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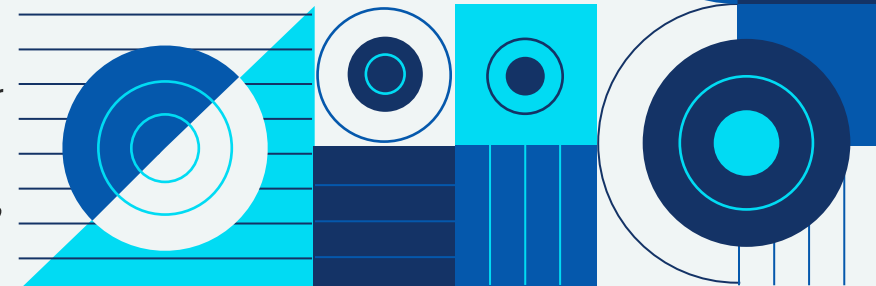
CATOLICA
CECC - CENTRO DE ESTUDOS
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LISBOA

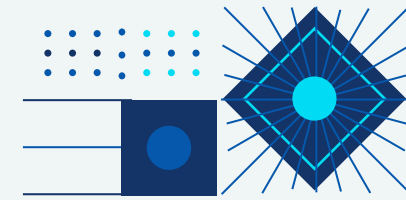
FCT Fundação
para a Ciência
e a Tecnologia

Cleaning the looking glass:

An investigation of the concept of “underreported news stories”
using a method of phenomenology

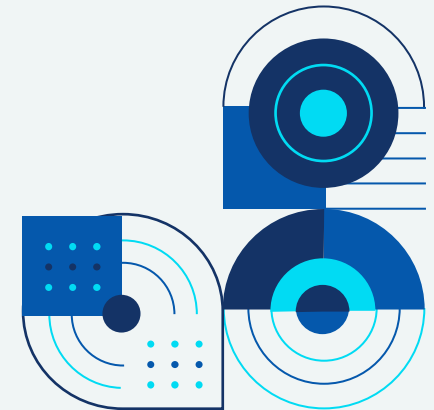
*A paper presentation
for the Lisbon Doctoral Winter Seminar
Communication in times of disruption
08-10 February 2022*
JASON ABELLANEDA BAGUIA





AGENDA

- Prologue: The PhD project's research questions
- Introduction: “Underreported news stories”: a quest for definition
- The state of the art: “Underreporting” in academic discourse
- Interrogating “underreported news stories”: a framework and a method
- Results, discussion, and conclusion: A phenomenological definition of “underreported news stories” –in five steps
- Critique and limitations of the study: Afteward
- References

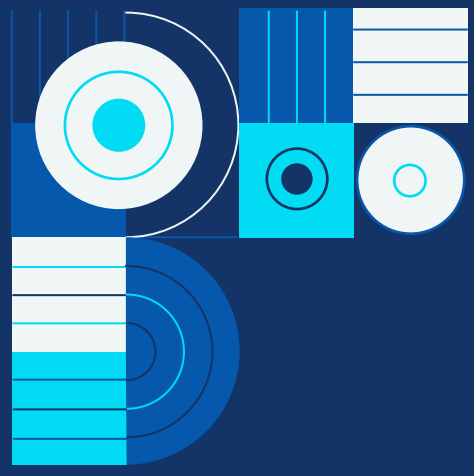




Prologue: The PhD project's research questions

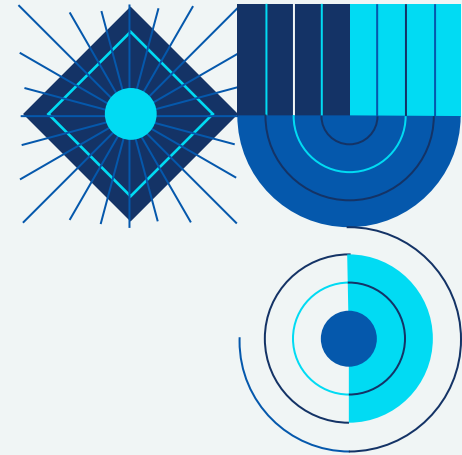
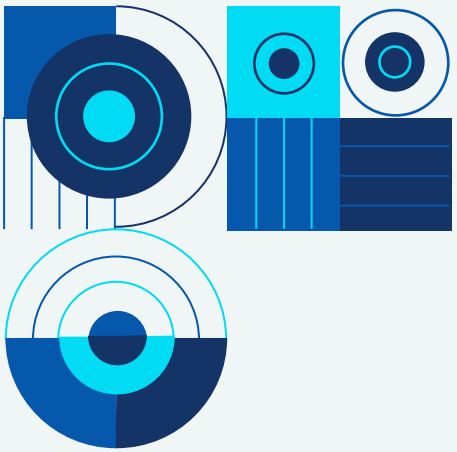
- MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION: What is the role of underreported news stories in the constitution of cultural memory?
- Sub-question (SQ)1: How do journalism's stakeholders define underreported news stories?
- SQ2: How do global journalists address the problem of underreporting in general?
- SQ3: How does journalism address the specific case of underreporting in global religion coverage?
- In the interest of better knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon that are “underreported news stories” as well as consistency in related discourse across journalism, media, and communication, the term must be interrogated and clarified.
- How does cultural memory develop from the coverage of underreported news stories?



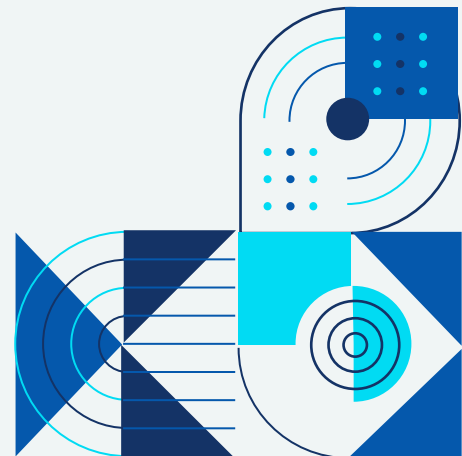
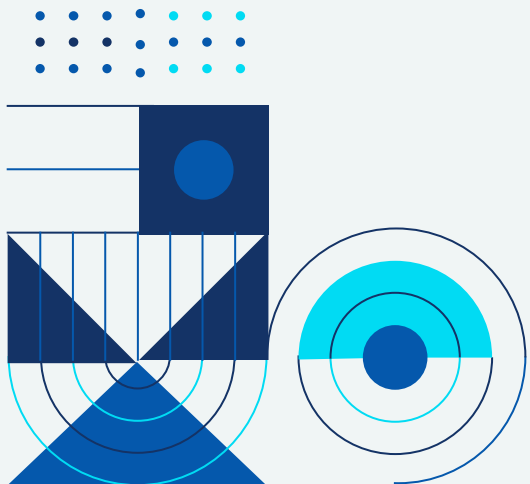


Underreported news stories: a quest for definition

(INTRODUCTION)



Does the news correctly mirror reality?



