. Play against the emotion. Pull it back.

48:00-50:00
The thing that makes people relate is getting to where they live, where they eat. I used to say we're having a famine in Bangladesh and close to a million people are dying, children. More people wills top and tune in to listen to the fact that their neighbor had a chimney fire than they would that a million people are dying in Bangladesh. The closer you get to where they live, to their home... You're on vacation, you're in Spain, you've got armed forces radio on, or the BBC is coming in so you can get it in English. They say there was a terrible tragedy in the United States. The New Hampshire national guard was called in and you slow the car down. People in Nashua are feeling quite... and you have stopped the car. You have stopped the car. As you get closer to where people live the story gets more and more important. And it can be a kind of nothing. You had to pay double for the pot roast – that's a tragedy.

50:00-58:00
I do radio on the air. There's very little production in what I do. Although I've got literally hundreds of stories that I've done on television that have been produced. But it's the time thing. It's going to take that amount of time. If I chose the newspaper I can choose this story to read, or this story to read or I can go to the next story and chose this story or that story to read and to read. But this is all me, I am in charge of this. That's what the newspaper is about. I am in charge of what I am going to see. And I scan, they do it in a particular way I can get all the headlines and find the stories that I like. You're in charge. They put the menu out here for me and then I'm in charge. But, you've got no choice on television. If you're listening to the radio in your car you don't have a choice. You are the captive of that. And if you watch your tv it's also, you don't have any choice you're the captive of that. We can at least go to a new channel now. In the early days when there were only three or four networks out there you got your news when it came on, 6 at night or 8 in the morning. For our purposes here they are in charge you aren't in charge. They tell you what they're going to tell you next. And it's going to take 2 ½ minutes and that's what they're going to give you. Whoever the program director is, whoever the assignment editor is knows you've got to fill so much stuff with what we've got on this thing and each one of these stories has to be this long. Sometimes they have to be a lot shorter because there are more stories. But generally it's 2 ½ minutes but
no more. So we're watching the news, we've given ourselves over to that and it comes on, oh if you know what that is all of the suspense is out of it. If the suspense is out of it you're wondering, 'why are they going on with this?' It's somebody else saying the same thing about the same thing. If you are in charge and it's been given over, why not do it in a way that they (the viewer) likes better, that's sweeter, that's nicer, that's more like eating chocolate than broccoli. Tell the news like a story. It's the perfect way to tell news. And frankly it works very well in a small market as it did with me. It works really well that way. I say, 'I tell the news just the way I talk to somebody across the table at the coffee shop.' ... That's the way I tell it one the air. It's a story. People want the crisis, the resolving of the crisis, how it was tied up in the end and then what's going to happen in the future, the dénouement. That's the mint on your pillow, it's after the meal, it's that thing that makes it so satisfying.

58:00
Almost not at all. I let the characters be who they are. They are who they are...

1:01:50-01:05:00
I like the fact that, if you're in small market you can develop over the years a cast of characters. They're the people you go to every week, and pretty soon they begin to play their part for you. The Boston Globe came up once and did a feature on the radio station in Peterborough because it was a pretty unique radio station in what it played as well. It was pretty amazing. And they asked me, 'what do you do?' And I said most people who live in Peterborough came here from somewhere else, Connecticut, New Jersey, New York and they came to this small town with a kind of fantasy about how they were going to live and I feed that fantasy. They said 'I want to live in a place like Opie lives, where everybody knows everybody, even people who are having trouble, they're people to gather around too.' So that's generally what I did and I did it with some humor... I'm a proponent of taking the news and making it stories. We're all in our own little group and

01:05:00-01:09:30
I'm lucky because I have a nice low voice that helps me a great deal. The secret is to talk to the camera one-on-one. There's a thing called the Arthur Godfree axiom. Groups have never listened to the radio ever. They'll listen to a broadcast in the stadium. But generally only an individual listens, generally it's just a person in a car. So he said stop talking to groups, talk to one person. Make that person somebody who is smarter than you are, able to catch anything that you do, and you don't have to explain it to them because they're smarter than you are. And it's somebody you like a lot. I'm always amazed, weathermen often do the stentorian, the camera is over there so they yell at it. Where as the microphone is right here, that's closer to the sound coming out of your mouth than your ear is. Speak to the individual.

01:10:00
If it's the news, that comes to you. But what I do here is I come up with stories. I thought after a while I would be done. But they're still out there. These are all town
histories. Everything written by New Hampshire people about New Hampshire. So when I need to get to something I do this. This is where I start generally and sometimes I go to the state library in Concord. Sometimes I go to a local library to get stuff from there.

01:18:50
I cannot write a sentence over 25 words long. I cannot. I'm incapable of doing it physically. Most of my sentences are 15 or 16 words. Generally 25 is the limit and that's just from years and years of going through copy to bring it back to what it is. Throw out your adjective and adverbs. It's like a fat lady trying to be. What's what adjective and adverbs do they put weight on you they make you flabby. Metaphores are great fun, but be careful because sometimes what you're guilty of is calling attention to your writing. You shouldn't call attention to your writing. You only call attention to the subject or the verb. Words are nothing, the subject is everything. The idea is everything. Stay with your idea. Write it the way you want to write it to begin with and then go through it and take out all of the adjectives and adverbs to begin with, that's the first thing and then if you can use shorter words to replace your long words and you'll be amazed at how much stuff that's in there that doesn't need to be in there. IF you can do that, writing a story with fewer words, it's like buying something with less money. It's a wonderful thing to be able to do. There's a lot of stuff that goes into stories that just doesn't need to be there. Edit it down, get rid of your adjectives and adverbs, make your sentences shorter and use action verbs, not active verbs, stay away from the verb to be as much as you can and see if you can find some action... When you're doing broadcasting the person can't reread anything. If you've got an article in the newspaper or a magazine your eye can go back and reread. You've got to anticipate that when you're on the air.

01:25:20
I didn't tell lies but I didn't tell the whole truth. I think of what I do as being an advertisement, an enticement for someone to go out and find the entire story. If I haven't left anything else in this world I have given editors on television, radio, magazines, story ideas. You tell a story and you tell it the way it's told. They strive for it (objectivity) and that's good. And we should all strive for it all the time. But if you go to MSNBC or FOX they're both biased. Big time biased both ways. They choose to ignore certain things and stress other things and John Stewart is left leaning, but he makes no excuses about it. And sometimes you don't need to give both sides because one side is wrong. If the flat earth society is there saying there’s a flat earth out there you don’t give them equal time, you don’t even give them time but you know we'll do it with evolution, we’ll give the other side.
I've always been amazed. It's been the same journalism course since they taught in the 1950's to what's happening right now. And there are many, many, many more choices than there used to be. And people have understood things in a different form and people like John Stewart have changed the paradigm. And I wouldn't be surprised if somebody taught a course about how to tell a regular news story in story form. Like I said it's the only way I ever did the local news. And I think I could do a limited kind of news.
M. Jana Shortal Interview Transcript, March 15, 2013

00:15-03:15
It was kind of serendipitous. I went to Missouri not like most students that go into the journalism school with a clear focus. I went there because it was the furthest away from my town that my parents would pay for. I’m from Illinois and my dad worked in Saint Louis so I could get in state tuition. I grew up in a really small farming community and I wanted to get far away from home. On the campus tour they touted their journalism program pretty highly. At that time I was really interested in sports reporting. But as you know through your experiences, your freshman and sophomore year you don’t really dabble into those waters. So anyways that was kind of my pathway in with what I wanted to do and that’s how I ended up at Missouri, however, my junior year when I ended up in Greeley’s class I was probably in it maybe two weeks when I dropped out. And I majored in advertising, I was very intimidated and I was just very bad at it. And Greeley was tough but now 20 years later I know that he was hard on me, as he and I have discussed, because he thought I had potential but I didn’t internalize that very well I just quit. So I wound up doing the advertising thing and wound up graduating in ad graduation. Greeley saw me, I usually tried to avoid him because I was embarrassed, and he came up to me and called me a chicken basically and that summer, I asked my parents at graduation dinner if I could stay and try this one more time. I went to summer school and did his class and then the third level class. It ended up all working out I was less intimidated during the summer there were fewer people, there were way more opportunities. I found a group of friends that were diehard newsies, I had no interest in sports anymore. My path just kind of took off from there. A year and a half later I graduated with the broadcast sequence. They thought it was such a crazy story I was the class speaker that year. It speaks to that faculty and him going out of his way and him going out of his way. For whatever reason it worked out.

03:45-04:25
And it was hard the second time. But at that time there was no fall back and I knew that’s why I was there. It worked out. And in terms of the way I told stories that was not the case in the beginning. I go speak to Greeley’s class every other year, I think that you find your voice over time. I think that it’s always there, but like a sport you have to master the fundamentals before there’s something else in there that tells that story.

04:35-06:30
I took a really big leap and went to KRCG in Jefferson City. I took their morning anchor job. Sarah Hill worked there or might have just left. I was the morning anchor and then the day reporter. It was the shellshock after Columbia, because that newsroom had so many gadgets and tools and people, and it’s not really a small market station because then you go to one and you go whoa. I just jumped into the
pool and thought ‘this really is as hard as they said it would be.’ I was at KRCG for I think like 9 months. At the time because I was the morning anchor I was also the producer of the morning show. Well Governor Carnihan’s plane went down, he died. But we were the only television station in Jefferson City so we were the first on the air and I started doing live shots for other stations. An assistant news director for WDAF in Kansas City, I was doing a lot of hits for them they were the distant fourth place station, called me and left me a message. Basically really gruffly he said, ‘hey kid when you get your chops give me a call,’ which I intuited as he wants me to come work there right now. And so I drove to Kansas City the next week and waited in the lobby and said I wanted to talk to him and he said what are you doing here? And I said, ‘well I’m ready.’ Through much pestering he hired me. I was there for four years and then I came here ten years ago.

06:45-08:45
I went to Kansas City and I was too young. I was sort of thrown into the lions den I mean we were the fourth place station. So now it’s not that unique to go to a market that big but at the time it was and it ended up being a positive and a negative because they were a news factory I would say. They did nine and a half hours of news a day so you’re on the air all the time. So I was doing four or five live shots a day so I really kind of buzzed off the edges there by doing it nonstop 12 hours a day, every day. But also in that vein you don’t have a style you’re just trying to get stuff on the air. I was blessed to work with a photographer who became a very dear friend and we kind of just paired off and did stories that we wanted to tell. Very much like KARE. I was watching KARE tape in college because I thought it was just this magical place. I had never been to Minnesota in my life but I wanted to tell those kinds of stories. When you see KARE’s stories with that branding, especially 15 years ago… Boyd… you wanted to be that. I never wanted to be him I just wanted to be able to tell feature stories. I wanted to tell stories it’s the oldest thing in human times. People would gather around fires and tell stories and I enjoyed that. So this photographer that I worked with we started to do a few of those and once they were done, the positive and the negative of working in a news factory is someone would run it because it filled time. Dominic Swan, he I think is the bureau chief at CNN Miami. If it weren’t for him I don’t think I would have gotten there in that way because I needed coaching and he did that for me. Those relationships and those bonds really got me here not. Me.

08:55-9:30
No. They liked it, but because of the type of station it was, it was a very run and gun… murder, murder, fire, fire, murder, murder… it wasn’t there style. They would again, run it but doing a minute forty on tape was unheard of. They did minute packages… live, live, live. It wasn’t their style, but they would run it they would like it because it was free but they wouldn’t encourage it at all and it ended with us parting ways obviously.
09:40-10:10
I don’t know how they operate. We really can’t do that anymore. You just can’t. There would be a couple of photographers who would do that. This is kind of a destination place to tell stories, in this market especially. And you can’t just take gear and go do stuff. Unless you have your own gear but what if something happens. So that’s kind of gone by the wayside, now there are far more rules. But you don’t have to do that here. If you’re passionate about something and I say I need to do this then you can go do it.

10:15-11:45
Another amazing how did this happen story. I was KARE obsessed when I was in Kansas City. But again I knew no one here I didn’t try to get a job here because the audacity of someone at 25 trying to work at KARE just seemed silly. There was a parting of ways at FOX over what I would consider an ethics thing and I just quit. I started working in radio. That photographer Dominic compiled a reel for me and sent it here, without my knowing, to a photographer that no longer works here that used to work at WDAF, he was the chief photographer at the time, his name was Brett. Brett walked it into the news director. The news director called me out of the blue and I hung up on him the first time because I didn’t think it was real. ‘Yeah right. Tom Leonard KARE 11 news, really funny… click.’ The second time I believed it was him and they flew me out. At that time I didn’t want to get back into television but I had a choice. It was like I was so bettered by my experience at FOX but at the same time this was what I had always wanted so how do you say no? So I came.