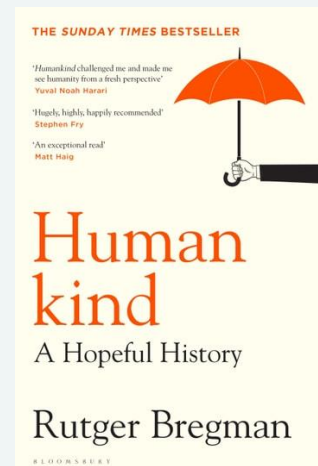
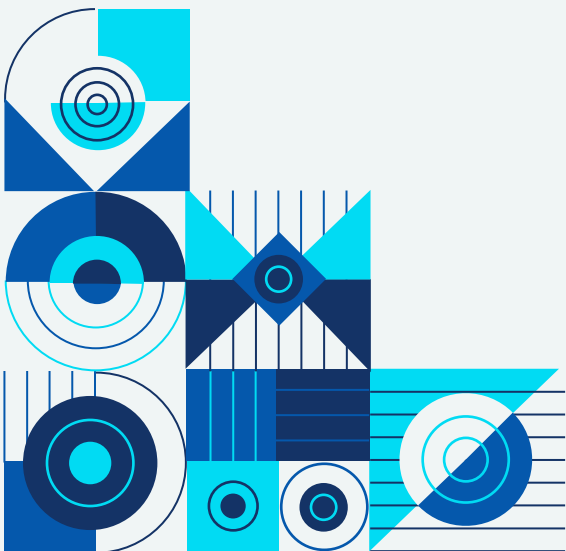
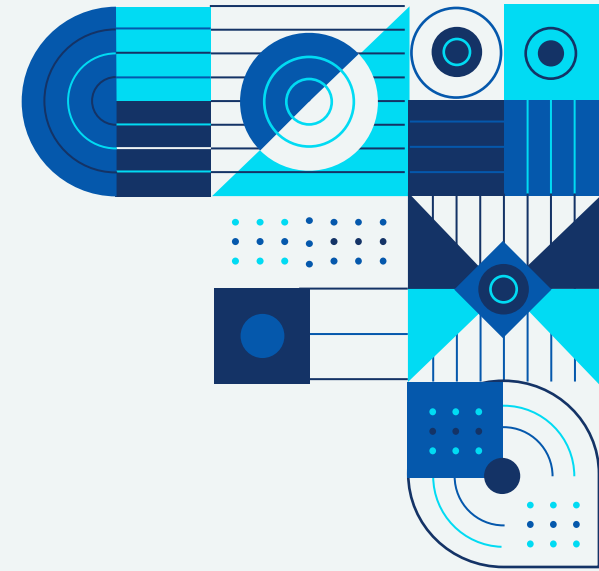
PLEASE
HELP US!

- PEOPLE
- DOG
- CAT



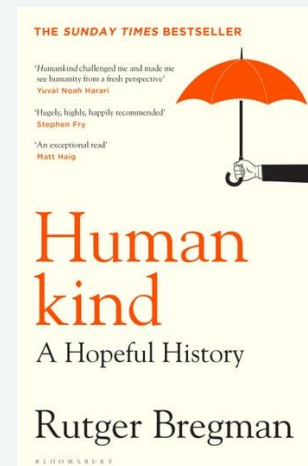
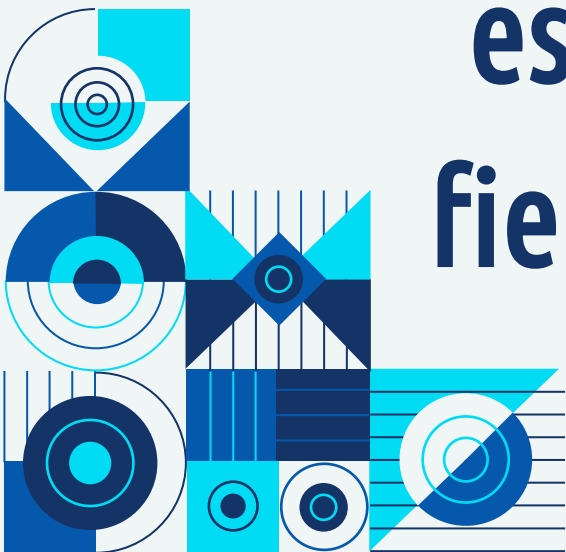
“

Katrina, in short, didn't see New Orleans overrun with self-interest and anarchy. Rather, the city was inundated with courage and charity.



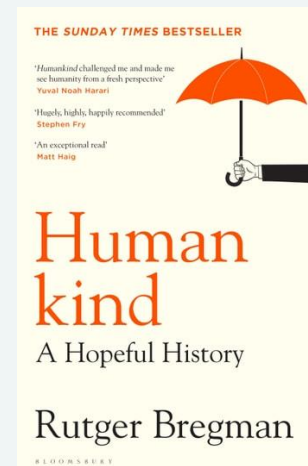
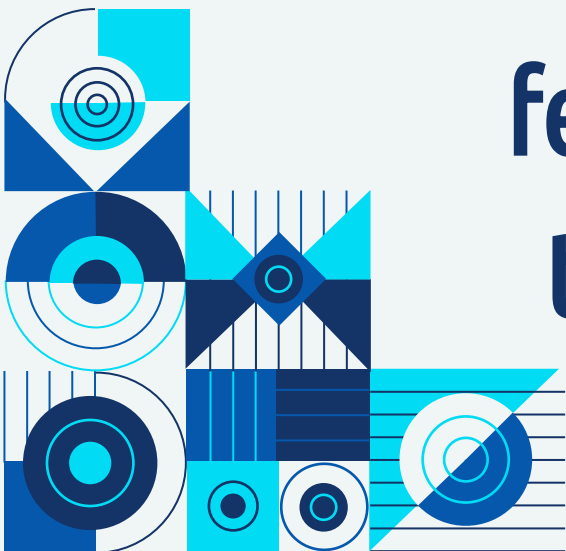
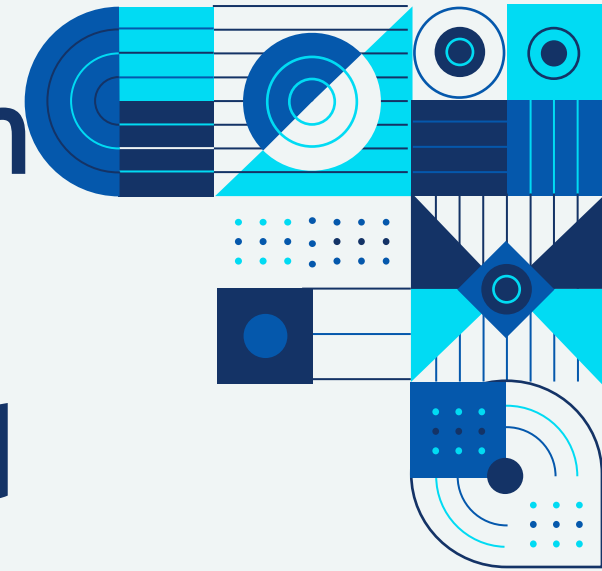
— Rutger Bregman (2020, p.5)

“Contrary to what we normally see in the movies, the Disaster Research Center at the University of Delaware has established that in nearly 700 field studies since 1963, there’s never total mayhem.