11:55-13:30
That was such a part of the ethos here. But I had a rough adjustment here. It was cold. I moved her in December. It was the furthest away I had ever been from any sort of support network. It developed over time and it was really encouraged because the photographers here, that’s how they shot stories and told stories. So even without your knowing I was still kind of in the FOX style and they would insert nat pops and let things breathe a little bit and stories were two minutes long and they would put me in extras and then they would put me in five minute long stories about features and so it started to develop but I think as I got older I started to realize more about myself as a person. I’m a natural talker and a natural storyteller. I think empathy comes into it too and when you actually take the time to listen that storytelling tends to happen and it kind of comes out on the page. Now it’s at a point where my storytelling is very different than Boyd’s. Why, because we’re different people. I’m much more tongue and cheek, a more smart-ass reporter, with some empathy too, but more almost comedic. But that was also me coming into my own.

Q: So if someone asked you what your style is that’s what you would say?

13:30-13:45
People say to me, ‘gosh I just love your style.’ And I think I don’t even know what it is. It is what it is. It’s a little bit of humor, it’s a little bit of sarcasm, it’s a little bit of harder edge and then a little bit of feature. It kind of depends on the day.

Q: What is narrative storytelling to you?

14:20-15:50
I guess it really depends on how you approach a story. Some would call this just sheer laziness but I never really approach a story knowing exactly what I’m going to do. I just don’t. I can’t define my character until I meet him or her in his or her environment. If they say Jana you’re going to do a story about a four-year-old soccer prodigy, you can in your head think of what you want to do, but then you’re staging. And what if the four-year-old has a really wacky love of hip-hop or something. So I prefer them to be the narrator and me say as little as possible, but again I think that goes with a stations ethos. I think I prefer narrative storytelling when it applies but it doesn’t always apply to me. I get really kind of, my back gets up a bit, when that gets suggested and we haven’t gone to that story yet. Or I don’t always think, and they tell you for good reason, like there was a gun debate and the capitol last week… well take it out of the capitol. Well we need to tell you what happened at the capitol first. I kind of push back a little. I say tell me the news first and then tell me the story. And sometimes you can tell the story in the news but not all the time.

Q: Is every story and every topic lend itself to the narrative?

16:00-17:30
I don’t think so. I really don’t. I think if you go to a NPPA workshop or storytelling workshops they’ll say, ‘yes it does and they’ll show you examples of that, and sometimes that works. But your mind has to work that day. I remember Greeley always said if you get two good stories a month that’s a pretty darn good month and that’s very true. Not that the other stories are bad but they’re news stories. You can do a good job on them but reel stories that go on your resume tape… If I have five a year that’s a great year, two maybe that I might be really proud of… but you always work under an eight hour deadline and so all that stuff that you also see at the NPPA workshops aren’t deadline stories. They usually get a little more time with that. But I don’t think so I mean, would I go to the Schaffhausen hearing and do a narrative? No. That would be inappropriate and a disservice to our viewers. I think your obligation is to tell them the news. If you have the opportunity to do a narrative then great, but I’ve kind of reverted back to news actually. I leave the narrative stuff for what I can but it’s not my first priority.

Q: Do you think about the narrative in your daily assignments?

17:35-18:45
Yes. Like last night I did a story that I was very passionate about because I felt it needed to be told for several reasons. There’s a theater in St. Paul that’s an African
American theater and they almost went down and last night was their opening night after a year of almost nothing. So in a dream sequence I would have loved to have shot the show and have the actors tell that story but in reality I had two hours so I had to do the best I could. But yeah I think if you have the time narrative storytelling can almost always be universally applicable but on a general news deadline reporter it’s a little more difficult and it depends on the subject matter. Boyd’s doing a winter weather story today, he can easily do a narrative story with that because you can have characters and develop them and let them tell the story because what facts are you going to get wrong?

Q: You said you don’t think about what the story is going to be until you get to the shoot and meet the person, can you talk a little bit about your thought process while you’re out on a shoot?

19:10-21:20
That comes into play especially when the story primarily focuses on a person for his or her achievement or talent or something crazy. A couple of weeks ago there was a gentleman in Duluth that takes off on his snowmobile, it’s the middle of January and it’s about 35 degrees below zero and the wind-chill is even colder. He runs out of gas about 25 miles from home. And somehow he survives for three days without food or water. I mean most people would die within hours in that kind of cold in the woods. But you don’t know what he’s like. So you’re going up there to tell the story you have absolutely no pictures. It’s not humanly possible to get to the place he was because it’s in a ravine. We weren’t there it was out of our market, three hours away when it happened, so all I know is I’m going to this guy’s hospital room. He could either stink, he could be really shy and embarrassed or he could be really great. So you have to prep either way. So I’m thinking ok give me as many still pictures as you can I’m going to know when I get there. And he was just the type of guy when you put the mic on him and you say ‘tell me what happened’ an hour later you still haven’t asked another question. That’s obvious he just told his story and that’s a conversation you have to have with your photographer when you get back in the car, luckily for me the drive was three hours. I tell him, ‘ok, here’s what I’m thinking.’ He obviously is a character he’s very funny so also inserting that. We’re allowing him to be him so that you care about him. And if I just have him tell this wacky story people at home are going to be like ‘what an idiot.’ If you inject humor and moments when he was scared and show pictures of him and his wife... you have his wife in there saying, ‘I was pacing at this time.’ And then take a shot of the clock and he’s saying it started to get dark. And so that kind of narration lent itself really well to that story and I wanted to be in that story as little as I possibly could. And so that’s another example of how that story was his story not mine.
Q: Can you talk about the relationship between the photographers and reporters?

21:50-23:45
I've done both so I feel your pain. And there were certain times where I enjoyed one-man-banding because that relationship's in my head where I live anyways. I knew what I was doing and it made sense to me. Yeah, the quintessential relationship is Boyd and Jonathan. You can go to their workshops and they'll tell you about it. But it's like dating. It works or it doesn't. But even when it doesn't work you make it work and sometimes it's just like today it's just meat and potatoes today... exteriors of this place, it's not that hard. But when I say it's like dating or like a relationship there's a certain simpathico that sort of goes with it where you kind of just get each other and that comes with style. So if a photographer hates my style its probably not going to work and vice versa. A lot of mutual respect, it's also a bit of hey really great job. And you can tell when you work well together and you don't. So if you see the edited piece, and I'm not a very visual person, but you know if you like it when you see it... communication is important. I'm not an over communicator again because I don't know what I'm walking into. I think with Boyd and Jonathan, from what I've heard from their discussions is they make a pretty decent place going into it and I think Jonathan works well that way. I don't. And because we don't speak the same language it's a different story when we work together. But there are four, five or six people here that we work together enough and that has to develop over time. You're not going to get a photographer that's just like year awesome right away. That takes years, and years and years to develop that language. It's not something, like any other relationship, that you can force. You just figure out if you work well together over 10, 12, 15 assignments.

Q: What do you think is your favorite story you've ever done?

23:45-28:45
Oh that's easy. I mean there's a lot for different reasons. There's funny ones. There's sad ones. I don't remember how long ago it was Greeley still shows it I know he does. Amy Taylor. We did a follow up six months ago. Life is funny and that's why I love this job. Going into that story I had a really negative attitude because I had read her blog that she and her husband were very raw and honest about how much they loved each other. It was like a cheesy romance novel. It was written well but it was like 'oh my god this is so gross no one loves each other that much!' I was just a bitch. And I just remember going there that day and she for three tapes worth, which is probably three hours, and it sounds cheesy because it is cheesy but she absolutely changed my life. And we became friends, which I caution against that. And it was a tremendous gift. She was 300 times more powerful than she was in that tape and I still get people asking me about her because that tape was so powerful for people to watch. Her courage, her authenticity and her just ... I don't know it's hard to say. I have a necklace that has her name on it and I wear it everyday to remind me that,
it’s not the story so much but it was the opportunity to meet her. And I got the opportunity to meet her because I tell stories. She reminds you, she reminded me to make everyday intentional. That you have to be intentional in everything you do. Like when you order a sandwich, is that the one you really want? Or tell people how you feel. That’s what her message was she left those messages and videos for her children because that’s how she knew she could be present. So she needed that for herself to let go. But there’s no reason why you and I can’t do that for the people we care about while we’re still here. Being intentional about how you live and love in your life. And it’s a lasting message that I’m so privileged to have. I don’t think many people have that in their lives.

The reason I came about her was a had a friend who has since passed who was the exact same age and had breast cancer and she had two small children ages four and two. She and I were at a Blockbuster when those still existed years ago. She was just sick and we went to go rent movies in St. Paul and we were at the blockbuster and there was a little flyer and it was a benefit for Amy and it had her website and it said she was 32 lived in St. Paul, happily married, stage four cancer. And it was just weird because Kerry my friend had the exact same thing. Kerry was very crass I loved her. She said, ‘that bitch is stealing my thunder.’ So we took the flier and went to her website and at her house made fun of Amy. Within a few days at work they told me you have to have two ideas for a sweeps piece now. So then I went back to the website and it said she was making videos. So they told me to go do it and that’s how I met Amy.

Q: You don’t think storytelling is appropriate for every story. How do you think storytelling is a good method of communication.

29:10-31:05
I think because of what I said previously when you were a little girl your mom and dad read you stories. You got books when you were two or three, everything was presented to you as a story and that’s lodged in your memory. You remember that because it means something to you. Rather than just saying do this. It doesn’t stick with you. I think we are trained as humans to ingest information in story form better than we are just being told something. So for that reason I think as often as we can apply it we should. A lot of these organizations don’t feel that way and that’s perfectly fine. Some people enjoy their news that way. But I think when given the opportunity I think people would enjoy a story to not. And so for that reason I think it’s important to try and do it. Even under time constraints, last night I made sure to write it as a story. Let people tell their story. It’s hypocritical for me to try and tell it. Even in two sound bites, it doesn’t have to be this magical story if you get a good graph and two bites that works. So you do as best as you can everyday and that’s what I try to do. Sometimes I have the opportunity to do more and stretch things out but I do think I try to tell a story as best I can everyday.
Q: Do you look at yourself as the narrator in the story?

31:08-32:20
Yeah in last night's story sure. I don't want to be if I don't have to be. I think it takes certain sound bites to be able to weave a narration for it to make sense. You have to have a lot of sound to let them narrate their own story. But like I also needed to tell you that 1400 donors came forward and two months time and gave 300,000 dollars and 14 people were laid off. I didn't have those sound bites because I had ten minutes with these people so I had to put that in. I could have chose not to and just used their emotional soundbites but then I didn't give you context and I feel like I have to. That's where the news part comes in. I had to put that in there. So that makes it not as narrative. The words did not match the pictures I was telling you.

Q: When you're putting a story together are you thinking of a certain emotion or tone?

32:55-38:15
I think early on in your career if you get the crying soundbite you're going to use it. But do you need to? I don't know. I think you push that early but I think you can convey it in a better way. So many times you're asked or told to go get the family. You know which one it is it's the one that's in the center of tragedy. Those stories specifically, I've come to do pretty well but I can't do it every night. My heart can't take too much. That's also something that comes over time. I think recently I visited with this family who's daughter and three of her classmates were killed in a horrible car crash and they were all college students and they were driving too fast. It was a year later and we did it because the producers wanted to revisit the horror. They didn't talk when it happened but they said they were ready. And I said well we can do it if we say that Minnesota was put up cable barriers, that was a big deal because it's a death trap. So we went there but you don't know. I was thinking about my own family. How would you want them to be treated? What would you say? What would you expect them to say? But if they've already agreed to talk to us then they need to talk and you don't know what they're going to say. In that situation it's a husband and wife it's been a year since their daughter died and they talked for about an hour and a half. You know we talked about the way that she used to walk to the living room window and watched her dad go to work when she was three. And I didn't ask them about that. It's important to him. Those are the memories he has and so you try to honor their loved one the bet that you can. And that can be a narration. They gave me 50 pictures of her too and I can say, 'this is what a father remembers a year after she's gone.' And he tells that story. And maybe that sound bite is 25 seconds long. I don't give a shit. And I tell them that, 'I don't give a shit.' If you want me to go in that living room this is what you're going to get. That's important to him. And that conveys emotion whether he cries or not because anyone that's a parent that watches that... and I remember showing a bite to Boyd and he said, 'Oh my god that bite!' and again he wasn't crying he was telling a story. You could feel it. I said when you think about her do you think about that day? Or do you think about the 18 years
of her life, because I talked to them on the actual day. They kind of spoke over each other a little bit. The mom said I don’t think about that day. And at the same time the dad said how do you not think of that day it’s the one-day that I didn’t protect her. That’s what I live with. Now he doesn’t cry ... but we let it breathe. Even telling that story to you feel it, and as a parent as a father especially. From the day she was born you were told to protect her and you didn’t. Now it’s crazy, like how could you have protected her? But that’s where he’s at. So I think when you get emotion like that and it serves a purpose, I mean that sound bite just really put that there. That’s your story. Did I know that going in to that? I can’t imagine I’ve never been a parent so I can’t say, but that’s what I mean by just seeing where they’re at and just seeing what they want to talk about and that just came out organically. And he obviously felt it. And a few days later the wife called and said that’s the most he’s talked about it in a year. Well good. It’s weird that it’s on tv but he felt like he could share that. So I think emotion comes out naturally and you shouldn’t sensationalize it. And I think a lot of places do that.

Q: Objectivity. Is the storytelling narrative style any more or less objective than straight news?

38:15-40:30
I think a lot of people would say it’s biased or it’s soft and that’s another reason why you need to be really careful. When I feel strongly about something I could be accused of that. And I think other stations wouldn’t run that script last night because it very much was like this place is awesome. I start to use you and we words and I. just telling people that this is important to our community and it’s a good thing that it stayed open and it’s good that it’s here, that’s pretty objective but I did it anyway. But that’s a dangerous place and I guess it depends on the subject matter. In the case of that girl or Amy Taylor are you going to argue with me about it? In the introduction of the story we say yes they were speeding, but this story isn’t about that. We’ve already told you that last year. So yeah but that’s where I think storytelling gets a bit muddier and you have to be careful. And I think the narrative can be important. If you let them say it they can say whatever they want it doesn’t matter. But if I say it that’s different. I think about it all the time. Because that’s where you recheck things. They weren’t on that interview but they’re reading the story. You can try and argue with it and maybe you’re right. But most times you’re just too close to it and that’s why you need other people to read it. But you do and time is an issue.
N. Jeremy Nichols Interview Transcript, February 18, 2013

00:10-1:20
I go out shoot and edit. What may be different from some of the other photographers is I have experience writing my own stories so while the basic job requirements are to go out with a reporter or by yourself to shoot something and later edit it, run the live truck and that kind of stuff, I consider there is more to it than that. I try to think the way he or she is thinking because it’s not about who is going to write it or who’s going to edit it. It’s about making the best story possible. And with certain people the more you do it the better relationship you have. Andy and I in particular, he knows that I have the best interest of the story in mind, not just trying to get cool shots, it’s about trying to make the best product.

01:45-4:15
The best ones, whether you’re with somebody or by yourself is having a plan. You can always reevaluate it when you’re out. Maybe it’s not going the way you thought it would, or maybe it is but you see something even better and you say ’hey ...’ With some people it’s automatic. With Andy and me we will know we need to scrap what we were thinking and start something new. With other people you really have to talk about it and some people are more open to it than others. One of my first jobs I worked in Grand Island Nebraska for a year in a bureau and during the week I would shoot with one of our two reporters and one of the other days I was all by myself and I would do a package and a couple of vosots. So that’s where my background of being able to understand it all comes from. I don’t have to one-man band as much now but for example going to a press conference or doing a nat sound package you’re still by yourself. I think the thought process is the same, what’s the objective? Like the story you guys went on, here’s a place that hasn’t been built yet, what’s the point? Lance has a different personality and different approach than I do but hopefully they know the way of working together. I have my way of doing it but the bottom line is how to tell the story so that your viewers that are watching are either, learning something, feeling something, or whatever it is. Not every story is an educational type story sometimes it’s just a feeling. My wife calls them fluff pieces. I call them human-interest stories. So a lady turned 100 today. It’s not earth shattering from a wide audience standpoint but you watch it and you feel something. Did you feel good, happy, upset? That’s our job to make you feel something.

4:30-5:45
It all goes hand-in-hand but there’s an old theory that you should be able to turn down the volume and still be able to follow the story. I don’t know if that’s 100 percent true but there’s some validity to it. If the pictures or the video doesn’t make any sense to what the story is about or what’s being said then you just wasted an opportunity. That’s what differentiates TV from radio or from reading an article. There are advantages to all of them. You always hear tv people say the newspaper
reporters or web reporters have such an advantage because they don’t have to
stick a camera in peoples face so they’ll tell them things. Well we have the advantage
of, you can actually see it and hear it at the same time. It’s not like ones better than
the other. Some people shoot textbook, wide, medium, tight, or you have to be on the
tripod the whole time, and that’s fine. But anything that allows you to continue to
watch and not think oh that didn’t look right then you’re doing what you’re
supposed to do.

6:00-11:05
He and I talk about it all the time and part of that comes with how you relate to
people. You don’t have a lot of time, depending on the shoot, generally you don’t
have a lot of time to get people to feel comfortable with you. The reporter will
always say, ‘Oh just ignore Jeremy behind the camera there, it’s just you and me.’
There’s no way they can’t know that it’s there, but can you talk to the person like it’s
not there? Can you get them to feel comfortable? I was actually reading something
earlier today by Ray Farkas and he said the further you get the camera away from
your subject you more truth you’ll get. The further way the camera is the more likely
someone is going to be comfortable. So one of the things, if I have the time and
possibility, I will back off. Before we even get to the camera I’ll put a wireless mic on
the person. Try to relate to them in a way. One of the things that’s changed in my life
is a now have a two year old son. And so now when I interview kids I can relate. I
know how to talk to my two year old, he doesn’t really talk much but I know how.
You want people to know that you’re not just the journalist asking question after
question. Then you just back off. Let them interact with the people around them and
then gradually move the camera in closer and closer. Because by then they forget
that they’re wearing the microphone. There are other people who are the opposite
in tv who are thinking the pictures are what make the difference. For me it’s that
microphone and being able to hear because when you talk about the concept of
sequencing I use the microphone as my close-up. If I can hear what’s going on and I
can play it for you, you as the viewer feels close in. Gradually I will move up a little
bit closer to what we’re used to seeing on TV which is more head and shoulders
length shots. But that’s my way of getting them more comfortable and then just me
being me. It all depends on who you’re talking to.

You just did one of the key things. I don’t know if you realized it but you shared a
little bit of you and I think you have to do that when you meet people, whether it’s a
conversation or for work. It doesn’t mean you should talk about yourself the entire
time but the idea is to get them to talk. And if this wasn’t an interview for your
school project I would be asking you questions about you. So if I meet someone,
man, woman, kid whatever, I want to get them comfortable and if that means
sharing something about myself to do that I will. It sounds like trickery but if I can
get them to realize that I’m just a normal person that has the same concerns that
they do then I have a better chance. There’s no guarantee but at least the door’s
open.
11:30-13:45
You mentioned moments already. It’s what makes a moment, it’s what makes anything that you watch special. There are a lot of stations across the country who claim, ‘oh we’re not into storytelling, we’re not into surprises and moments, it’s just, you’ve got a minute to tell the story just give me what I need to know. It’s kind of like this old joke about the definition of irony. It’s kind of like, I know it when I see it. If you watch a story and it’s good you know it was good, if you can remember something about it then they did something right. That’s what storytelling is. It’s not just give me the facts and lead with the most important thing. If you do it correctly and you leave the viewer with something to remember that then means you did something, you did it right. Frankly I don’t know how people are successful in television news without telling good stories.

During my first year in the business I learned who Boyd Huppert was, he’s one of several who I look up to. But I can tell you lines from stories that he did 15 years ago because he stood out to me. I remember the story, I remember the person. Why is that? It’s like irony. I can’t tell you why I remember it, I remember it because it was good. That’s a tough one to try and get across to people. Andy and I have done things that are good and we’ve been recognized by other people who think they are good, but I can’t tell you they think it’s good because of this. I don’t even know why I appreciated it so much.

14:10-15:15
Think of it this way. How many times have you seen a story with a number graphic in it? Or you see a story where somebody cried. It doesn’t matter what the stories are about. What are you more likely to remember? If I rattled off 9%, 12% and 15% and then you see a woman crying, you’re not going to remember what the numbers were because you don’t even know what the numbers were about. You just spent 10 or 15 seconds on a story or a minute and a half. That’s an important amount of time you just wasted on something that no one is going to remember. But you’re going to remember that lady.

15:45-22:10
the big thing is, there are a number of things, but it’s really about focus, structure, who are the people here. If you have an idea of what the story is you can think ahead about how can I tell this? The easiest way is to give a specific example. A couple of years ago I was doing a story about a junior college baseball team. They had a kid on the team who was blind in one eye but he was leading the team in batting averages. This kid was hitting over 400 which means four out of every ten times he was batting he was getting a hit. And he was doing it with only one eye. He was the son of the coach for the Minnesota twins. His dad is the hitting coach so he coached two guys who have lead the major leagues in batting. There’s a bunch of different things here. How am I going to do this? What am I after? I thought about it ahead of time and I thought how am I going to do this. The obvious thing is don’t give the obvious thing right away. You want to keep someone around, you keep building to the
moments and you want your viewer to discover the moments with you. Sometimes you want to hammer them over the head with it so they don’t miss it. But most of the time you want it to happen naturally and you want the person at home to say ‘ooooohh.’ So how am I going to get that? So on the way I’m thinking how am I going to reveal that he’s done all this but he only has one eye? I think to myself, I’ve been to enough baseball games and practices to know these guys always wear Oakley’s or sunglasses when they’re out there. I get there and thank god the kid is wearing Oakley’s and more than half of his teammates are. So I interviewed him. When I’m by myself I usually do more sit-down, standard, one-on-one interviews instead of doing the crazy where’s Waldo interview shots where it’s like where’s the person we’re talking to so I did it a little more normal. So I said to him do me a favor take your sunglasses off. And that’s how I did it in the story. I asked one of his teammates, when you look at him would anyone know that Tanner is different from any of the other guys. The teammate said, ‘you know when his Oakley’s are on you wouldn’t be able to tell.’ So now the question is, ‘be able to tell what?’ I still haven’t given that away. So then my next line was, ‘what about when the sunglasses come off?’ And then Tanner takes his sun glasses off. And then the following sound bite you hear from one of his teammates is, ‘When I found out he was blind I couldn’t believe it.’ So it’s not me telling you, it’s you getting to see it and hear it at the same time. To me that has more impact. Granted I’ve seen it a hundred times but hopefully when someone else watches it they discover it and it doesn’t happen until a good 25 or 30 seconds into the piece and then we’re going to build. It’s like peeling and onion, you want the story to have multiple layers that’s how you keep someone around. In this case you learn he was blind in one eye. Then you learn why he’s blind in one eye. Then you learn not only did he recover from having this terrible thing in one eye, it happened again and that’s why he no longer has an eye. And then you learn he’s leading the team in batting. So in two and a half minutes, if you’re going to get that much time, the more gold coins you have the better the story is going to be. So the long answer to your question is I’m trying to think about all of that stuff before I go out there. So when I’m there I have a plan of how to shoot, but be open to the fact that I’m going to learn something I didn’t know. You have to. I can’t pretend to sit across the table from you right now and be able to tell you exactly your life story without talking to you and learning about you there’s no way. So you have to have a plan but you also have to be open to changing it.

22:55-28:50
What we knew about it was this kid was in our area, and he had this bad disease. We talked to the doctor beforehand. We met him out in the lobby of the hospital. And then we went up there. I introduced myself. Andy was in another room and I happened to be outside the door when Eliafar came in. The plan was to get a mic on him, get a mic on the doctor so that when they meet it’s natural. Not like they’ve already been talking and then you have to try and make it look natural. So when the doctor walks in and sees him, that was natural. That was our plan, to make it be natural. So Andy hadn’t even met Eliafar until the doctor came in and talked to him. So this was a case where structure happened, we talked about it afterward, but we
agreed before this is what we need to do. And I think Andy actually said we should start with the bike, and I’m thinking, the bike is the last thing we shot, I’m thinking you need to build to the bike because that’s the best looking stuff. So what we did, and it’s something I’ve thought about for years how do people come up with their story structure. Or think about movies. How does somebody start in the middle and then go back to the beginning, take it back to the middle and go to the end. Or how do you decide to do that. And this was a case where we thought, Andy’s thinking start with the bike, I’m thinking end with the bike, why don’t we do both. I don’t remember if that was his idea or mine, but I remember the line, if you only knew what it took. I knew who I could hear saying it. Andy is the one who figured out we can still do that and then come back to that. And then in the edit I sort of made it work myself by using the same shots of him strapping his feet in the pedals. Again when you’re watching a story you think typically if you repeat a shot you think, they must have ran out of video but it was done on purpose to bring it back so you understand the reason why. The line even says, now that you know what it took to get to this point, and then you see Eliafar racing down that hallway. I wish I could tell you we planned that whole shoot ahead of time but we didn’t know there was going to be a bike, we didn’t know he was going to be popping soda cans. We just asked how are we going to capture this. The other thing is, the talking just doesn’t happen on the way, it’s happening throughout. I didn’t have a great angle on the therapist so I would say try asking her the same question again. The other thing is on the car ride home, I mean it’s four hours from the twin cities to hear, the first hour after leaving we were talking about this and that’s when it dawned on us, let’s say it this way, or let’s do this. The one thing we do try to talk about, people who are way better than me will think of their opening and closing shots when they’re on the shoot. The ending shot is him and the therapist riding away. What struck me was it was in a children’s hospital and a lot of children’s hospitals have this stuff to make them feel like they’re not stuck in a hospital. Well the hall at the end of the hallway looks like a park. It’s painted with trees and everything. All I could think of was a kid riding off into the sunset. I said to Andy, I don’t care how you do it but this is the close. That was actually decided when we were there. He saw it when I was shooting it and he said, ‘Ok, I have to get the PR lady out of the way. Move her out of the hallway.’ He’s smart enough to be paying attention. That’s something we learned from some of these other people and you’ll experience it if you shoot with other people or if you’re the reporter. You can tell who’s paying attention and who’s just talking to the PR person. I need to think like him, and I need him to think like me.