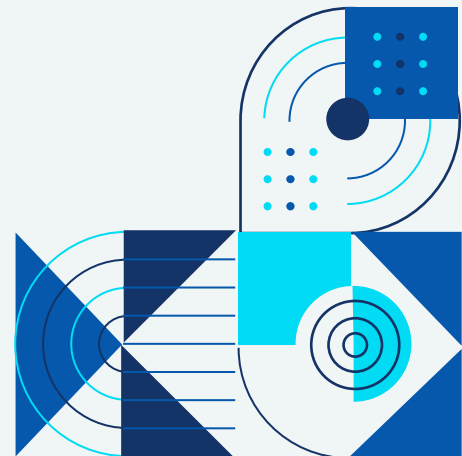
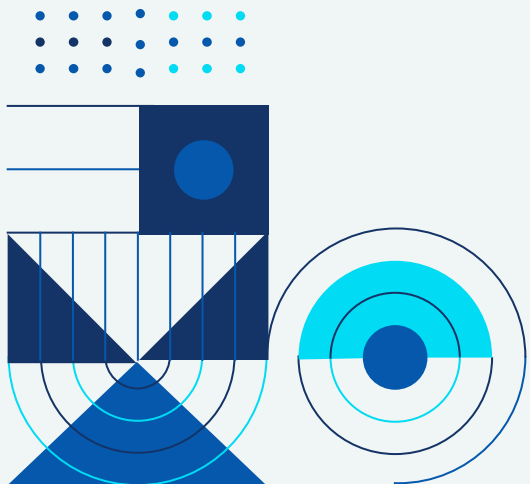
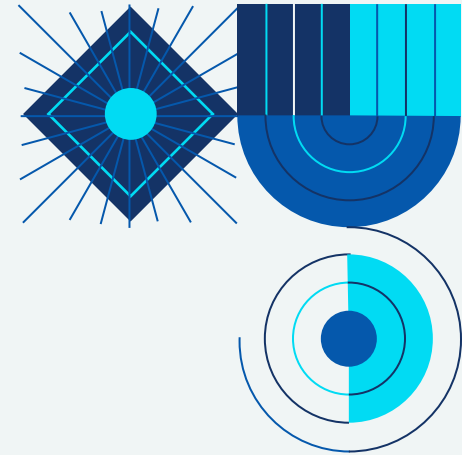
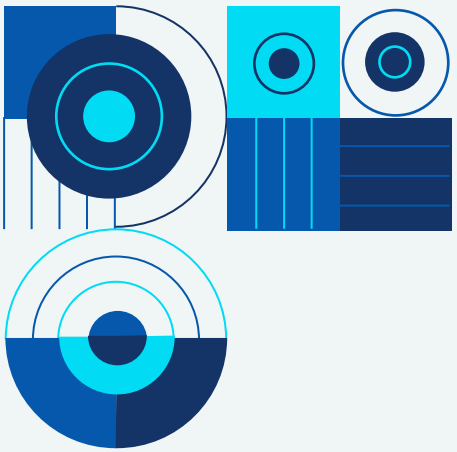
— Rutger Bregman (2020, p.5-6)

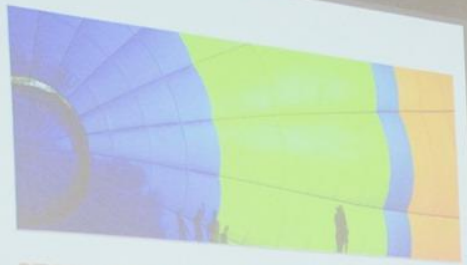
“Catastrophes bring out the best in people. I know of no other sociological finding that’s backed by so much solid evidence that’s so blithely ignored. The picture we’re fed by the media is consistently the opposite of what happens when disaster strikes.



— Rutger Bregman (2020, p.6)

**What are the journalism industry
and its partners doing to address
the phenomenon of
underreporting?**





STORY STRUCTURE

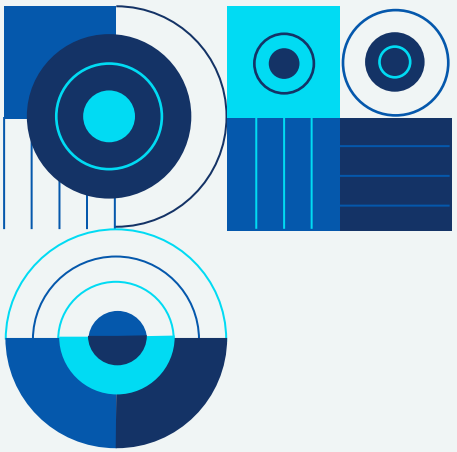
REUTERS

A man in a white shirt and dark pants is standing and speaking to the audience, gesturing with his hands. He is positioned in front of a whiteboard.

A woman in a dark blazer is standing and listening to the speaker. She is positioned to the left of the speaker.

Identities
Documents
Crimes
Blinded
Locked
Trapped
Help
Men
Victims
Deception
With
Bondage
Fear
Threats
Pain
Silence
Hope for better life
Data
Trapped
Freed
No hope
Intimidation
Media
Fake news
Denial
Exploitation

A group of people are seated at tables in the foreground, listening to the presentation. Some are looking at their phones or laptops. The room has large windows and wooden paneling.



THOMSON REUTERS
FOUNDATION



 **Pulitzer Center**

THE
groundtruth
PROJECT

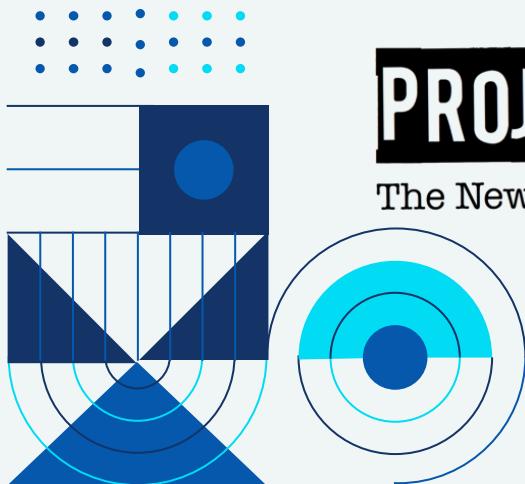


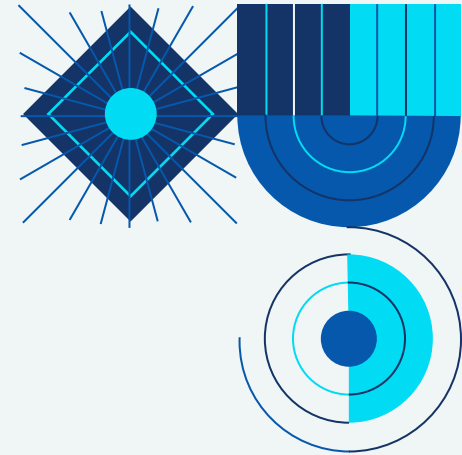
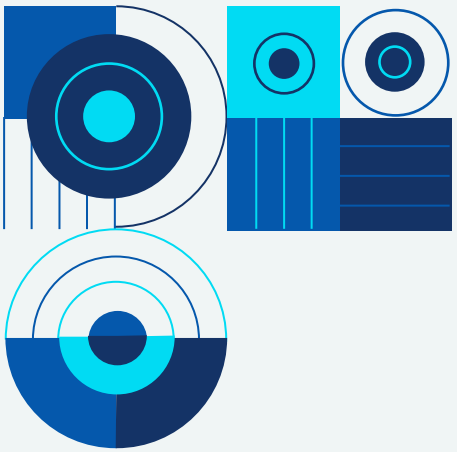
THE ORWELL
FOUNDATION