29:00
The other thing we’ve learned from ourselves and from other people is you don’t have to be satisfied with the first written version of the story. I’m thinking, I’m not the greatest writer in the world but I don’t know what he’s struggling with because we talked about all of this. But there wasn’t enough emotion or humanity to it and I said to him, Andy it’s good but I feel like we’re missing who Eliafar is. It’s like the light bulb went off and he said now I know what I’m doing. He went back and he wrote what we ended up with.
30:00-32:30
The concept of staging, that’s been going on for years. I’ve heard people say well the whole concept of setting up lights and going an interview is staging. That’s a tough one to answer for anybody. It’s what do you feel is right or wrong. I don’t think asking a guy to take his glasses off, personally, I don’t think it’s staging. It’s like if someone had surgery and the scar is on the side of their ribs saying he show me what happened, of course they’re going to lift up the side of their shirt. That’s not staging, that’s just telling them. I could have physically said, if someone was really technical I could have said Tanner show me your eye, it could have been the same thing but in this case it was more casual. Staging in general, we’ll all hear the argument that it’s bad because it’s not real. But there are shades of grey that some people will debate over. I think if you’re doing something with the intent of manipulating the situation then that should be your guide that it’s probably not right. If there is no intent to alter anything then it’s generally ok.

33:00-35:15
The classic 60 minutes shot is ‘Dr. So-in-so is researching...’ and what do you see? A video of the doctor walking down the hall. That’s ridiculous. Could you at least see if the guy had a lab and could he go in and do something? Its tough because everything is situational. That day we had the amount of time he was in his therapy session, we also had the PR person from the hospital, and we knew we were going to be on a time schedule so we knew we had to maximize our time. There are times when you only get five minutes. So what are you going to do? The people who will claim it’s staging if you have the doctor walk down the hall, if you only have five minutes and you’re in the television business, and you have another thing to get to or you have a deadline you do what is ethically and morally acceptable to you and in general with the time you have. 60 Minutes, I have a hard time imagining they only had 5 minutes with that guy, so if the best thing they can come up with is him walking down the hallway then that’s that. The other classic is typing on the computer. You have to ask, ‘is this the best we can do?’ I’m not a big fan of using two shots with the reporter and the subject, I think it’s kind of lazy usually but I’d rather see that than see a guy hammering away at a fake email. And when they say, ‘we can have somebody pretend to call me and I’ll answer the phone,’ no I don’t want any of that. I don’t even want to hear the word pretend because that implies that I’m leading you to that.

35:30-36:00
Ask them what they have to do. If it’s that doctor, I’ll accept them on their computer if they have legitimate work to do. If it’s an email to their fiancé or going over the grocery list or if they actually have patient notes to look at, as long as they’re doing something that they would actually be doing then I’m ok with it. And I don’t have to show a close up of the screen when it says ‘Dear Julie what do you want for dinner tonight?’ As long as they’re doing something they would actually do. If they’re answering their phone because it was an actual phone call then that’s fine with me. I
do not want the receptionist to ring up the phone so it sounds like Dr. Jones was answering the phone.

36:20-41:30
Time, experience, age whatever you want to call it I know it’s ridiculous. You have to be smarter and more creative than that. This is where thought and planning comes in. Don’t ever settle for something because that’s the way that someone else has always done it. Don’t do it because that’s the way your station has always done it. Sometimes you do have to fall back and rely on things you know. But at least try to take it further. The viewers at home only know what they’re going to see on TV. There’s an old saying, unless you’re going to go ahead and all every viewer and explain what you went through that day, you can’t make an excuse for what goes on the air that night. It sounds tough but it’s the truth. Give it your best effort. If having the doctor walk down the hall is the best you can do in those five minutes then so be it. The doctor we interview had tons of time. He made time for us because he knew we were driving up from Madison and he knew that any kind of success with a kid like Eliafar could mean for his program. And even though he probably had another appointment to get to and he probably needed to get there quickly he knew this was something he needed to do. And when you watch it you can’t tell that he had limited time. He looks like he’s spending time with the kid and we did our best to make it look that way by not letting them see each other ahead of time. And that’s another thing, what do you do when somebody says something and you didn’t have the camera on them and you think that would be a fantastic bite. You can’t say, say that again. But you can act like you didn’t hear it. What was that? It’s incredible. People will say the exact same thing because they think you didn’t hear them. People probably think I’m deaf when we’re out on a story. Because in order to make things natural and in the moment you have to get your other close ups and cutaways while things are happening. You don’t want to miss every sound bite. But one of the things he and I try to do and it’s one of the things you’ll see when you watch other people way better than me is they’ll do what we call active interviews. We call them interviews but we want the person do be doing whatever they would already be doing. The best example is of somebody painting a wall. Have them keep painting the wall. Don’t have them stop painting the wall. We might chat and I might ask them a few things but keep painting. Don’t have them paint, paint, paint and then turn to me. So as the photographer you have to be cognizant of when to get the sound bite, when to get the close up of the paint brush, when to move the camera and the tripod and the reporter needs to be cognizant of where is the camera pointing. Do I need to ask the guy a question again when you can tell the photographer is getting a close-up? If the guy happens to say something while we’re getting a close-up, this is where working as a team comes in; the reporter needs to say what was that? And if the reporter doesn’t do it, this happens a lot with me, I’ll do it. It gives me a chance to get back to the face and then they’ll say it again. I brought that all up because we don’t get second chances. I shot sports for many years and you don’t get a second chance at the game winning score. There is that mentality that you have to get it the first time, but in situations like that you can still
try to get it again by doing it in a natural way. Staging the broll is not natural. There is some broll that you can stage because there is nothing ethical being broken. You’re not hurting anybody you’re not changing the truth.

41:45-42:30
The story we were telling you about that we shot last week about beer. After we did the interview with the brew master and got him walking around the brewery with Andy, we went into the little bar area and I set up a light and I had one of the guys pour a beer into the glass. Just to make it so it looked nice so we could showcase the different types of beer or whatever. Now how technical do you want to be? Is that staging? Sure it’s staging. I set my light up where I wanted it and I said ok go ahead hit the tap, pour it out, get another one. Yeah it’s staging. It’s not going to hurt anyone. The beer is still the same; we didn’t change the content of it.

42:55
You have to have that in yourself to know what people could take from this. Because if you are getting something that may not be right you have to evaluate what you said or how you may have said it. One of the big ones is the choice of words. It’s a reporter or producer thing to not say the same thing twice. Generally you don’t want to say he or she twenty times in the same sentence. But for example the choice to use the word police, or cop, or arrested, busted, perp, if you use one of those it has a different meaning than it does one of the others. Sexual assault, rape, yes to varying degrees they might mean the same thing but how are you applying it? Are you applying it in a way that you’re telling the viewer whether this person is good or bad? If you’re doing that that’s a part where your moral compass needs to say, I know it may sound more creative but I need to go with the safe one.
How are we going to a path for the story. How am I going to share this information? It’s kind of like a tour. How are we going to start the tour? Like when you go to a museum it’s like here’s...
the timeline, do we want to start at the beginning and progress? Or is it like hey look at this now and let me show you how we got here and then let’s bring it back. There are a million ways to tell it and I don’t know that any are wrong or right.

08:05-10:45
There is a feeling of ... you can be kind of robotic in a way that when you’re going out on a story you’re saying OK I need to find some really good nats and I need to find a character and I need to find someone people can relate to not some official. But I don’t know how specific that is to narrative. It depends on whether you’re talking about narrative in terms of story structure or are you delineating that from having a story that is humanized. Some of that can be the same. I think that you can have a humanized story that’s not necessarily some great artistic narrative. But you rarely have a great narrative that doesn’t have a compelling character with it. And even if that’s personifying an object, it can be a box it can be an item it can be an object so you end up humanizing some inanimate object. Sometimes it gets flowery when you think about making it mushy. But I don’t think narrative has to be... you think about it more in features but it’s in investigative work it’s in hard news. It could be major investigative work that has some element of the narrative but I don’t know if I answered your question. How am I using it? You kind of have a formula you say I need all of these elements let’s get on the phone and call somebody and not just have me standing somewhere saying something you can get someone else to say it. They say it better than a reporter usually.

11:05-15:30
The basic formula for that or my process is I go out and interview folks. I will come back and listen to the interview usually when I’m ingesting into a system or whatever the case and you pick out your bites. You sometimes in the grand scheme of things, and this is all textbook type stuff, but you think of a focus you think of some theme you think of something that you can hit on. Maybe a concise three words that will say this is the focus of my story and that will help you pick out the bites that are relevant or not. Because today we talked to that guy for a half hour and he’s going to make a gazillion interesting comments but when you pick out your focus you say this is a really interesting comment but does it apply to the story we’re telling? Leave that on the cutting room floor if it doesn’t. Usually I will pick out the bites and then write around them in a way that flows. When we were out there today, if you have a standup it usually forces you when you’re out there to sort of think about what’s the middle of your story? I rarely have anything like that at the beginning or the end because if the best thing I can show you at the beginning or the end of the story is me then I don’t feel like it’s a very visual story. That’s sort of the process for me. Think of a focus, listen to the bites, pick out the bites, write around them. With some of these longer pieces when you actually have time to think about it and you’re not in a frantic rush to get it together... I mean somedays you hit a homerun and some days you’re happy to get on base... I didn’t strike out! You can really start to think about how to structure it, where to get emotional aspects to it and the reason I say that is because if your goal is for people to remember what you
I remember being in grad school and all this quantitative research that gauged memory and it talked about if there was anything that ever gave you a big emotional response you are more likely to remember what comes directly after that then whatever was right before it. So if you’re about to hit something that is going to be disgust, it can be laughter, it can be whatever else, you’re not going to put something really important right in front of that because the way your brain works is whenever you feel something you really start to pay attention, and an hour or a day later you’re more likely to remember what happened right after that then what happened just before it. But that’s if you really have time to sit here and think about how to do it. Most of the time it’s just oh I did that and that worked and it happened to be that way but I was just writing it and trying to get it on the air.

15:30-17:30
I don’t know that there’s that much of a difference. I don’t know. So with the inverted pyramid style as far as keeping you from beginning to end. That completely depends. If you’re using the inverted pyramid you have to figure out what’s going at the beginning, what is the most important thing? People may not finish my story so there’s some news judgment in that you have to decide what to put at the front. So the objectivity is still in the eye of the beholder or the journalist or whatever else. I don’t know that one is more or less objective as a tool. Is a hammer more objective than a chisel? I don’t know you’re swinging it. There’s a terrible analogy for you. But one thing with that though is if you’re going to have an emotional attachment... and I’m just thinking off the top of my head, if you’re attaching something emotional to one side of the story and usually it’s a central character I can see how someone would say well they were totally sympathetic to one person.