PROJECT CENSORED

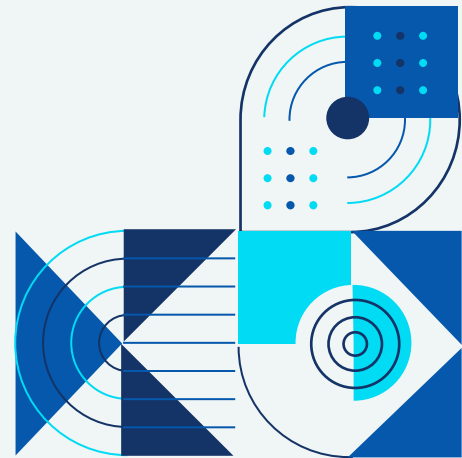
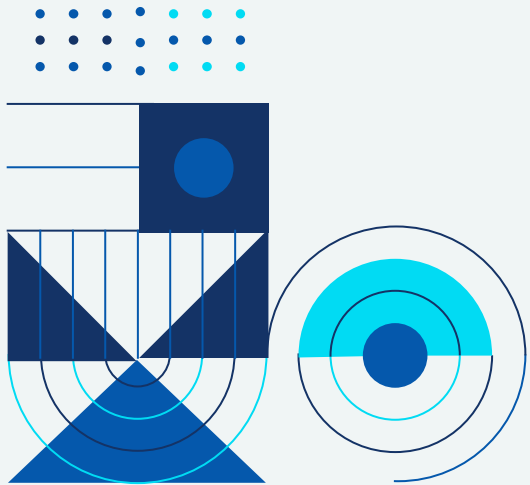
The News That Didn't Make The News

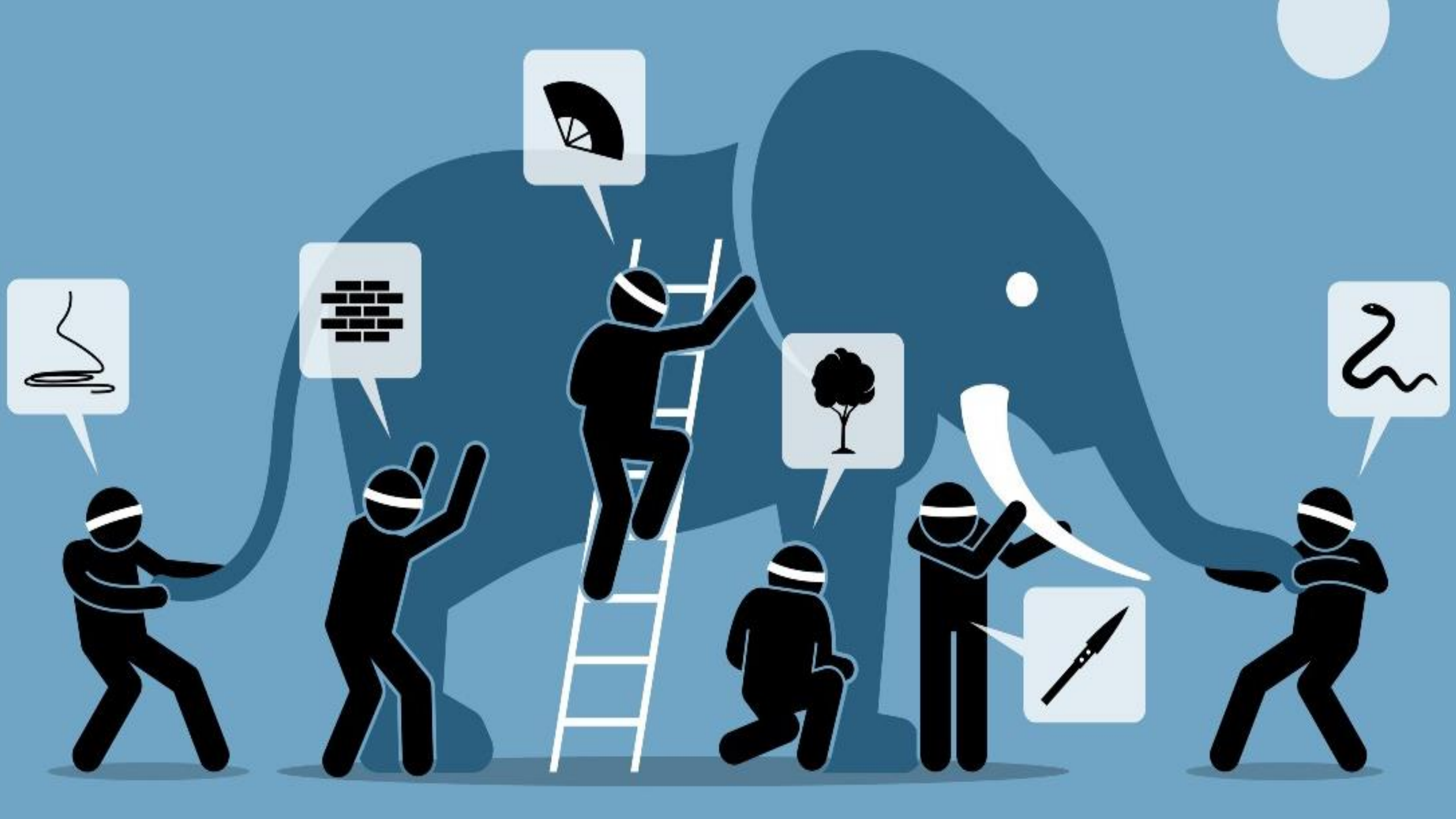
Poynter.
EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO BE A BETTER JOURNALIST





What is this paper's research problem?





Disparate definitions?

Thomson Reuters Foundation (2022)

Our correspondents and stringers shed light on stories that are often overlooked by mainstream media.

The Pulitzer Center (2022)

Under-reported stories communicate issues that don't get a lot of attention.

The Ground Truth Project (2022)

Our mission is to serve under-covered communities by supporting the next generation of journalists to do on-the-ground reporting and to advance sustainability, innovation and equity in journalism worldwide.



Disparate definitions?