18:00-23:00
Yes it is. The analogy that I’ve used about what you are as a journalist as far as anything is that, and this is because my beloved wife is a teacher, but you really are like a teacher. Everyday you have to have a lesson for folks and you’re trying to teach them about something. And what you’re trying to do is you’re rushing out to learn as much as you can about something and then tell them what you learned. So if the object is to teach them then you want the person to retain the information. First you want them to notice it and get their attention and then you want them to retain the information and then you want them to recall what you told them. That’s what you’re trying to do when you teach anyone anything. And if there is clear quantitative research that shows people are more likely to remember something if there is an emotional attachment or an emotional response you’re going to remember it more if... and a lot of that research on emotional stuff goes into advertising. What do you remember about advertising, be it the way a smoking ad made you feel or the Clydesdales. Emotional responses are memorable. I’ve heard a few people use the example of going back to teaching, if you were ever in class as a kindergartener, and you got a question wrong the embarrassment you felt. You’re at the spelling bee you misspelled the word, you had to read in front of the class and
you messed up... whatever it was... twenty years later you can’t remember what
the word was you can’t remember the question that you got wrong... but you can
remember what it felt like to get it wrong. I think that there’s value in attaching
emotion to things but I think people will attach a lot of their own emotion to it. If
you show a drug addict crying about something terrible some people are going to
feel sympathy some people are going to feel anger. You can’t dictate where you’re
trying to take someone emotionally. They’re going to look at the same thing and
perceive it from their own frame of reference. And a side bar to that is one of the
things I remember Greeley Kyle talking about to this day I think about is if I ever
think about using music, the way people attach memories to music and it’s almost
like a chronology of thoughts... music becomes a soundtrack to peoples lives and if
you think about including a song you might take the person who’s watching it
somewhere that you didn’t mean to. They’re going to hear that music and they’re
not going to think of the context you were using they’re going to take it somewhere
else. It can backfire it can work against you. I don’t know if you can really control the
emotion you are going to get. And I know that because everyday I get emails of
people saying oh I loved that and other people saying you suck.

23:30-25:00
They love that work they love those kinds of stories. It’s very much part of what we
do. It’s also welcomed a lot in newscasts. We had a whole separate show and
department called the heartland department. With that gone they talk about ‘oh
that’s reminiscent of the heartland series that’s great.’ That was major storytelling to
the point that they would actually go around and find old folklore stories and
recreate them. The oral traditions and heritage with the point being they are very
much in support of it. The journalists that have come to WBIR came to WBIR
because they want to be able to tell those kinds of stories. They want to go
somewhere that supports that and it keeps feeding itself. It attracts people that want
to do that kind of work and they support it.

25:45-28:30
I have not been working long enough to see those cycles. If you’ve been working in
something for thirty years you see any time of cyclical thing. One example of the
cyclical thing I’ve seen change is an emphasis on story count. I’ve heard we want to
get a whole lot of stories in touch on as much as we can. Two years later four years
later someone comes in and says the viewers don’t care about story count they want
more depth in each story. And in four more years I expect people to say you know
what they really want is something different. I think the bigger issue as far as the
economic thing can effect it is if you have fewer resources to feed the daily beast and
cover all of the daily stories people need to know about then no. it’s not that that
stuff isn’t worth while its just when you downsize and you don’t have as many
people you don’t have as much time to say hey jim go make us a beautiful story and
you don’t even need to have anything today. Go and just shoot today and then we’re
going to give you another day to just sit down and write and edit this and then write
a really good web story to go with it that can go into much more detail. That’s where
I've seen it and not just economically if you have turnover and it's like ok two people left and we need to fill their positions but we're interviewing people and we're shorthanded, jim you're not doing this franchise this month until we can hire more staff we really need you to cover daily news because we just don't have enough people. Anything that will affect how many people you have.

28:30
We did not have a morning show reporter. I took that job because it got me off of weekends. Then you're going to work at 4 in the morning. Because I was working an odd shift and they gave me an odd schedule. I worked 4 ten hour days and then only worked 3 hours on Friday just to have a reporter there in case something major happened. Point being they said some days he's going to be slammed some days there won't really be anything easy to turn before his shift is over. What they basically did is they looked around to see what the other morning reporters at Gannet were doing to give them sort of an idea of how can we use a morning reporter. Some dude down in Tampa was doing a Franchise 'Why do they call it that.' They started having me do that and I did it once a week. I would shoot it all one day and then write and edit the next day.

30:00-34:20
For me no I don't have a whole lot of disadvantages but I also, and I don't say this with arrogance, but I probably am a better shooter than a reporter. I know how to shoot and I enjoy doing that. That's the creative outlet of it. It's art to a certain extent. Anyway the only disadvantage is if there is any kind of shot that you can't do with one person. I typically don't do a whole lot of hey let's look at me on camera. For this type of story especially you would much rather be looking at this than looking at me talking to the guy. You don't need to see me. If that's an anchor you get into branding and all that stuff. But I also do things that one-man bands should not do. Like when I did not have a GoPro I would bungee cord the camera to the hood of a car. I've had my old news director say... well how did you...? Never mind I don't want to know how you got that shot. I know that you're putting the gear at risk. I've done that for stories where people were salting roads. But again it's not been a disadvantage to me because in part because I put all of my gear at risk. Doing things where you would want to have a photog with you whom is himself hanging out the window with the camera and he's paying attention he's not also steering the vehicle around a curb like I have done.

34:30
Why would it be any different for television as opposed to a magazine or a non-fiction book or an NPR piece or whatever else? You know what would help me out is an example of something that is not narrative. You're basically defining it as something that's a longer piece? Something that is humanized? Yes I think it's important I believe it I believe it creates an emotional attachment, if you can show someone that is involved and show how it really impacts people and how it affects them away from that setting because emotional baggage comes along with anything.
I can talk to you about all of the amputees and all of that kind of stuff... but if I can show you guy who is actually dealing with it, how it inhibits them and how they have overcome and then use that show and then broaden out that’s the whole pregnant eye thing and then you say he is not alone. That is the formula of all formulas it’s like, ‘meet Joe and this is what Joe’s doing and Joe’s not alone and this is how it affects everyone other than Joe and let’s end the story by going back to Joe.’ That is the X+Y=Z. I think I would agree with that. I think about media ethics stuff, are you doing a disservice to someone pretending to be the detached eye in the sky with no emotional involvement in anything.
At KMGH in Denver we have an investigative team and that consists right now of two reporters, two producers an a photographer editor. We work on long term and short term projects. Most of what I do is more public policy more looking at systems more looking at issues that are kind of broader issues. We do short term stories as well or for instance when there’s a huge crisis story, for instance the Aurora theater shooting, I was involved with that from the first morning and essentially moved everything because it had all of the elements that we needed to find out. Where did this person come from, his mental background, how was he missed? All of those things we investigated and we continue to investigate and break more and more stories on it. So that’s like what you might call topical issues that we do. We also do topical issues like the gun debate; I would do specific stories dealing around the gun debate. Because it was an issue that people are very, very interested in. As you probably know Colorado, there have been a number of gun bills, which may or may not be worthwhile depending on what happens nationally. So we do those topical things and we do long term things and we get into different issues and you can see the long term issues we deal with, child welfare, the air force academy, military, mental health system, so we deal with those larger issues. A lot of times like the child welfare story it began with a topical story. We started looking into that story because of the horrific death of a child and then it got us into the systemic issues. What I’m always looking for is essentially a porthole through which I can look at the horizon through which I can see the much broader systemic and public policy issues and that’s where narrative comes in. it’s actually the basis of what we do in investigations.

In any story there has to be a character. You’re basically making a small movie. If you’re really talking about narrative you need a character to carry this point or to illustrate that point. So you’re always looking for a character in that story. Who is the person with who the audience will identify and say I get it. And I think if you look at any of the major investigations we’ve done, Beth Davis was the main character in the original story we did about the Air Force academy. A woman who was incredibly strong, incredibly terrific and wonderful person who was basically drummed out of the air force academy because she reported a sexual assault. And she became the character who everyone in the audience could identify whether it was a center arms services committee member or someone at the pentagon or whatever, she was the character that started this and the person people identified with and then there became in each story there became other characters, the same way with the issues involving the mental health system. The families became the characters that everyone could identify with in terms of the horror of what had happened. Same with the case of the parents of children that had died in the human services system, so that essentially is what I always look for in a story. Occasionally
you’ll do a numbers story where you’ll actually say to people you paid for this. Here’s this budget where the public school system wants to raise property taxes to pay for... Well then we start looking at the district and how they spend their money. We’ll it might not be a big part of the budget but we might say this is really playing towards the mentality here. This is how they’re using your money in this way. You might not have a character to tell that story than the characters that sit down and explain to you why they’re spending your money this way and generally look foolish. But narrative plays a role in that too but that’s more of a numbers game.

06:00-07:30
I see narrative or storytelling as one of the most basic human interactions. People talk about the water cooler or when you’re a kid in grade school you’re telling stories. What happened today? You’re telling your parents or telling other kids what happened. You’re peaking people’s interest through storytelling. So I mean you can go through the spectrum, politics, religion, biblical storytelling through parables, its’ the basis of human interaction and human communication. For me it was very normal. How do you illustrate something? Well you have to tell a story about it. We all do that with examples. Somebody doesn’t understand what you’re talking about... how do you get a point across? Well you tell a story about it. And so I think that’s just kind of basic interaction.

07:45-10:25
As I said I think there are those number stories. But if you don’t have a human face on a story then it usually is more difficult for people to identify and understand it. I’m always looking for the character. I have a stack of folders right now that have potential stories and the question is kind I find a character to illustrate this point or to look at this particular story. To give you an example you go to a database, we do a lot of database work, so we start looking at databases. You go to a database and you can find through a code, here are accidents resulting in death and you look at that and say gosh look at all of these people who are still driving and they only have a four point violation, they’re still driving and they actually killed someone. You could do that as a numbers story but what you’re really talking about is a tragedy of what’s happened and how do you get people to identify it. I don’t really look at stories in any other context than to say is there a character who can help illustrate this story. Again with the ‘you paid for it,’ or the political stories on is this ad true or not. Those stories don’t really lend themselves to the narrative. But I don’t really know any other story, even in a daily story, an accident story, if you’re going to find a character to talk to you about it or that plays out what happened. I mean most of the time local reporters don’t have a lot of time on an accident story to go back and get background so a lot of times in a breaking news situation that doesn’t lend itself because of the time. But other than that most of the time I’m looking for characters.

10:45-10:55
It’s all them. As much as I can I try to stay out of the way of people telling a story. At least that’s my style.
11:00-12:30
How would you tell that story without a character? I don’t know how to tell stories without characters and without narrative. Now that’s not to say that every story I tell is a great narrative but to me that’s the basis of it. We’re telling stories. So when we say ‘I have a good story,’ that entails and demands well tell me that story. Just tell me a story. The people that I worked with earlier in my career these guys were great producers, they were great storytellers, and they were great narrators. So you’re always looking for a character and a narrative around that character that can illustrate whatever. I think in human interaction that’s an expectation that we have.

12:40-15:55
You’re also looking for tension. Just like in the careless driving story there’s great tension in that that people aren’t listening. People don’t understand the impact of what this law was doing. The tensions in terms of you don’t understand the seriousness in the broader aggregate. And often times that’s what can happen in a narrative story, you can’t lose the aggregate. Some people do that you tell the story and it has great characters but what’s the broader issue? So again with the porthole idea I’m looking for characters and that element of that story that broadens it. A lot of people will use narrative to tell an individual story. But what’s the broader context of this story? What’s the broader lesson? What’s the broader public policy issue? What’s the broader implication? You can do great storytelling but that I think is what separates features, or daily stories from investigations. Here’s a woman who called me and said the woman who killed my husband is still driving. And I said well I couldn’t follow her around. She just kept saying would you look into it. She was persistent and she was just a really wonderful sincere person so I told her I’d look into it. So the girl, low and behold, she is driving, she got a four point violation, she killed somebody. So that’s when I went ok she was charged with careless driving resulting in death. So that’s when you have a character, now you have a story, but what’s the broader implication? Boom database. So we go to the database for that infraction we found 500 of these people and all of the sudden there’s the horizon, there’s the broader picture. Now we have a story where we can say this is one of hundreds of cases where people have died and they’re still on the road. So that’s what became the big story. But if you were just doing the story on the music teacher, well that’s a feature. Well that’s a nice story and it’s a great narrative but that’s not an investigation. But both are narratives.

16:00-16:45
Well it can work either way. Someone might have tipped me to a story. Let’s say someone from Motor Vehicle called me and said this is just outrageous all these people are still driving. If I started with that and said wow look at all of these people where are these people? Then I would start looking for cases and then say what’s been the impact on people’s lives? It can go either way but you’re still looking for a character you’re still looking for a vehicle to transport people into a piece and really understand it.
The air force academy sexual assault was one of the most difficult to do. It was really difficult. It was difficult emotionally for me to do it, it was difficult to connect with people who had been so egregiously harmed and were then emotionally and physically damaged and then no one cared. It was a very difficult group of people to identify and then to approach. Essentially in that investigation when we got a woman who called us and said I’m getting kicked out of the air force academy. I was raped two years ago and I’m getting kicked out. Finally she agreed to meet with us and we met her and met with another woman with her who said she was also sexually assaulted. Initially we believed them but at the time we thought how do we prove this? How do you do this? We just can’t.... I was actually just stuck for a couple of days. And then after a couple of days it struck me we don’t have to prove this. All we have to show is what the air force did when they reported it. It’s the system. It’s understanding the system. So the way we went about that was we talked to these two women and they talked about people who had left abruptly and they heard some rumors about this person or that person. All of the appointments to the air force academy are public. So we got a current yearbook and then got the year before. So we had four years and identified all of those appointments all of the people who were accepted and all fo the people in school. There were 6000 so basically we identified them. Got the women and then looked at presently who was not there. And then we began asking do you remember this woman? So basically then we made some calls and found out other people had left. We weeded it down to six women who would have been most likely to leave because of this. So we had these six women we decided to start with. We had other people we could have called but these women had left so abruptly no one knew why, etc. so we did database searches and found people who had air force academy addresses and then started there. The question was there were four guys in our unit so the question was how do we do this? One of the guys said well maybe we should have a woman do this. But I said let me try. So we’re in a closed in area and I made the call. But before I did I went to the town, I found rape crisis centers. There were three of them I familiarized myself with the town and I knew where they were. So anyways I called this woman and I said is this Ruth and she said yes and I said my name is John Ferrugia are you by any chance online right now. I said well here’s who I am look me up here’s what I’m doing. I’m in Colorado I said we’re looking into issues at the air force academy I know it has probably nothing to do with you but we’re looking at situations where women left the academy after being assaulted. Again it probably has nothing to do with you.... She said assaulted? I said yes women who have been sexually assaulted at the academy. We’ve been hearing about issues of people who have left and not been treated well. I had just wondered if you had heard of anything like this. There was a silence, and then she started crying, and then she started sobbing and then she was almost hysterical. I said look Ruth let me call you back and she said no, no, no. She really got hysterical. This went on for like three or four minutes. I kept saying Ruth let me call you back I’m so sorry. Finally I said Ruth look have you told anyone about this? She said no I’m so ashamed take a deep breath. Finally I said
Ruth listen to me, listen have you talked to anyone about this. I said Ruth I want to tell you a story. I said look let’s say you’re walking down the street and you’re ready to cross the street and some guy pulls up and gets out of his car and he reaches into his truck and grabs a tire iron and he starts beating you. He starts hitting you he breaks your nose and he tears your ear and he cuts your head and then he just walks away and leaves you laying there. I said do you understand? So someone takes you to the hospital and takes care of you. And you’re in a wheelchair and you come out and I see you. And I say if I see you are you going to be ashamed and she said no. I said well that’s what’s happened. I said, I just can’t see it and other people can’t see it. You have a lot of things that are hurting I don’t want to hurt you anymore but I don’t know how to do that. And she said yeah. And that’s where it started.

28:30-31:15
You would never prove it without the narrative. It has no impact without the narrative. The fact that no cadet was never convicted of sexual assault on another cadet in all of the time... there is no statistic. So what you had to do is you didn’t have to prove that someone was raped for sexually assaulted. What you had to prove was what the air force did after it was reported. It was a systematic acceptance of rape and sexual assault and that the officers at the air force then saw these women as damaged goods and said get them out. When they reported, they were investigated. They were investigated, they were drummed out, and that’s what you had to prove. I couldn’t prove whether Ruth was sexually assaulted. What I could prove was when she reported it here’s what happened. So without the narrative you couldn’t have done the story. And without telling her story or illustrating for her what had happened to her in context of ... I’m not a rape counselor but the issue was it made her understand that this was not a shameful issue. It made her understand that this was someone who had assaulted her as they would with a tire arm. That is there were no more stigmas to this than someone who had beaten her. This was not something she did or accepted, it was about her being bludgeoned. So once she understood my sensibility about that through that narrative then it gave her understanding that oh he’s not judging me this isn’t about me this is about the people that hurt me. I think that narrative itself hurt her. Eventually 63 women came forward. I repeated that exercise 8 times.

31:45-35:05
The thing that I noted at Mizzou that was very concerning to me is that people are emailing public officials or emailing a public information officer or emailing and there’s no human contact. And the reason that wont work is because you will never cultivate a source via email. You will never cultivate a source by tweeting someone. People email me anonymously but the goal is always a meeting. Because it’s only in a meeting that you’ll cultivate a long-term source or get the narrative you need or find the character. You’re never going to find a character by tweeting them and never meeting them anymore than you can get a date with someone because we’ve seen how that turns out. The idea is the connection the idea is the personal
connection. You get information through a personal connection and you have to cultivate that, picking up the phone for people now is we don’t do that. No, no, no you have to have that conversation. Now you don’t have to in any other part of your life if you don’t want to but we’ve seen what happens in relationships and that you can have these kinds of digital relationships that generally don’t turn out well. Well I can tell you your career as a journalist will not turn out well if you think you can have digital connections in lieu of personal connections. It’s not going to happen because you will not be able to get the character get the character and form the relationships that will continue to give you new relationships and new stories. People have friends and you know you can have an ongoing digital relationship, but without the human interaction you’re not going to have much of a relationship.

35:30-37:55
Narrative has always been important, now it’s how viewers discriminate in terms of what to watch. For us our unit, when our unit has a story on the air it is destination television for many people. When you look at demographics in television 18-65 you have these layers with gender and age but whatever ratings or research you look at there is across those layers the news viewers. Younger will be fewer, older will be more. How wide is it? Depending on how you can connect with those news viewers. They don’t know oh that was a jump cut or there was a flash frame but there is a level of expectation of production and a level of expectation of storytelling that they can’t define but they know it. They will talk about that story. They can’t tell you, oh the narrative was written in this way or what the character was etc, but they know that story. But discriminating news viewers and documentary viewers, but I think its all the more important narrative storytelling.

38:15-40:05
No I think one is more sterile, but that doesn’t have to do with objectivity. To tell the human impact of careless driving resulting in death is very objective. Let’s say in the 500 cases could I find a guy who hated his father and was happy he’s dead? Well maybe but does that make it any more or less objective? Well no because objectively people who die in car accidents are mourned by their families. It’s not a public value for people to die in car accidents so objectively to tell that story with family members yeah it’s very objective. It tells you the impact, the human toll that is being taken by these drivers and so conversely they’re not being held accountable to the level of gravity of this death. So that’s really the point. So let’s say he robbed a 7/11 and killed someone well that’s a four-point violation. So what that means in this state you’re going to get a year in jail for that. It just doesn’t meet the criteria, the reasonable person criteria that is just or fair. And that’s what this is really about its about fairness it’s about justice in the public domain.

40:20-42:30
it is. If you said to me for the next month you cannot tell a story using a character or using the narrative I’d say ok why are we putting it on TV? Why does anyone care about it? You can go and get statistics but if you don’t humanize statistics... I can find
other statistics to fight those statistics. It’s like going into court on a workers comp thing and say this doctor’s opinion is this this doctors opinion is that and nobody is focused on what happened to the individual. It all comes to a higher level or lower level... if we can move the spotlight away from what actually happened and argue about the process. We do process stories sometimes but also in the narrative sense. I think the best example is what we were talking about with the careless driving. You could have done a feature about the guy and it’s a good narrative but you can take that same narrative style and you can bring an investigation into a broader issue into that. Into the same narrative style into that. I mean the feature would have been a picture on the wall. It’s a tragic picture on the wall, terrible for the family etc. Where as this as a porthole where you say wait a minute here’s this tragic situation what does this mean? Holy cow look at what it means! That’s the narrative.

43:00
I think probably what happens when you get out of school is you’re doing stories like here they come there they go. That’s what you’re doing. There was a traffic accident a shooting whatever it is... it takes more, the real question is what else do you do? I tell people who come and talk to me about jobs and talk to me ... the way I got off weekends when I got out of journalism school was I made myself indispensible. Because I went out on my own after that accident or after that kid was killed and I went in and looked at the situation from as many different perspectives as I could. After that was all finished and I talked to the neighbors... if things don’t work out work harder and they will. What you have to say to someone who is starting out is you have to work your way out of that. You have to prove to yourself that you can do it.
00:05-01:30
I’m a general assignment reporter is pretty much my regular title. I was hired as a backpack journalist, which I still do one man band maybe one or two times throughout the week and then the other times I work with a photographer. So I primarily report for our 9 and 10 newscasts Sunday – Wednesday and then Thursday I will report for one of the early evening shows 4, 5 or 6 or I will be working on our Storytellers segment. It’s a weekly segment that air Sunday nights in our 10pm newscasts in the D-block. I manage the entire segment which includes helping reporters set up stories, getting stuff on the air, creating the graphics for it, the look for it and making sure we’re schedule and have stories set up. So that takes up a lot of time actually because the stories are somewhere between 3 and 4 minutes compared to a one minute twenty package. So making sure reporters have those in on time is really important because our Sunday night newscast is our highest rated newscast. And on top of that I report for our Storytellers segment. So that’s pretty much it. I go from reporting on marriage equality to spot news, breaking news, I was one of the first reporters on the scene at the Aurora theater shooting so it really runs the gamut of what I cover.

01:40-04:20
I had always wanted to be a reporter and I didn’t know about storytelling until I was a senior in high school and my hometown station in Utica, NY is WKTV the NBC affiliate and I wanted to do a shadow program while I was in high school there. And so they let me do that and while I was there I was shadowing a reporter who at one point had interned at KARE11 news in Minneapolis that is our sister station. I was shadowing this reporter and he said if you want to see really good reporting you got to check out this station KARE in Minneapolis because they do what’s known as storytelling. And I had never heard of storytelling reporting before. Well anyways he had a DVD of stories from KARE and I was like oh my god this is TV news? And he said absolutely this is how it should be done. And I watched the stories and it was by the reporters Ken Speak and Boyd Huppert. Boyd is still at KARE and he’s probably one of the best, if not the best storyteller out there. He and Ken Speak, and Ken retired years back, I had the opportunity to meet him over the summer during a conference on storytelling, but what really captured my attention was the attention to detail that the reporters had looked at, and not only describing it, but also describing it in a way that was memorable. For instance there was this story that Ken Speak had done and to this day I still remember it and to this day I still remember it and I think that says a lot about the way the story was put together. It was about these soldiers and taking off and I’ll never forget that end shot because the end shot was a plane taking off in the field and it’s wings tilted to the side, looking as though the wings were waving and his last line was and they waved goodbye the only way they knew how to. And I’ll never forget that line and I’ll never
forget that picture and I think that’s what storytelling really does it allows the viewer to remember and to never forget that emotion and the attention to detail.

04:30-06:45
Narrative storytelling if I had to guess as to how I would define it would be something along the lines of you’re telling a story that would otherwise in a sense be very generic but you’re using simple theories and ways of putting together pieces that we have learned since we were children. We had always heard about really interesting stories as kids and I think we were fascinated when our parents would read us a story about once upon a time. I think when you take those techniques and you use them in your everyday reporting and newsgathering I think that that really to me defines what narrative storytelling would be. We can go along and say, no that you would do this with a spot news piece but you can use the once upon a time technique with different stories. That’s the thing that you want though with stories. Boyd’s Huppert put it best when he described storytelling as an onion and you’re peeling back layers and every ten seconds or so you want a different surprise with every one of those layers. And I think that really keeps the viewers in tune. I really think that the key to saving local news and national news, because viewership is at an all time low, is to really focus on better storytelling. My parents for instance don’t understand TV news one bit but when I show them a piece that’s on CNN or a local station back home they’ll watch it and I’ll ask them why do you not watch the news anymore? Why do you turn away? They say because this is boring, it’s still it’s boring and it doesn’t keep our attention. I think with storytelling you can take a story that would not be interesting to anybody and you can make it interesting to anyone. I think that’s what really storytelling does.

07:10-08:30
Absolutely I think the thing is you leave the general facts up to the anchor. You put all of the general facts in the anchor intro. You tell them the boring stuff that most reporters tie up in their package that the anchor already said. You give them the a, b, c, details and then you let the reporter focus on the story. The actual story itself. For example it was the one-year anniversary of a wildfire that swept across the eastern plains and swallowed up like 30,000 acres and destroyed three homes. We did an update on it because its fire season again, it’s very dry out there and people are concerned on the eastern plains. So in the anchor intro we talked about the details about how dry it is, the percentage of how dry it is in Colorado, the one-year anniversary and then Kevin Sullivan and I we focused on the story itself, which was this lady who lost her home. She was 97 years old and we did an update on her and what she’s doing now and how a wildfire can really affect somebody and here’s what somebody’s like a year later. So I think its like anchor focus on the facts and the reporters focus on the actual story.

08:40-09:30
I think that you can use the narrative style towards anything, but I think at the same time sometimes it’s best to just give the people the story the way it’s supposed to be
done. Sometimes you can’t stretch something out. It wouldn’t be worth it and it wouldn’t be fair to the viewers to try and force the style onto certain topics. And there are plenty of times... every single story I do does not always involve the storytelling technique. Sometimes I’ll use graphics to really tell the story but I think that is a storytelling style in itself. I think that you can look at storytelling in different ways but I think the main thing is we are in an age now where so many people can get the facts from the internet ahead of the newscast so we have to do something different and we have to do something that will keep their attention.