The Orwell Foundation (2022)

As local media collapse communities do not even see their own particular stories reflected back to them – let alone brought to bear on policy makers in the distant metropolitan hub of Westminster. If we suffer from a democratic deficit, then that is shaped by a reporting deficit.

Media Freedom Foundation (2022)

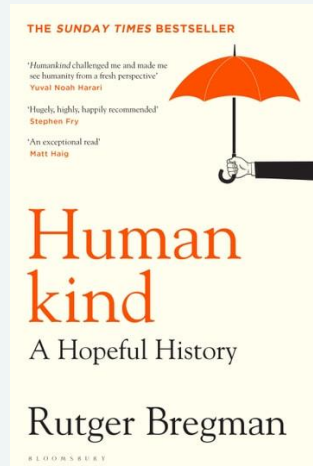
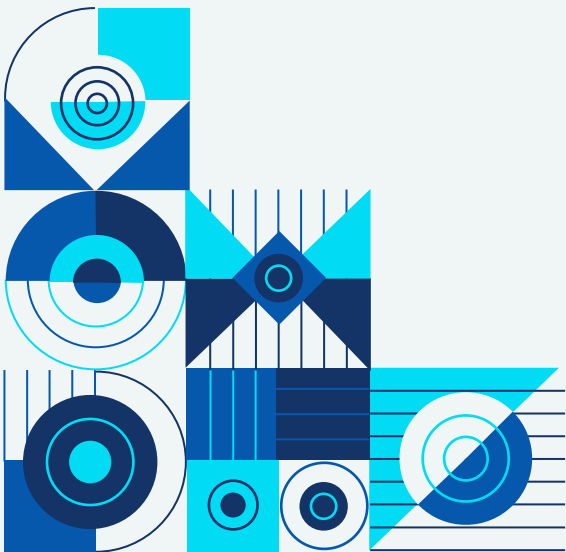
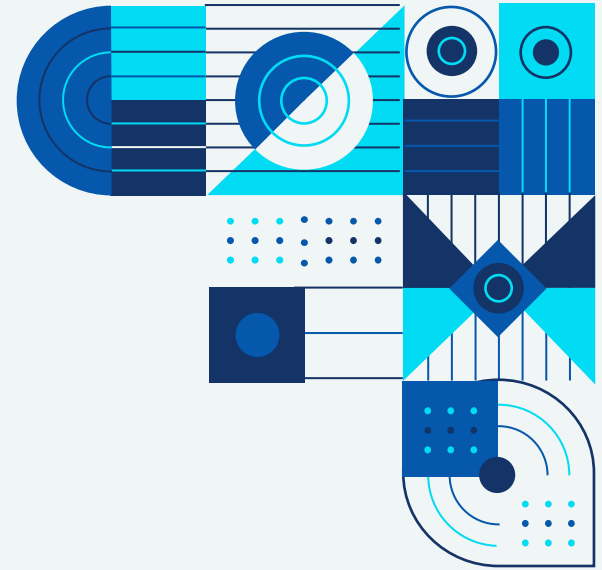
Each book reports the year's top-25 independent news stories, which corporate media have ignored, misrepresented, or censored.

The Poynter Institute (2020)

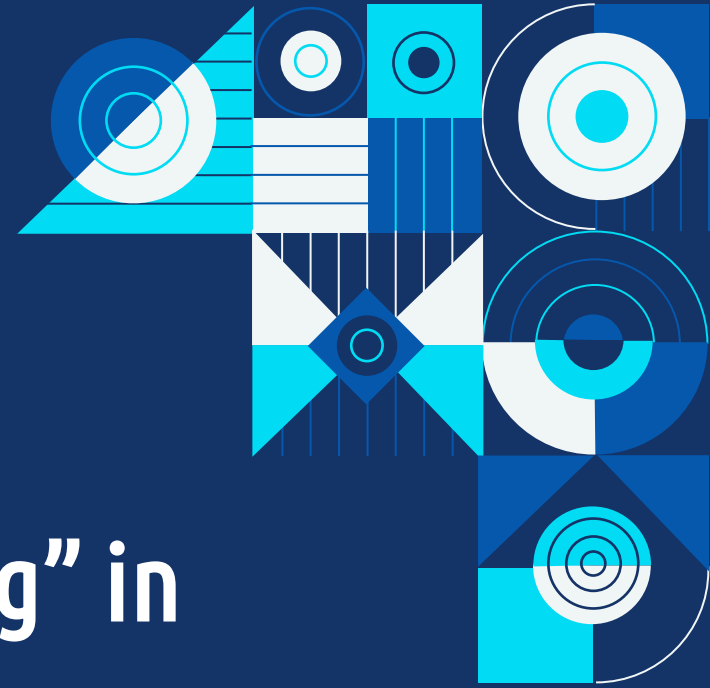
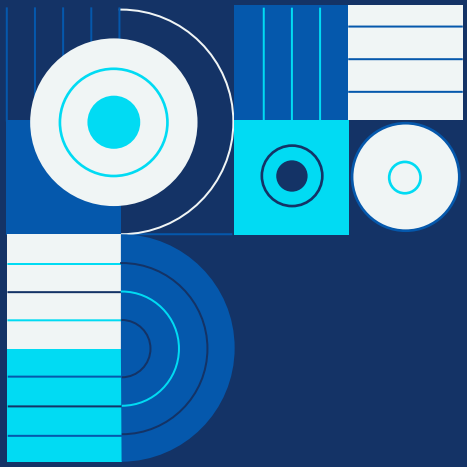
The important stories left underreported while we were focused on COVID-19; Meet the youth shining the light on an underreported area of Los Angeles: The youth-driven Boyle Heights Beat project covers an underrepresented community in Los Angeles.

“

THE RESEARCH QUESTION: What are “underreported news stories”?



— Rutger Bregman (2020, p.6)



State of the art: “Underreporting” in academic discourse

(A LITERATURE REVIEW)



Underreported news stories

Sjovaag & Khalveim (2019) [Norway]

[U]nder-reported news constitutes predominantly 'eventless' issues, sustaining event-centredness as an agenda-setting news value.

Hunter & Bartolomeo (2019) [United States]

[A] growing number of crowdfunding campaigns have raised, or are raising, funds to create... freelance journalism aimed at telling stories about women that... are either under-reported or missed entirely by mainstream media.

Graham and Dziuban (1996); Gelbspan (2005) [United States]

Climate stories “are barely reported in the mainstream press”. “The quantity and quality of coverage of global climate change remain disproportionate relative to the risk that it poses”.



Underreported news stories

Scott, Bunce, and Wright (2018) [South Sudan, Yemen, Nepal]

[S]pecialist news organisations are rarely studied (or even acknowledged) in previous research [but] they often report on humanitarian issues and events not covered in the mainstream media. Indeed, these specialist organisations often explicitly position themselves in opposition to mainstream news media; as providing a form ‘corrective’ journalism by covering ‘under- reported’ crises.

Nelson (2018) [United States]

City Bureau... focused primarily on Chicago’s South and West Side communities – areas that comprise an overwhelming portion of Chicago’s black and Hispanic citizens (the South Side is over 90 percent black, and the West Side is 80 percent black or Hispanic) and that City Bureau’s founders believe to be underreported by bigger name Chicago presses like the Tribune.

Mellor (2015) [United Kingdom]

As with the under-reporting of funding sources, the under-reporting of limitations and uncertainty are common in science journalism, notwithstanding concerns that journalists over-report uncertainty in the case of climate science.

Blind spots, media shadows, news deserts

Mathisen (2021) [Norway]

A media shadow (geographical, thematic, or social) occurs when the reporting from a specific area is single-sided, scarce, sporadic or lacking (Nord and Nygren, 2002).

Familiar concepts to media shadows are blind spots and black holes, where citizens lack news media to fulfill their information needs and are thus in a democratic deficit (Howells, 2015).

Also, the concept of news deserts is relevant, which describe a lack of local news in a specific geographical area (Napoli et al. 2015).

Hackett, Gruneau, Gutstein, & Gibson (2000) [Canada]

Are all the socially important stories that might be told actually making it into the mainstream?



Comprehensiveness of the news

Mody (2011) [Sudan]

a. Timing of the first report, b. Sustained reports until the issue is resolved, c. Length and depth of reports, d. Use of news features and background article as against only hard news, e. Inclusion of causes of the crisis in news reports, f. Inclusion of names of those responsible for causing the crisis, g. Inclusion of remedies and who is responsible to act, h. Inclusion of diverse non-traditional sources close to those in the news event, other than government officials, e.g. the victims, non-governmental organizations.

Allen (2014) [United Kingdom]

The pursuit of comprehensiveness in the realm of media analysis involves viewing the press in its entirety as much as possible, quantifying and documenting how the press has actually talked about an issue in all of its contradictory or unexpected ways, and then making that full analysis available for public interrogation.



Visibility and representation in journalism

Cooky & Antunovic (2018) [United States]

We observe a recent shift from celebratory, liberal feminist narratives of progress and equality, which once dominated US media coverage, towards the inclusion of critical feminist narratives that interrogate the persisting forms of inequality that manifest in the Games. This shift is not the replacement of one narrative with the other, rather narratives of progress exist alongside narratives of failure/inequality.

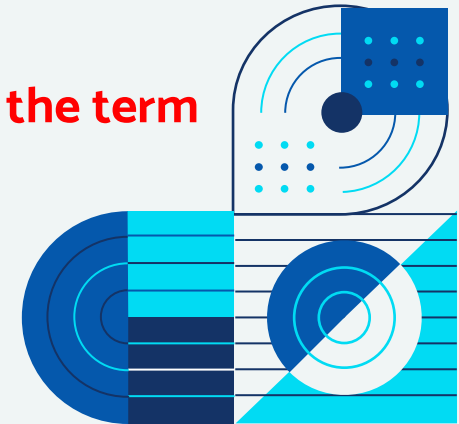
Asik (2021) [Turkey]

Political worldview, political experience, and political context combine to shape journalistic values – the values which orient various stages of news production, at which journalists imagine, categorize, and articulate the Kurds and decide how to represent them in news outputs.



State of knowledge, research gaps

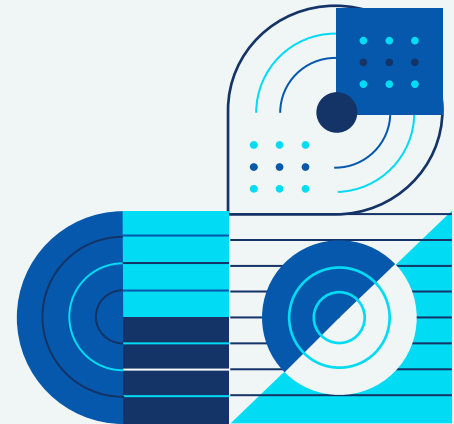
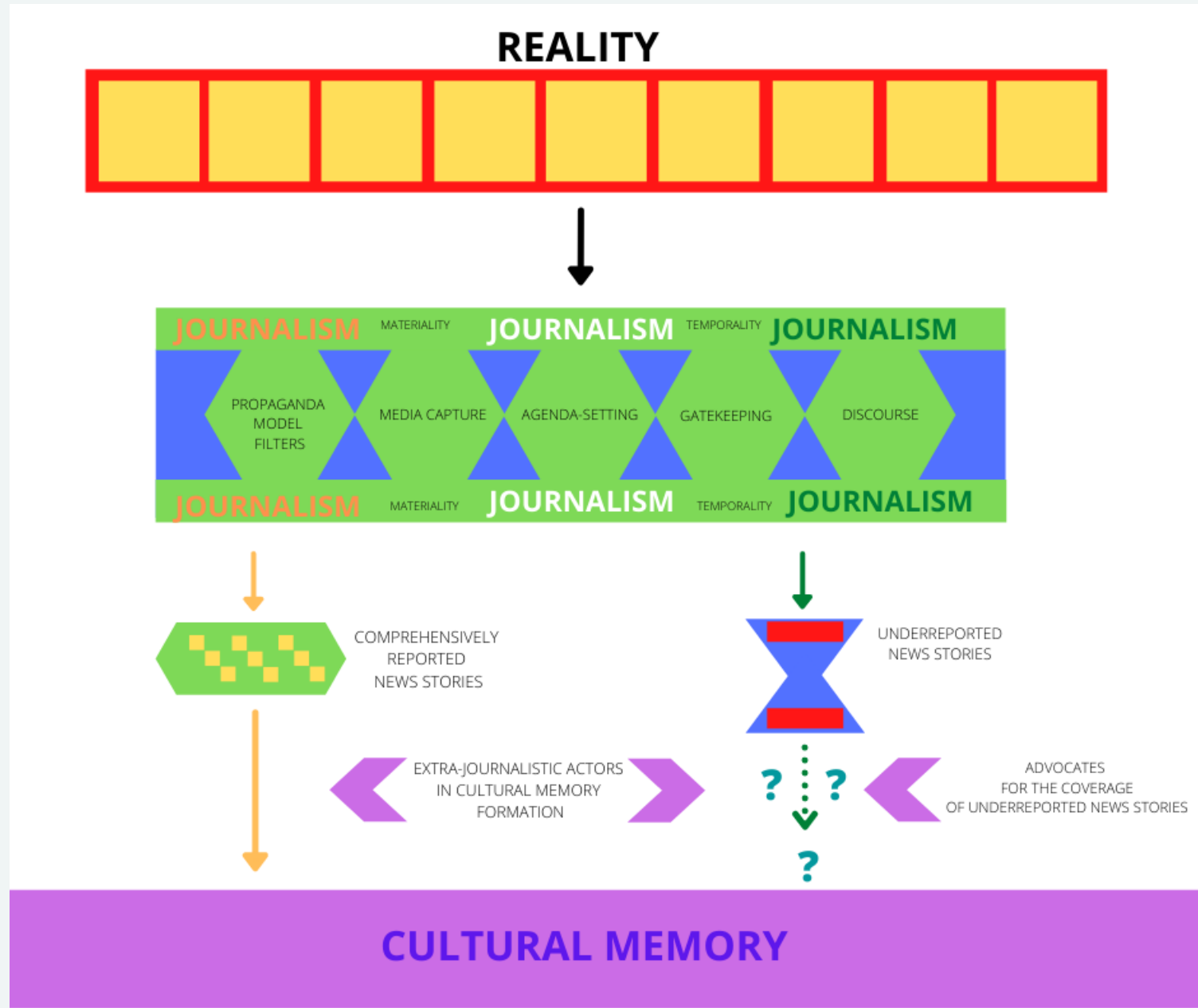
- Academic discourse about “underreported news stories” is emerging but not yet extensive. It appears to be the subject of scholarship more in the global north than in the global south.
- Different scholars have different notions of underreporting in journalism. In defining underreported news stories implicitly or explicitly, they emphasize different aspects of underreporting.
- Various scholars have articulated and reflected on other terms that are complementary to but not identical to “underreported news stories”.
- Further research is needed to raise the ecological validity of scholarly language and discourse with regard to journalistic underreporting, increasing their consistency with journalism industry-wide movements in addressing underreporting.
- **In the interest of better knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon that are “underreported news stories” as well as consistency in related discourse across journalism, media, and communication, the term must be interrogated and clarified.**





Interrogating “underreported news stories”

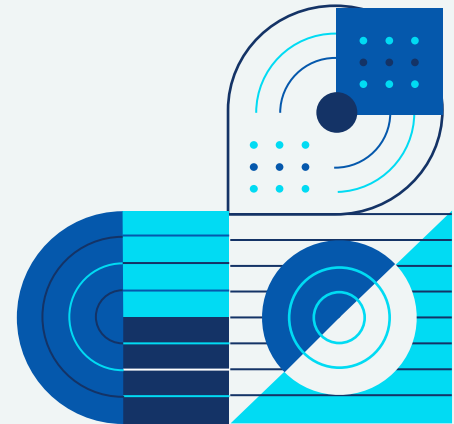
(FRAMEWORK AND METHOD)

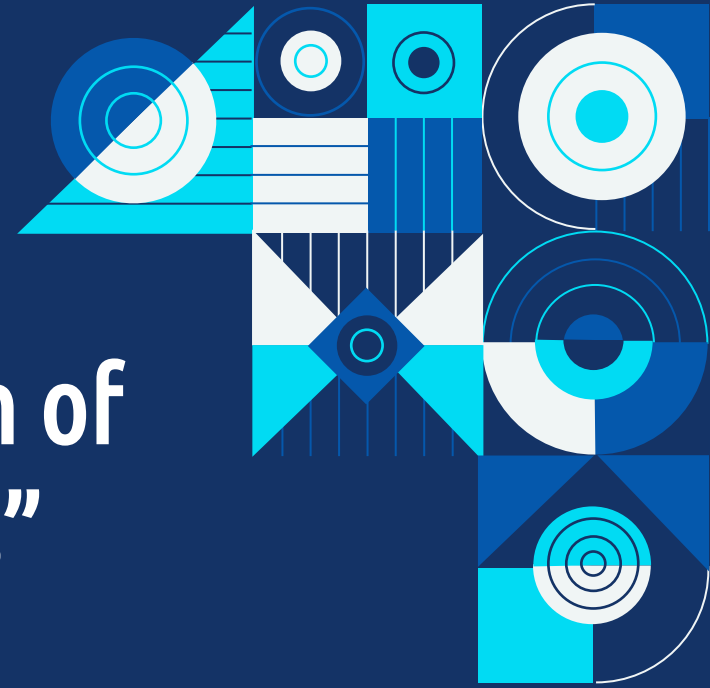
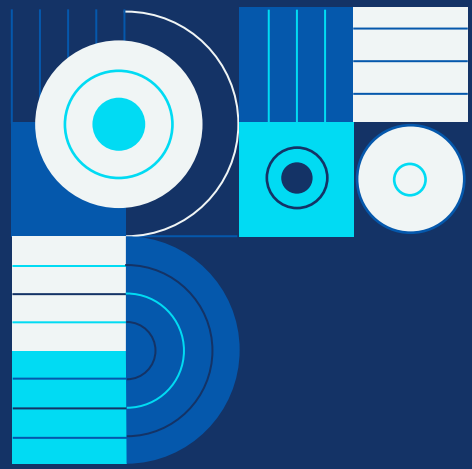




Steps in a philosophical investigation of a phenomenon (Ilharco, 2008)

- Describing the phenomenon
- Analyzing the etymology
- Performing the reduction
- Investigating the essence
- Interpreting concealed meanings





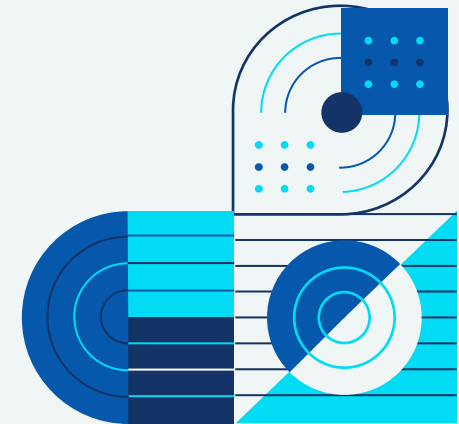
A phenomenological definition of “underreported news stories” —in five steps

(RESULTS, DISCUSSION, AND CONCLUSION)



Describing the phenomenon

- “Underreported news stories” belong to the realm of language
- But they also belong to space-time, a sort of suspended action
- Underreported stories are linguistic indicators of our state of knowing that appeal to our capacity for total information about reality
- They are signifiers of epistemic practices in our quest to experience the fullness of being -- the term therefore has an orientation toward ontology, toward making an account of it





Analyzing the etymology



ONLINE ETYMOLOGY DICTIONARY



under (prep., adv.)

Old English *under* (prep.) "beneath, among, before, in the presence of, in subjection to, under the rule of, by means of," also, as an adverb, "beneath, below, underneath," expressing position with reference to that which is above, from Proto-Germanic **under-* (source also of Old Frisian *under*, Dutch *onder*, Old High German *untar*, German *unter*, Old Norse *undir*, Gothic *undar*), from PIE **ndher-* "under" (source also of Sanskrit *adhah* "below;" Avestan *athara-* "lower;" Latin *infernus* "lower;" *infra* "below").



ONLINE ETYMOLOGY DICTIONARY



report (n.)

late 14c., "an account brought by one person to another; rumor, gossip," from Old French *report* "pronouncement, judgment" (Modern French *rapport*), from *reporter* "to tell, relate" (see **report** (v.)).

By early 15c. as "informative statement by a reputable source, authoritative account." In law, "formal account of a case argued and determined in court," by 1610s. The meaning "formal statement of results of an investigation" is attested by 1660s; sense of "teacher's official statement of a pupil's work and behavior" is from 1873 (**report card** in the school sense is attested by 1913, American English). The meaning "resounding noise, sound of an explosion or of the discharge of a firearm" is from 1580s.

report (v.)

late 14c., "to make known, tell, relate," from Old French *reporter* "to tell, relate; bring back, carry away, hand over," from Latin *reportare* "carry back, bear back, bring back," figuratively "report," in Medieval Latin "write (an account) for information or record," from *re-* "back" (see **re-**) + *portare* "to carry" (from PIE root ***per-** (2) "to lead, pass over"). Early 15c. as "to submit" (to an authority, etc.). Meaning "to name someone as having offended somehow" is from 1885.





Analyzing the etymology

reporting (n.)

mid-15c., "a written document," verbal noun from **report** (v.). By 1861 as "newspaper work involving gathering information and writing accounts for publication."



ONLINE ETYMOLOGY DICTIONARY



news (n.)

late 14c., "new things," plural of *new* (n.) "new thing" (see **new** (adj.)); after French *nouvelles*, which was used in Bible translations to render Medieval Latin *nova* (neuter plural) "news," literally "new things."

The English word was construed as singular at least from the 1560s, but it sometimes still was regarded as plural 17c.-19c. The odd and doubtful construction probably accounts for the **absurd folk-etymology** (attested by 1640 but originally, and in 18c. usually, in jest-books) that claims it to be an abbreviation of *north east south west*, as though "information from all quarters of the compass."

Meaning "tidings, intelligence of something that has lately taken place" is from early 15c. Meaning "radio or television program presenting current events" is from 1923. **Bad news** in the extended sense of "unpleasant person or situation" is from 1926. Expression **no news, good news** can be traced to 1640s. Expression **news to me** "something I did not know" is from 1889.

News-agent "person who deals in newspapers" is from 1817. **News-hound** "reporter" is by 1908. The newspaper office **news desk** is by 1840. **News-monger** "one who employs much time in hearing and telling news" is from 1590s. The *News* in the Virginia city **Newport News** is said to derive from the name of one of its founders, *William Newce*.





Performing the reduction

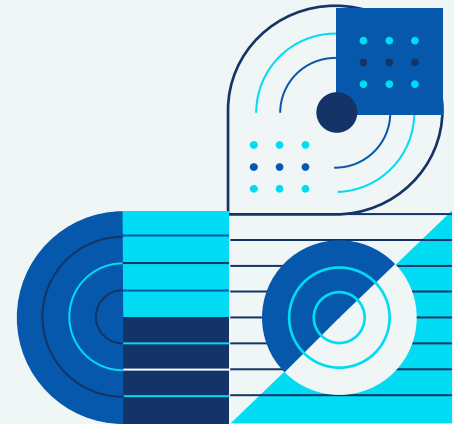
- Testimonies of our being uncertain
- Chronicles of our being *homo viator*





Investigating the essence

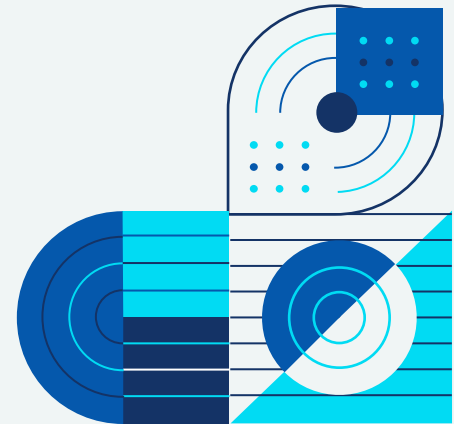
- “Underreported news stories” are maps for memory and vision

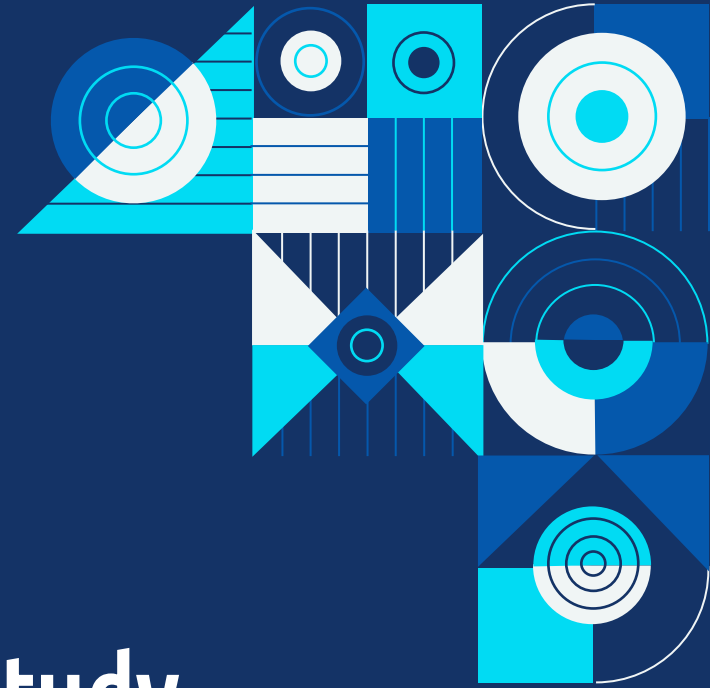
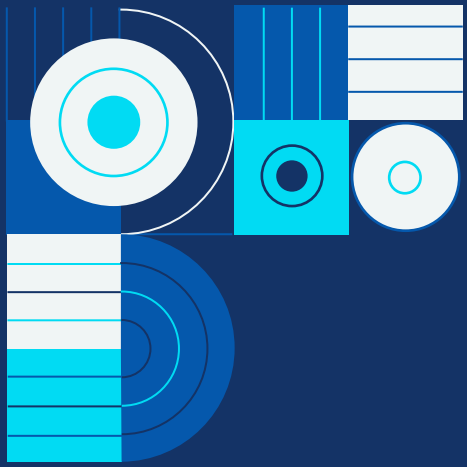




Interpreting concealed meanings

- Dynamic textual sacraments of our relationality





Limitations and critique of the study

(AFTERWORD)



Perspectives on method

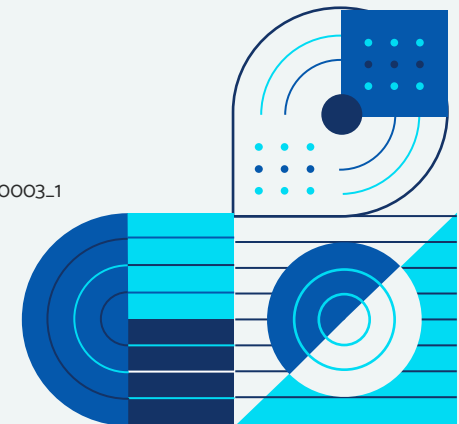
- Ilharco (2008): This is not the only way, this is not exhaustive
- Von Hildebrand (2009): Critique of method of unconcealment
- Buber (1937): Critique of journalism (I and Thou)





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**Gratias tibi!
Muito obrigado!
Daghang salamat!**



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