10:00-13:25
When I go out and do a story or whenever I’m handed a daily assignment, for instance last night I was reporting on marriage equality for our ten pm newscast. I told the story in a narrative storytelling fashion. That was very easy to do because there was a rally, there was a lot of people there was a lot of good natural sound, good emotion good characters, so it wasn’t a very difficult task to do, but on a day-to-day basis when I go out and I know other stations are going to be covering the same exact story, I’m looking for something that they didn’t pick up on. For instance there was a lady driving through Glenwood Canyon, which is a big canyon in the mountains, and a boulder about the size of a Volkswagen bug had landed right in front of her vehicle. And she happened to be a limousine driver and she was driving someone to Denver. Well anyways it turned out she was going to be in Denver and agreed to do the interview but she said oh I’m talking to channel 7 and channel 4 first and then we can talk. So you already know the other stations are going to be doing the story, but the thing is that you want to try and get to know the station better than the other stations would and better than the other reporters would because I know that our competition doesn’t follow the narrative storytelling format. They focus on the general a, b, c news and so they went out they did a quick interview with her and left. Kevin Sullivan and I had a little bit of time so we got to spend 45 minutes with her. And so while I’m sitting with her I already knew what kind of questions they were going to ask her. But then there were other things that we picked up on by just getting to know the person in conversation, for instance, that morning while she was driving to the interview she almost died in a car accident when somebody clipped her off while they were talking on their phone and she almost slammed into a wall. So we picked up on that fact. And I wrote the anchor intro to give the facts about what happened and the toss into my story was ‘as 9news reporter Kevin Torres tells us she had another quick cut in with death today.’ So it’s picking up on things like that and finding those different layers and finding those surprises. I try to find as many surprises in a story as possible. For instance last night in the newscast the story shoot wasn’t until 6:30, we had to have it on the air at 9pm. There weren’t a whole lot of surprises in it but I did let some reveals breathe out. We introduced one lady very quickly and I had 50 seconds for this package. That’s exactly what it timed out to be. I introduced this lady who was straight but she decided that she and her fiancé were not going to get married because of marriage equality. When everyone else was allowed to get married then they would get married. So introduced her and coming out of her said, ‘because Jen
Hanson is allowed to do what Jeff Allan cannot.’ And then he says, ‘well I’ve been with my partner for 8 years and we’d really like to get married.’ So it was kind of a little set up and a little reveal where we can and he can’t and it allowed the story to flow a little bit better. You try to look for those reveals, as Boyd Huppert calls them the moments.

13:45-15:15
I feel like a lot of people who want to be good at storytelling take a lot of different styles from different people. And I think that’s a good thing and I think it’s a good thing to not have a certain style. I think it’s important to report and do storytelling in different ways a lot. One of the people who is really good at that is John Charifee from KING TV. He’s a great storyteller but a lot of his stories aren’t the same he’ll try different styles. A lot of the things I like to do is I like to put a wireless mic on somebody and I don’t like to interview them at all I just say do what you would normally be doing if I wasn’t here. And that’s what we did last night with Jen Hanson. We had the wireless mic on her and I just told Sully to keep an eye on her and she was going around talking to people and that’s when she explained she’s been engaged to her fiancé of 8 years and they wont get married because they feel it’s not right that gay people can’t get married and so we picked up on that little nugget. And I don’t know if I would have learned that had I been asking her questions. It allowed also for the shot to look a lot better than a standard interview shot. It was natural she was in a moment and she was talking with people. So I think the wireless microphone is probably one of the best inventions for storytellers because it allows people to forget that they’re being filmed and it allows them to go do their own thing and it allows you to pick up on those magic moments that make television great.

15:40-18:55
You know I was very fortunate because at my first TV station I was hired when I was a junior in college in 2004 and it was a tiny TV station market 186 or something like that WWNY-TV and it was an hour north of my college and I was hired there my junior year, fall semester, and I would have to go back and forth every single day and I was working between 30-40 hours on top of 18 college credit hours. The thing was at that point I had been following KARE and KUSA online and by ordering DVD’s from them and I started studying their styles a lot. But then when I was at WWNY-TV my news director, who wasn’t familiar with new age storytelling but really understood the Charles Kuralts and the Bob Dotsons back then, he really embraced it and our chief photographer up there who taught us how to one-man-band really embraced it a lot and he really pushed me to go and do it. So I was allowed to do it. So a lot of times I was covering city council meetings especially on Monday nights I didn’t have a chance to do it then but other days especially on weekends when I was a weekend reporter, a lot of the time you’re covering something that happens to be very feature-y and so you have a lot of opportunity to sort of explore and try different things and I think it was really a good training group for me but what I would do is every single night, and I mean every single night, I would go onto
KARE11news.com and 9news.com and I would watch the stories of the reporters I liked: Boyd Huppert, Chris Vanderveen, Ken Speak and others who are no longer in the business, but I would watch their stuff all the time and I would pay very close attention to the writing and also how the photographers shot and edited it and what they would do to insert natural sound and all of those moments into pieces. And so I picked up on that pretty quickly and then I stayed at WWNY for a year and a half and then I went to WSYR where there were really some excellent photographers who really understood storytelling and I got to work with some of them and then I told my boss, because I was hired as a reporter, that I really missed one-man-banding, which I did, and so he let me start one-man-banding again and I started putting together these storytelling pieces. No other reporter at the station or in the market for that matter would do stories like that. And so my boss really liked it but he didn’t want anyone else to do it because no one else really cared for it, so he understood what I was doing was unique and he never told me no don’t do it. He encouraged it but at the same time I don’t think that viewers in that market really understood it because they weren’t used to it. I mean it worked out. I would always get positive feedback on the stories that I would do that were creative but you know I think that it took coming to KUSA for it to really be embraced because viewers here in Denver really understand storytelling. They don’t understand the title or what it is. They are just so used to it.

20:20-21:10
You know I don’t feel like I’m at a disadvantage because I know what I need to do in order to do the narrative style storytelling. Does it come out better when I’m working on a day turn with a photographer? I think so, now I think so. I’ve done some really good one-man-band pieces that have been day turns, and I continue to do them. I prefer working with a photographer on day turns. On long-form pieces I enjoy working by myself because a lot of times I travel the entire state and a lot of times it’s difficult for them to free up a photographer if I have to go to a story that’s 6 hours away. So I’ll go and do that by myself but then I have time to really focus on the photographer as much as I do on the writing. But I think in the last year I’ve really enjoyed working with a photographer more than I have one-man-banding.

21:20-22:20
I think that you learn just as much if not more through storytelling as a viewer. And the reason I say that is because if it’s the general form of reporting you are going to get a steak and it’s going to be good and it’s going to inform you about what’s going on, but storytelling is more like a steak with seasoning on it. Not only are you going to get what you want and you’re going to understand but you’re going to remember it because it was more delicious. And I think that remembering part is very important because, let’s say for instance we did a story on marriage equality and we did it as a general piece, sure you’re going to learn the general ins and outs of it but three weeks from now are you going to remember what you learned then? Probably not. But in that storytelling form when it was so appetizing and you learn so much
and you really enjoy the story it’s going to stick with you longer. And I think that’s really important.

22:50-23:00
Look at it this way when you watch the CBS evening news on a Friday the one story you’re going to remember out of the entire newscast is Steve Hartman’s story. It’s as simple as that. I think that really speaks volumes.

23:25-25:15
I don’t think it’s us as journalist injecting our own emotion into the story, I think it’s that we’re allowing the emotion of the characters to play out. If you look at that board behind you there are nine things that are written there and that’s a Gannet thing. The most important one on there is the one of the top right hand corner which is emotion, or at least that’s how storytellers feel, because at the end of the day if there’s something that strikes a nerve in that person they’re going to remember that and feel that. So many people in this market when they go out to the scene of the murder or something they just go after the facts and just interview the sheriff’s deputy and don’t make the effort to interview the people that were affected, which is a big problem. You can get everything from the sheriff in a news release. I would rather get the person who was over on the side who witnessed everything and was traumatically affected by it. When you have that person and you interview them and you strike up some sort of emotion then the viewer is going to feel that and that’s going to stick with them forever instead of just a talking head. To answer your question I don’t think in any of our stories I don’t think the reporters ever inject their own emotion into it. I think that maybe in their form of tracking but I think that’s important too. If you’re tracking a story you’re not going to track a death story with a smile on your face, but if you’re tracking a happy story you’re going to do it with a smile on your face because I think that sets the mood and helps you understand the story but I don’t think that injects the journalist’s personal feelings into the story.

25:30-26:20
I think because in television, so many reporters right now, those generic reporters putting general stories on the air are doing what could easily be done in a newspaper is giving the generic facts the general a, b, c stuff that really can be done on the web and everyone is going to know about before the story hits. Storytelling is a way to really allow a person to understand and to feel the story that is going to be reported on that they’re trying to learn more about. And I think by doing that, by introducing them to the characters and really opening them up and telling the story in a different way then that will allow the viewer to remember that piece much longer than something they could have easily read on the internet or in a tweet hours before.

27:00-28:45
I feel like telling a story about an entire town couldn’t be told by just one person. I was covering a story about a missing teenage boy and I had been down in that corner of Colorado reporting about that boy and I always hate going to a community, especially when I’m there for a couple of days, and just report on the bad news. So I always try to look for something that could be good news as well. So what I was doing is I happened to be driving around and I noticed these statues that were carved into logs and I asked someone in town about it and I thought this could be a good story. Everyone in town I talked to was affected by that fire and they each had their own story about it. I mean the outcome was all the same, they all wanted to live in that town so much because they loved it and they didn’t care that there was a fire and this was how they were recovering. But I felt like they all had different stories, whether it was the folks that almost lost their homes, or the folks that helped people escape or the firefighter who’s friend died in the fire. And I feel like you don’t need just one character to tell the story. And none of them were memorable characters. I don’t think years from now I don’t think anyone would remember something about each and every one of them but I felt like together they helped really tell the story better than just one of them could.

28:55-30:00
I think one of the things that would be great to see is more news managers really embracing storytelling. I’m fortunate to work at a shop that does embrace it, not just from our assistant news director but up to our news director and up to the general manager. They all really embrace it. I hear from a lot of smaller stations who look at it and say ‘man we really love that storytelling stuff that you guys do’ but they never really try to put it into their shops. I think it can be something simple it can be as easy as taking your employees and sending some of them to some seminars because I’ll tell you what when I go to one of those seminars I’m inspired for months. And sometimes my fuse starts to burn out where I’m burned out about everything but man when you go to one of those seminars you are ready to go. And a lot of people who work in the business and have never been introduced to storytelling, I think if they were to go to one of those it could really make a difference.

30:30-31:10
Granted I will say this though I don’t think having a shop that does all storytelling is a necessarily good idea. We have a lot of generic reporters too who just report a, b, and c, but they’re needed, because I feel that you can’t always do it because then it doesn’t make it as special. I mean it’s great to have, out of maybe 10 stories in a newscast; maybe one of them is a storytelling piece. I think doing it time and time again would annoy viewers but I think having that makes us special and I think it’s great to work at a special station.
R. Mitch Pittman Interview Transcript, March 13, 2013

1:00-2:00
Yes but I wanted to be on ESPN at the time. So I thought the way you did that was you were a print sports reporter and then become a talking head on one of the shows. So I went in and then discovered, oh here’s this TV program I can just do TV right away. So I did sports in our college TV. Until junior year I was the TV sports anchor, but thankfully in all my classes my advisor made me do real news stories. Which I’m grateful for because sports it’s a lot of fun you get to have a little more personality, but a story is a story, if you can tell a good sports story you can tell a good news story. So senior year I said OK I actually want to get a job and not even that through my internships I kind of got bored with sports. I don’t want to shoot softball everyday for years until I make it somewhere big, I just thought news has more of an impact.

2:15-3:35
It was really junior and senior year. They were very competitive with a girl in my grade and a guy one grade below me. And Randy and I at first we really didn’t like each other. Then we realized ok we’re in this together. And I ended up helping him get a job in Burlington. We were roommates up there and he’s in West Palm Beach now. And I remember he showed me my first Boyd Huppert story, which was duck in a truck. Classic. I saw Joe Little and his one man band reel and that opened my eyes to a bunch of possibilities and thinking about a lot of folks that come back and talk to the school they talk about characters and telling the stories through characters and at the heart that’s what storytelling is about. It’s about the people behind the story not just the facts.

3:45-5:30
It’s not that they discouraged you doing that it just wasn’t on their priority list at all. There was no value placed on storytelling. Not to talk bad about them it’s just a different brand. But coming out of school I was very fortunate to have a couple of different offers and I chose Vermont because of the money, it was a cool place and it was a high market and I’m happy I went there because I feel that you grow the most when you’re challenged and so I really had to fit them a lot more. The package limit was 1:10 and for some stories that’s great, but for a lot of stories you can’t do as much as you want. So it was sometimes a struggle there. But I feel that no matter where you are you can put your touch on a story. If it’s only 1:10 it’s still your 1:10 to tell it the way you want to more or less. That made me a lot better of a reporter, a much tighter writer. Same here at KSTP, sometimes I’ll get a little bit longer but it forces you to be a better writer. But even in a short amount of time you can still get characters in there.

5:50-8:00
I owe so much to the NPPA. I was searching for awards to enter and I saw that they had the solo-video journalist thing. And so oh let my join this! And I started entering the quarterly contests and that was a motivator. I’m a huge nerd and I watch a lot of news, I would say usually about 30 minutes a day. At first it was broll.net and that was kind of the thing before, now I go to tv.nppa.org which is where all of the contest winners are posted and that’s such a great resource because on broll.net it might not be that great, or you can go to KUSA but not everything will be that great. You can go to this site and it’s all of the best of the best from all across the country and you can go there and just soak in so much. I can’t tell you how many times I’ve watched Darren Durlach’s, photographer or the year, reel. I’ve probably memorized about every shot in those. It’s really copying people, seeing what’s out there and being able to do that. I think we’re so lucky nowadays to be able to just go online and have it all there. I was having drinks with Boyd a few weeks ago about how he would have his mom tape Steve Hartman stories because Steve Hartman used to be at KSTP. So she would tape the stories and then mail them off. I think storytelling is so much better off now because of the Internet. The storytellers Facebook page, wow what a great tool!

9:00-11:30
It’s a way to make people care about something that they might not necessarily care about otherwise. It’s emotion, moments, it’s not even really about the big things it’s about details and making people feel something. It’s on my mind all the time. That’s the number one thing. The other week I was out on a water main break. It happened overnight and I was sitting there the next morning and I was thinking well, how do I make this in downtown Saint Paul, how do I make it so people across the metro will watch and care? I found a character. The first character was this guy who was a hoot, he was actually wearing a Hooter’s shirt. He lived in the apartment next to it and he was saying some ridiculous stuff so I was like let me get a mic on you and we just chatted for awhile. Then I went down to the farmers market that was a block below it and they were like gutted out, everything was icy. There was one lady there packing up I happened to get lucky, she was also kind of wacky as many goat cheese sales women are. I talked to her about it and how her business about it. The guy, while he was funny, talked about this inconvenience of it. This woman talked about how business went away. It was supposed to be a busy Saturday; it was warm, about 30. Then I went to the only restaurant in the area that was open, it was a bar. And they were like we can’t drink water so we’re just going to drink beer. So I had these people throughout the story explaining these things you might not think about. You still have to cover the story and I still talked about the water boil advisory is in effect, you have to cover the nuts and bolts, when it happened. You still have to fit those in, you weave them in and you be efficient in doing that to leave time for the fun stuff. Hopefully it was a good water main break story. It was a little different from your normal one.

12:00-12:45
I think personification can be really powerful. I think the greatest storytelling technique is the reveal, which that didn’t dawn on me for awhile probably right before I came here to KSTP. But the reveal, wow, what a great tool. If you can nail the reveal and create an ‘oh shit’ moment, if you can get someone to say oh my god then you’re doing well.

13:20-14:30
Humor, I like using humor if you can work it in. With respect make fun of somebody, or have fun with somebody. Make fun of yourself, that’s fine too. One of the more out there stories I’ve done was at the first part of winter. It was a not good snow year for us. Last year we had like 22 inches the whole year and at that point we had had 17 inches so it was kind of a bust and so I was like you know what I have an idea and I ran with it. I’m from North Carolina and it was like what gives? It was a standup driven piece about me being on my skis in the middle of a dirt patch and I usually don’t do me driven stories, which is something different, but it got a lot of good response. And so making fun of yourself. One thing that I think I can get better at is including myself in the story.

15:00-15:45
I do standups if they’re meaningful, if they serve a purpose like a transition but I don’t like to just throw it in there as a throwaway line. But it’s also really valuable. One thing Steven Hartman is a master of is including himself in a natural way. He has a photographer and that’s where it’s different for one man bands. It’s harder to get that natural interaction. I would love to joke around and have me in the shot. If I had a photographer I would do that. You get the interaction and have some fun. But it’s awkward and forced if I get the tripod, get everything framed up and then try to recreate another moment.

16:25-17:45
I think you bring up a really good point it has to be appropriate. The short answer is yes you can always fit it in absolutely. But you wouldn’t want to on a murder story, having him dying being the reveal. That would be inappropriate. But you can pick up on the little things. One serious story that was on my reel was the officer funeral. I think I did some storytelling there I tried to be a little poetic with it but in that story there was no sound, but that’s because there was no access to sound. We weren’t in a little cage so I just thought I’ll do what I can. And that’s an idea I copied from Eric Johnson out in Seattle at KOMO. He’s done a few of those stories where it’s just narrative.

18:00-18:20
Why not!? I don’t know. I don’t see any reason why you shouldn’t try to do that. Sometimes you’ll be limited by time. I think you shouldn’t be limited by your efforts. If you care you can make it interesting.
I sit down and I toil over stuff. I push deadlines, but it's worth it. I take a lot of pride in my stories. And especially as a one-man band you have to want to shoot as well. I wouldn't say it's that much harder. I think you obviously try 100% on each story but you have to know what the story is and take it for what it's worth. There was an amber alert case and all the stations were at it was a breaking news situation. It was more of the just the facts situation. But you still try to turn it a little if you can, something clever, not cheesy, just a point of difference in there. It doesn't take much effort to do one thing above and beyond. Not every story is going to be duck in a truck or something like that but you can always do something a little bit more just to make it better. One thing that I wonder sometimes if viewers get that effort, and that, I really don't know if they do. Obviously viewers don't watch KARE and KSTP and say oh, they did it this way, and they did it that way. My hope is that they don't think, 'oh that was a really clever line or I liked that video...' but maybe they are just this much more interested in the story, or that this story is just a little bit more. They don't know what they're missing out on but that doesn't mean they shouldn't get the best product.

22:00-26:30
Yes I do the work of two people but at the same time it's more efficient I feel. When I'm out there I can see a shot and if I get a line in my head I know it. Or if I have a line in my head, I get the shot and I have it. I know what I have. I'm editing in my head as I go along. As I'm writing it I already have the story edited in my head so it's really easy to put together. So that takes time. When I'm interviewing somebody I'm controlling the camera. I think it's a lot more comfortable with just one guy with a camera, rather than a reporter, a camera guy and a camera. It's a lot less for that one person to worry about, just that feeling there. And I think a big part of storytelling is just the intangible making people feel comfortable and being genuine with them. Because bottom line is you need good sound from them and I think there's an advantage there in one man banding. But when I'm writing and shooting and editing all of the wheels are turning at the same time. As so as those ideas come to you you know what's going on. It sucks when you're driving back from a story that's an hour and a half away and you get a great idea, I have to pull over to the side of the road to write it down. You can't log your video while you're driving. But you don't need to log your video as a one-man band because you know it. I would not mind doing less one man banding to make better stories. I am generally the most gung-ho one-man band you can find. I didn't do it just to get my foot in the door. I really love it. But I see, Chris Conti, is a great reporter in Nashville and he was a one-man band and we're buddies at the same place in our career. And he was tired of one-man banding and he has a photographer now. His work has gone from here to here because you do have a lot more time. I'm sure I would tell much better stories if I had a photographer, or the right photographer. WTVF is a great photo shop with amazing people. KING, KUSA, those places, it's great. At my first job a lot of the time I would want to go out alone because I thought my video would be better and the story would be stronger and same at KSTP. It sounds really cocky but I know what I'm getting. It's easier, but with some stories it's not as good like in court, or on breaking
news you need the help there. But a lot of times I just know what I’m getting I like what I’m getting I like doing it myself. But if you’re at a great shot like that it might be nice.

26:50-27:15
I’m looking at places where the management cares about storytelling and they’re known for that. KING, KUSA because that’s what’s important to me right now in my career, it doesn’t matter what market size or where I’m living it matters that I get the chance to tell good stories.

27:25-28:30
It’s because of the one-man band. It’s the hip thing to do right now. The station wants to save money and the station wants to try it out. So that has opened a lot of doors. I do it because I love it. I wouldn’t do it just to be in a higher market because then I’d just be miserable. And now I’m still ok with one-man banding. One of the jobs I’m hopefully hearing about today, the news director knows that I like one-man banding so the news director said if you want to go out and work on something by yourself then you’re free to do it and alternatively at KING they don’t have one-man bands right now, Seattle is union and they’ve never had it before but they want to test the waters. So it would be a lot of reporting but it would be a little bit of one-man banding just to see how it goes.

28:30-29:00
And so much of one-man banding is time management more than being a good shooter or a good writer it’s about being a good time manager and knowing, ok this is a really good visual story I’m going to dedicate more time to shooting and editing and less to writing. Or if I really want to make the story creative I’ll dedicate more time to the writing and then for the editing it won’t be the greatest. It’s a little give and take. You have to know where to ration yourself.

29:30-30:30
That’s when being a responsible journalist comes into play. I think you could abuse the facts just as easily as you could abuse the facts with emotion. It just makes it more interesting to watch while being responsible. I’m not going to put a person on going on some Obama rant even if it’s great sound you have to be responsible. You’re a journalist number one a storyteller number two. They can mesh together but I would never sacrifice a story or source integrity for the sake of flash or a tear. And there are a lot of times when I get a tear or you get somebody crying but I shouldn’t exploit this person and it’s not responsible and that story may have been more entertaining or juicier but I wouldn’t have felt good about it.

31:00-31:45
I’m super against that. I’m hardcore ethics so I would never stage. No. Maybe occasionally do the Boyd trick and be a little hard of hearing sometimes and say, ‘what? Could you say that again?’ But that’s the limit. But I would never tell
somebody to do something. Because if you know what you're looking for that wouldn't be the best thing. If it's staged it won't be good. It won't be as natural. It isn't a genuine moment, if it isn't genuine why would you want it anyway. If you missed it well just get better at anticipating.

32:15-33:20
I think we're already given a lot of responsibility in terms of you're giving them the facts and interpreting those things so if you're there, you're a person... what do you feel? Our job is to bring them there and if I'm covering a house fire and I can create an urgency and if I can show people that's what's happening that's a lot more responsible than showing it as humdrum, nothing is going on here. If I can have some fast edits, someone crying for their baby, then that's real that's what's happening here. You don't create an emotion that's not there, you just convey the emotion that's already happening. I would never misrepresent something. You're truthful in your facts and in the emotion that you get across.

34:00-35:00
A lot of this is self-driven and no matter what station you're at you can still do it. And I think if you're behind it it will come through in your work. And when I was picking my job to come here, it was either here or WBFF in Baltimore, which last year was the station of the year, is a huge NPPA palace, it's wonderful. But I wanted to push myself and learn more breaking news and live experience so I chose to come here. And they wanted some more storytelling in their work here. But I knew no matter what I could do the stories how I wanted to do them and put my touch on them. So if you're not doing good storytelling it's on you, you can't blame it on the station because if I can do these stories at KSTP you can do these stories anywhere.

36:00-37:40
It's really important to be well rounded. Bottom line is news, you have to be able to do a live shot, do the breaking news, do the boring stories it's part of the job and you can work your storytelling into that. Not everyday is going to be a feature. Be prepared for tough days. Why it's important. Why it's important is because nowadays we get our information through tweets and Facebook and online. So much of what we learn is between 9 and 5 and the reason storytelling matters is to differentiate. Give them something they can't get on the Internet or on Twitter. If you're just giving the facts, or you're rereading a web story people are going to continue to stop watching news. They have better things to do because they already know. You have to give them something they can't get online or in any other way. Even the radio on the way home, I love NPR, but you can't get the visual part of it too. So I think storytelling is what's going to keep people watching TV because it makes people care. Even if you already know the story if you can make them still watch yours then you've won.
I think just playing the odds of probability yea. I think even I'm looking to one man band less. I still want to do it some but yeah I think the industry as a whole is pulling back on the whole one-man band thing. Scripts, Gannett those big companies that were really pushing for it are kind of pulling back. The perfect newsroom isn't one filled with one-man bands it's one that's diverse and flexible. It'd be great if everyone had the skills to do it but not everyone should do it everyday. Its utopian to think oh the one-man bands can do everything it's not going to happen that way. But I think there will be more because again it's more efficient, more people are doing it now.
REFERENCES:


