Bearing Witness

Practices of journalistic witnessing in South Sudan

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DECLARATION

I certify that the thesis I have presented for examination for the MPhil/PhD degree of the London School of Economics and Political Science is solely my own work other than where I have clearly indicated that it is the work of others (in which case the extent of any work carried out jointly by me and any other person is clearly identified in it).

I declare that my thesis consists of 97,944 words.

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the practices and normative tensions of journalists reporting on conflict in South Sudan, based on a combination of semi-structured interviews with journalists based in Nairobi, Kampala and Juba, as well as ethnographic observation of an investigative reporting trip to the Malakal protection of civilians site in Upper Nile state. This thesis addresses two research questions, asking how journalists' practices are enabled and constrained in the context of South Sudan, and what normative tensions arise during their practices of journalism. To these questions, this thesis develops three arguments.

In the first, I argue that risk functions as both a constraint to the practices of journalists working in South Sudan, as well as an element of the practice itself. It can afford journalists epistemic authority, material benefits and recognition as 'professional'. I also provide an account of media intimidation in South Sudan as it appears to journalists, and some of the tactics adopted to cope with this.

In the second, I argue for the importance of affect/emotion as an integral part of the practice of journalism in conflict. I make the case that emotion is not simply 'picked up' in the course of tiring and stressful work, but is an important part of how practices of journalism in South Sudan successfully proceed. I suggest that the case of journalists in South Sudan raises a number of important questions for research into affect/emotion in practices of news production more generally.

Finally, I argue that normative tensions experienced by journalists as moral conflicts suggest that this journalism operates within a humanitarian imaginary of the type described by Lilie Chouliaraki. Perceived 'obligations to report' and discomfort over whether or not to help individuals in certain cases are, I argue, examples of journalists' double-interpellation as both spectators and witnesses to the suffering of others.

For Katherine, for believing in me.

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Emily Callaci (2019) points out that acknowledgements betray the fiction that work like this is ever the sole product of a single mind, rather than of communities of support. This thesis was absolutely, ultimately, the emotional and conversational work of a community much larger than me, and I would like to acknowledge, however inadequately, everyone who helped to make this possible. Most excited to see this document finished will be my partner and love, Katherine Furman, whose endless encouragement and patient listening to the thousandth version of an iteratively-improving argument over four years has been the rock on which this project was emotionally possible. To my mother, Elaine and brother, John, I'd like to thank you both for a lifetime of watching me charge at windmills and always, always encouraging such behaviour. I could not have asked for better people in my life on this journey.

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CONTENTS

1 | INTRODUCTION

For a generation that came of age in the 1990s, Kevin Carter's image of a vulture and a girl[1] was emblematic of a form of journalism of a particularly moral kind - a practice which navigated danger and difficulty to produce accounts of others' suffering that we as privileged spectators ought to see and respond to. Carter's place in the mythic history of journalists bearing witness to suffering and conflict was in fact double-inscribed - once for that image and again for his membership of the 'Bang Bang club' that reported on the violence of the run-up to South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994 (Marinovich and Da Silva, 2001).

Much has changed in the twenty seven years since Carter created that frame. What was Sudan has since become two countries and international politics shifted away from its post-cold war enthusiasm for humanitarian intervention. While Carter's image of Kong Nyong has been overtaken by others in a long series of reminders of suffering, conflict reporting as a risky, morally particular work has remained as both an imagined and actual practice. In the South Sudan of 2017, journalist Chris Allen was killed by government soldiers while reporting, embedded with rebel forces, on the country's conflict. In death, he joined nine other journalists killed in the process of reporting on the war and its effects on the lives of South Sudan's citizens: John Gatluak Manguet, Peter Julius Moi, Pow James Raeth, Musa Mohammed, Boutros Martin, Dalia Marko, Randa George, Adam Juma and Isaiah Diing Abraham Chan Awuol.[2] The relatively vocal media coverage and subsequent investigative reporting on Allen's death also painfully highlighted the contrasting levels of accountability demanded for the death of a white American reporter over the earlier deaths of those who were ostensibly his professional peers in South Sudan.

The accounts of distant suffering that journalism of conflict provides are something that we take to be self-evidently morally important. As part of a cosmopolitan ethical project, a humanitarian imaginary, the representation of others in need grants us the opportunity, however imperfectly, to make good on a responsibility to people that the media has allowed (or perhaps forced) us to see (Chouliaraki, 2013; Silverstone, 2007; Boltanski, 1999). Regardless of whether we do in fact acknowledge our ethical obligations and act on them, or try to wiggle out of the facts or implied duties in received accounts of need (Moeller, 1999; Spiekermann, 2016; Seu, 2010), we enjoy no general right to ignorance of distant suffering (Sontag, 2003, p. 114). This point is perhaps even more strongly made when we are in various ways causally linked to it through our patterns of consumption, political choices, or simply an un-exercised ability to assist unknown others (Pogge, 2003; Linklater, 2007). Which is not to naïvely overlook the fact that we do not always seek to act out of genuine commitments to justice and solidarity. Humanitarian giving may be linked to a desire to 'purchase' the symbolic content of a humanitarian identity (Chouliaraki, 2013), for example. Nevertheless, within an imagined moral relationship to the suffering of others, our actions - however motivated - are made possible first through knowledge of suffering of the kind that journalists (and others) produce.

The work of journalists producing these representations involves negotiating the ethically complicated position of seeking proximity to (and occasionally, corporeal experiences of) conflict and its attendant suffering for purposes that may not include immediate (or, in the long run, possibly any) guarantees of assistance for the sufferer (Sontag, 2003). Questions of what ethics are appropriate for encountering the suffering of others combine with a slew of prac-

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[1] See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_vulture_and_the_little_girl. The girl, in fact, was a boy, Kong Nyong

[2] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_journalists_killed_in_South_Sudan

tical difficulties in actually navigating conflict contexts to make the practice of journalism in and of conflicts an especially complex form of the work.

With a few notable exceptions (Markham, 2011a,b; McLaughlin, 2016), studies of journalism of this type have often fallen within the broader sub-field of foreign correspondent studies, as those journalists who most frequently reported on conflict for organisations in the West were, in the longer history of such journalism, generally also the correspondents in the nearest bureau - 'our' proverbial 'man in Nairobi'[3]. Research into the work of journalists reporting on conflict has also generally tended towards interview-based approaches over ethnographic-type methods directed at examining these practices in context. This is not especially surprising. Trying to study journalism ethnographically in spaces of war is difficult for many of the same reasons that doing it is. Poor infrastructure and the persistence of risk are two of the most obvious barriers to researchers and journalists alike (Pollard, 2009).

1.1 CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

Despite these barriers - or perhaps informed by them - this thesis is an attempt to address some of the gaps in this sub-field of journalism studies using the case of journalists in South Sudan. Specifically, it explores some of the *material and discursive elements that enable and constrain the practices of journalists covering conflict* (research question 1) and the *tensions in normative ethics that arise during this work* (research question 2). In its data, this project is novel in at least two respects. In the first, I sought to interview as wide a selection of journalists actually reporting on conflict in various capacities as possible, rather than cleaving to a historical focus on the foreign journalists of various major organisations. The views of journalists from the Euro-American 'West' were included, but their insights have been examined together with those of South Sudanese, Ugandan and Kenyan journalists in roles that ranged from freelancers to correspondents at major global networks. This has been a deliberate attempt to make good on critiques of who we imagine when we imagine a conflict journalist (see chapter 2).

Second, this thesis involved ethnographic observation of the work of a variety of journalists as it took place in the context of an ongoing low-level civil war in South Sudan - a conflict which, at the time of fieldwork, had produced the largest forced migration in Africa since the Rwandan genocide. From the banal routines of journalists attending NGO and government press conferences in the capital, Juba, to following journalists on a war crimes investigation to Malakal in Upper Nile state, this thesis adds descriptions of the work of journalists and contextual details to the reflections of those journalists themselves. This has been a productive approach, theoretically and empirically, and has allowed the project to explore the practices of journalists from a point of view that takes seriously many of their most recognisable features - the structure of a 'risky' environment, the peculiarities of the sociological universe of international interveners, and the emotional and ethical negotiation that characterises reporting on suffering.

On a purely practical level, this project makes an empirical contribution to the practice(s) of journalism in and of one of the world's most significantly under-reported conflicts - South Sudan. As far as I am able to discern, no contemporary research on the dynamics of journalism as in South Sudan exists following the magisterial overview provided by Keri Wani (2014) in his *Mass Media in Sudan: Experience of the South*, though the scope of this detailed historical work ends in 2005, before the establishment of independent South Sudan. Moreover, Keri Wani's is a primarily historical account of the organisations that made up the media landscape in the country over the last century, rather than being concerned with the specifics of

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[3] And it was, invariably, a man.

journalism in conditions of contemporary conflict. In this regard, this thesis makes a number of contributions to the study of journalism of this type.

1.1.1 Exploring practices of journalism in and of conflict

Most immediately and obviously, this project adds to understanding what enables and constrains the work of journalists trying to report on what was at the time (and arguably remains) one of the world's largest and most under-reported conflicts. The choice of South Sudan as a case study is discussed in more detail in section 3.2. The country's disintegration over the last four years has made it an acute example of precisely the type of neglected conflict that journalism imagined as a form of bearing witness most obviously has as its object. A study of the practices of journalists in their attempts to cover the conflict in South Sudan provides an account of some of what makes this work not only possible, but recognisable as journalism of this kind.

As will become clear, there are aspects of life and work in South Sudan that differ in degree rather than kind from journalism undertaken in other contexts of risk and difficulty. Coping with state intimidation, the manichaean structure of humanitarian/NGO infrastructure, the normative ethics of the profession and the affective dimensions of their work are all discussions that would be familiar to those who have lived, worked or researched in conflicts or 'complex humanitarian emergencies' in other places and times. While there is value to understanding journalism in South Sudan in its particularity, it would be remiss not to point out that not everything discussed here is particular.

1.1.2 Developing work on foreign correspondents

Within this field of journalism studies, previous research on the work of war correspondents has tended to focus attention on the work of reporting in geopolitically important conflicts, such as the wars in Yugoslavia and Iraq (McLaughlin, 2016; Playdon, 2002), whose contexts are in many respects different to those of 'new wars'[4] fought in geopolitically marginal contexts by comparably irregular forces, where the problems of representing geographically and culturally distant suffering and fostering cosmopolitan sensibilities are most acute (Hawkins, 2008, 2011).

Such work has also generally had a particular interest in studying embedding as a form of journalistic 'capture' by state militaries (McLaughlin, 2016), or the autobiographical world of the foreign correspondent (Bentley, 2013). There is much left to add in connecting the actual and imagined geography of conflict space to the practices of journalists. The historical focus on the work of journalists representing conflicts to home audiences in the geopolitical West has also left other journalists and their work out of the spotlight. There is value in looking at the practices of local-national or regional journalists as they go about trying to report on conflicts for home-country audiences or audiences in neighbouring countries outside of the normally presumed geopolitical center. Equally, there is practical value to excavating some of the detail of the banalities of the work, in order to better understand how risk, affect and role-conceptions might structure the work of journalism outside of moments of spectacular violence or active conflict. That is, what goes into making journalism when not on the frontlines or seeking to reach them?

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[4] The term 'new wars' describes a particular form of less-tractable conflict with a self-perpetuating economic logic, proposed by Kaldor (2006). See Kalyvas and Kalyvas (2001) for a problematisation of this category.

1.1.3   Affect and the work of the journalist

Existing work on affect in the practices of journalists covering traumatic events in non-conflict contexts has highlighted the importance of affect and emotion to the work of journalism under trying circumstances (Kotišová, 2017; Jukes, 2017). In particular, these authors have pointed to cynicism (Kotišová, 2017) and an attitude of 'cool detachment' (Jukes, 2017) amongst journalists as an emotional distancing mechanism when working under stressful conditions. In the case of journalists covering armed conflict, Feinstein et al. (2002) has pointed to the often severe consequences of working in these contexts for journalists' mental health (Osmann et al., 2020) as they return to the newsrooms they left.

In between these accounts lies a gap addressed by asking how affect and emotion figure into the practices of journalists as they go about their work under often significant strain. That is to say, what do the feelings of journalists and the fact of their physical presence in often demanding surroundings actually do in and for practice? If the physicality and emotionality/affectivity of conflict space is one of its most recognisable features, what can we learn by taking this seriously as an element of the practices of journalists - as something to be coped with, but also as a resource used to mark the practice as distinctive and authoritative in particular ways.

In its examination of affect and emotion in the reflections and observed practices of journalists, this thesis opens up a number of diverse ways of thinking about affect and practices of journalism. Rather than understanding emotion as a kind of akratic failure of will or affective baggage accumulated as practice proceeds, I develop a more entangled account of affect and practice, informed by Wetherell's (2013) concept of 'affective/discursive practice'. In many cases, there is no reason to believe that there is anything especially South-Sudan-centric about these insights, and they likely have value to thinking through the relationship between journalism and affect/emotion in other, non-conflicted, less-marginal contexts.

1.1.4   Distant suffering and bearing witness

Finally, existing work on the mediation of distant suffering has largely focused on analysing the structure of texts (Chouliaraki, 2006), audience responses (Seu, 2010; Orgad and Vella, 2012) and the institution-level interactions of media and foreign policy elites (Robinson, 2000; Hawkins, 2011; Livingston, 1997; Olsen et al., 2003a,b). These lines of enquiry would benefit from research examining the practices of the producers of these texts. If the project of studying the mediation of distant suffering is to make progress from 'how things are to how things could and should be' (Chouliaraki, 2006, p. 199), then this can only be helped by an understanding of how the actual production of accounts of suffering takes place. What is it, in other words, that journalists reporting on conflict are actually doing?

In the case of the literature on media and witnessing, the case for the existence of a discourse of bearing witness and its role in justifying practices of journalism has been a valuable contribution to understanding how witnessing more broadly connects to the practice of journalism performed in proximity to suffering (Tait, 2011). This project develops this thinking further in conversation with journalists themselves, to outline more of the normative ethics that make up the role of one who 'bears witness' as journalists understand it, and the conflicts this role can occasionally create when doing work that may also involve being a direct spectator to others' suffering.

1.2 THE STRUCTURE OF THIS THESIS

This thesis is divided into eight chapters. In chapter 2, I develop some of the theory that informs how I come to think about the material and discursive elements of the practice of conflict reporting in the way I do. Theoretically, this is an eclectic mix, drawing on existing literatures on witnessing and foreign correspondence that would be familiar to scholars of journalism studies, but also work on the sociology of humanitarian space and affect/emotion which has to my knowledge not been widely applied to the work of conflict journalism in this way. I outline how changes in foreign reporting practices have resulted in different kinds of journalists covering conflicts, in potentially very different ways to their oft-researched predecessors - the foreign correspondents of Bunce's (2010) "white British boys' club". Turning to existing work on the micro-sociology of the physical and social space of international humanitarianism, I argue that Fanon's (1963) concept of 'manichaean space' provides a productive lens through which to understand the structure of the humanitarian 'Peaceland' (Autesserre, 2014b; Jennings, 2016) in structuring where and how journalists are able to report on situations of conflict. I also draw on work on the politics of local-foreign stringers and freelancers, which point to the structuring effects of aspects of journalists' identities (in terms of gender, race, and status as foreign or local-national) on their ability to communicate accounts of conflicts with safety and authority. Finally, I argue that theory on affect and emotion has much to offer in thinking about the practices of journalists in contexts which are widely acknowledged to be highly affective, but not generally theorised as such.

Taken together, these threads support three general claims. First, that existing work on witnessing can be productively brought into conversation with the practices and understandings of its most paradigmatic practitioners: chroniclers of suffering in armed conflict. Second, that changes in the structure of foreign news reporting and who we think of when we think of a conflict journalist warrant a re-examination of how the work of conflict reporters actually proceeds. Third, that the sociology of the humanitarian space and the professional identities of journalists offer productive ways of thinking about how their work is enabled and constrained in different ways.

In chapter 3, I outline the specifics of what was actually done in conducting this research, and the research questions that I am concerned with. I provide an explanation for the choice of South Sudan as a case study and describe the selection of interview respondents and the structure of the ethnographic observation that took place in Juba and Upper Nile during fieldwork. I also elaborate in more detail about how interview material and fieldnotes were analysed to arrive at the findings that this thesis presents. As might be expected in research of this kind, I also give a more considered discussion of some of the challenges around risk and ethics that this project brought up. I was fortunate that the LSE allowed me to conduct field research in both Juba and the Malakal protection of civilians (POC) site in Upper Nile. This turned out to be an exceptional opportunity to learn and reflect on elements of the practice of journalism in the country that would never have occurred to me had I not been able to experience something of the reporting context myself, and meet with dozens of South Sudanese and foreign journalists who had been working in the country for some time. This access, however, created very real stakes in terms of the practicalities of keeping myself and others safe and raised questions around my own position in the social/political space that my respondents worked in. I have tried to reflect on these as openly as I can.

A discussion of my empirical data and findings begins in Chapter 4. This chapter is intended as both an introduction into the 'facts of the context' that the reader ought to be familiar with as they proceed to later chapters and a claim about the ways in which risk is written into the geography of Juba and structures the practices of journalists. This chapter includes detail on the bureaucratic structure of the world in which foreign and local-national journalists operate (and some of the most apparent sources of their intimidation), but also examines the literal infrastructure of the space. I outline in more detail some of the key features of a humanitarian

infrastructure that provides safe passage, transport and accommodation to journalists, and the ways in which geographic space is split in precisely the kind of manichaean terms that the literature on 'Peaceland'/'Aidland' would suggest. This chapter makes clear some of the most obvious forms that repression and intimidation of journalists takes in the country, and the degree to which its Media Authority departs from its legal mandate in harassing and blocking journalists in their work.

This is not, however, a thesis on media policy in South Sudan - though this is certainly a part of the environment in which journalists practice. Threat pervades the context in which journalists work and they must to respond to it in ways that both allow them to *do* journalism (that is, to achieve material outcomes) and to have what they do be recognisable *as* professional journalism. In line with this observation, chapter 5 moves to develop a more detailed discussion of how safety is entangled with practices of conflict journalism and the tactics that respondents adopted in coping with various sources of often existential risk during the course of their work. This includes tactics of association, evaluating and declining risky work, using balancing of stories to deflect unwelcome attention, and developing a sense of how elements of their personal and professional identities might produce different and possibly unwelcome understandings of their role in different contexts.

Chapter 6 then pivots to more affective questions around the practices of journalists as I observed them and they were related during interviews. It is intended to provoke a discussion on what is most obviously particular about conflict contexts - that they are often highly affective environments to those inside them. With this in mind, I develop a number of lines of argument on how affect/emotion opens up new ways of thinking about how journalists' feelings and bodies inflect their practices. I begin with a discussion of exhaustion and its effects on the practices of journalists working in high-pressure, under-resourced contexts, as well as some of the tactics that they take to cope with its effects and the questions these raise. I then move to thinking about the role of emotion when journalists find themselves conflicted in their roles - most obviously during encountering needy others that they could, in principle, assist. I argue that certain kinds of affective moments that would appear akratic under orthodox rules of professional journalism in fact point to affect being a form of non-deliberative rationality in moments where journalists appear to be conflicted in their roles and obligations to sufferers they encounter. Next, I argue that the 'doing' of journalism in (at least) this context involves managing as best one can the kind of 'feelings' that one gives off, and one's own affective responses. In various situations, from the banal to the life threatening, how one feels and causes others to feel may carry important consequences that journalists must take into account in their work. Finally, I reflect on the embodied nature of much of the knowledge required to navigate dangerous contexts, and what this might imply for rethinking what it means to be, and to train, a 'skilled' conflict journalist.

The final empirical chapter (chapter 7) continues a discussion on journalists' feelings of being conflicted whose affective reality was the subject of the previous chapter. It asks how we might make sociological sense of this phenomenon through seeing journalists and those they work with as operating within a common humanitarian imaginary in which their roles and relationships to other people and institutions may be organised in occasionally contradictory ways. I point to journalists' own reflections on the role and value of their work to argue that they reflect an imaginary in which journalists might occupy both a professional role of witness and a personal role of spectator who could act/denounce the suffering of others. This tension is something that must be worked out in practice in a number of ways if journalists are to fulfil the imagined normative expectations of what is required to be both a 'good' journalist and a 'good' person. I also reflect on the ambivalent relationship between journalists and NGOs in the imagination of journalists, where the normative ethics of international interveners and journalists may be aligned on matters of mobilising assistance for sufferers, but often imagined (and mythologised by journalists) as contradictory on matters of denouncing injustice and naming perpetrators.

2 | THE PRACTICES OF CONFLICT REPORTING

This thesis approaches the work of journalists reporting on conflict as forms of practice. By 'practice', I have in mind Chouliaraki and Fairclough's (1999a) view of practices as composed of material and discursive elements that journalists bring together in more or less stable iterations that both 'do' something material and are recognisable *as* conflict journalism. This approach allows for an exploration of the work of journalists that remains sensitive to both the materiality of space and bodies in 'conflict' conditions, and the rich discursive 'world' which structures journalists' norms and the recognisability of what they do as *journalism* of a particular type.

It is not the ambition of this chapter to give a full inventory of what elements might make up practices of conflict journalism. This would be an impossibly naïve undertaking, given (at least) the potential variation in any single moment of practice, the wide variety of practices that might be entertained as conflict journalism, and the subjective availability of material and discursive resources to different journalists in different contexts at different times. It is my intention, instead, to assemble a discussion of different insights from journalism studies, the sociology of conflict, witnessing, and work on affect/emotion to explore some of what might make the practices of journalists working in and on conflict contexts sociologically distinctive and more broadly theoretically interesting.

To this end, this chapter begins with a discussion of the idea of the journalist as 'witness' within a broader humanitarian imaginary and its construction of a morally praiseworthy position for the journalist-observer as something other than a voyeur in the presence of others' suffering. Journalism of conflict imagines itself as moral in particular ways that draw from and extend on previous work on witnessing and journalism, and it is worth outlining some of these insights in more detail, so that the language of witnessing and some of its implied normative commitments can be highlighted.

Next, I point out that material structures such as money, transport networks, technologies of safety, bodies and emotions are all important constraints on the work of journalists of the type I am interested in. That said, a more sophisticated understanding of how the practice of conflict reporting is structured by its material conditions requires us to go further than existing accounts of how little money, safety training and other support the contemporary conflict journalist has (see Palmer (2018) for a detailed discussion of these). I begin by outlining a critique of particular strands of the commonly-accepted story of reporting conflicts, including its occasionally problematic optimism towards technology and the limitations of the ideal-typical conflict journalist in both the popular and academic imaginations. Next, I discuss what the study of journalism(s) of conflict might stand to learn from the literature on the micro-sociology of humanitarianism and peacekeeping - the work of those who study 'Aidland' (Mosse, 2011) and its peacebuilding analogue, 'Peaceland' (Autesserre, 2014b; Heathershaw, 2016; Jennings, 2016).

I argue that we ought to consider how the material conditions facing journalists might interact with their normative commitments in ways best understood as a moral economy[1] of journalism (Wright, 2018b), but that more than this, we ought to conceive of these moral-economic structures as interacting with the bodies and emotional worlds of journalists. In this formulation, I argue that it is through affective experiences such as anxiety, fear and euphoria that

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[1] In the sense of understanding the actions of agents as being not simply economically-rational, but also motivated in their decisions by normative principles that may encourage 'irrational' decisions, alliances and actions.

the moral-economic structures within which conflict journalists work exert their behaviour-affecting force. In a reverse direction, one can also understand the affective experience of working in areas of danger as a form of 'identity-certification' in which it is the fact of bodily experience - Harari's (2009) 'flesh witnessing' - that certifies the practice of bearing witness as authentic, and underwrites the journalist's claim to a particular kind of heroic identity (what, from a discourse perspective, Peters (2001) would term the discourse of the martyr).

For if a moral economic perspective can help us to see the relationships between material structures and the particular normative commitments of journalists, affect allows us to see the force with which these structures act on the bodies of journalists, as it were - to connect moral-economic reasoning to the actual experiences of fear, anxiety, anger and euphoria that would be familiar to anyone who has spent time in a Juba, a Goma, a Kabul, or some other incarnation of 'Aidland'. The affective results of how norms and structures interact are not, I argue, simply a passive, qualitative 'experience' of decisions made by rational moral-economic actors, but can be understood as both the disciplinary force of these structures and an important element of meaning-making in the process of doing such work. After all, the (actual, experienced) fear of reporting from dangerous environments is often what does the practical work of constraining journalists, despite normative commitments and the material and discursive contexts in which they work. It is also what makes it possible to imagine such reporting as courageous (or foolhardy). It is no coincidence, after all, that two journalists (or humanitarian workers, or soldiers) will often steer conversations into a form of story-swapping on learning that they both spent time in specific dangerous contexts. Asserting one's affective history in such instances functions in part as a form of establishing one's bona fides - the authority to speak to the reality of a particular place and time (Driscoll and Schuster, 2018, p. 419).

2.1 JOURNALISTS AS WITNESSES

The concept of *witnessing* has developed in media and journalism studies as a way of thinking through the implications of observing and representing suffering to others. Recent work on this issue includes Frosh and Pinchevski's (2008) work on media witnessing, as well as theorising the concept of 'witnessing' across various moments of media circulation (Ong, 2012). Audiences can witness through media (Chouliaraki, 2004; Rentschler, 2004; Kim and Kelly, 2013), media accounts can serve as witnessing texts (Chouliaraki, 2006; Givoni, 2011), and journalists, humanitarians and others can bear witness to atrocity directly (Tait, 2011; Cottle, 2013; Givoni, 2011) for the purpose of testifying to others about what they have seen. It is this latter conception - of the activity of 'bearing witness' to suffering - that I am interested in.

As an ethics, bearing witness can be understood as an obligation to communicate observed suffering and its cause(s) - a duty to assist others through undertaking to communicate on their behalf, as it were. In this, it offers a position for the observer of suffering as something other that that of the voyeur - a guilty form of watching (Frowe and Parry, 2019). In the case of journalists working covering conflict, the idea of the journalist as a witness and the norms that this role implies can be understood as linked to a broader humanitarian imaginary (Chouliaraki, 2013) that structures how journalists and other actors involved in mediating accounts of suffering understand their roles and duties towards one another. This observation is more fully developed in chapter 7, but the point worth highlighting early on is that journalism in situations of conflict takes place within a relatively stable imaginary (in Taylor's (2002) sense) that structures how people imagine their roles, how those roles 'fit' with others and what normative expectations might apply.

As a *discourse*, bearing witness may serve as a justification for performing dangerous, traumatic and potentially ethically ambiguous work by journalists involved in reporting conflict (Cottle, 2013), a justification which often underpins shifting responsibility for the dangers they face onto journalists themselves (Palmer, 2018). This then raises the question of how the imagined obligations of bearing witness might structure the practices of journalism from moment to moment. That is, what might an ethics of bearing witness mean for how journalists go about doing their work, beyond the observation that they decide to undertake it? What kinds of actions might become praiseworthy journalistic practice as a result, and what kinds of practices might be ruled out? Peters (2001) has argued that witnessing more broadly can be understood as being discursively connected to concepts of the witness as martyr (in theology), as privileged source of information (in law), and as survivor (as exemplified by the history of witnesses to the holocaust), which cause it to carry an unusually large cultural and moral weight. I agree with this view that these concepts are articulated in discourses of bearing witness, but that in the case of journalists working in situations of conflict, and humanitarian emergency more generally, justifications of being engaged in a practice of 'bearing witness' of the type Peters describes creates ethical tensions that journalists themselves must work to resolve.

For example, Tait (2011) has pointed to tensions between the principle of journalistic objectivity and the demand that one who bears witness communicate not simply the facts, but the (impossible) affective horror of what has been seen, in order to place a (moral) claim on audiences as spectators to suffering. Trying to communicate the affective horror of conflict so as to provoke action comports well with the discourse of witnessing as a kind of denunciatory spectatorship in Peters' sense (as in the archetypes of Holocaust testimony, or the witness speaking during a trial), but may be far less compatible with professional journalistic norms of objectivity. Palmer (2018) raises such a concern in her discussion of the construction of Marie Colvin's final interviews before her death in Baba Amr, in which she was accepted as a 'witness' to the truth of the situation through a performance that included taking unverified footage of a dying child as fact.

Wright (2016b) identifies similar tensions in the justifications given by those working in 'liminal' roles freelancing for both news organisations and international NGOs, and between the professional norms of traditionally-employed journalists and de facto media partners such as NGOs who may have specific interests in advocacy and denunciation (Wright, 2016a, 2018b). What is common to both cases is a disconnect between what one ought to be and do to identify as a 'good' journalist, and what one ought to be and do to bear witness via denunciation. These contradictions must be resolved in practice if one is to be both a good journalist (be professionally good) and bear witness well (be morally good). Chapter 7 explores journalists' accounts of their role(s) and obligation(s) and how these produce practical tensions with precisely this view in mind.

2.2 CHANGES IN FOREIGN REPORTING

Changes in foreign reporting have, by and large, meant changes in conflict reporting, given that the reporting of distant suffering is, as the term suggests, generally undertaken in geopolitically marginal[2] locations. In this section, I discuss two particular shifts over the last few decades that have had far-reaching implications for the work of reporting on distant areas of the world: the move from permanent foreign correspondents towards flexible economies of stringers and freelancers, and a transformation in technology that has in some ways enabled remote newsgathering to be more easily practiced than ever before.

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[2] For some assumed centre, whose problematic construction ought to be noted.

In the first instance, challenges to the economics of journalism and the comparatively high costs associated with foreign correspondents have led many newsrooms to gradually shift from maintaining overseas bureaux, towards flexible commissioning of stories from freelancers and stringers in different parts of the world (Hamilton et al., 2004; Hoffman, 2003; Palmer, 2015; Waisbord, 2019; Palmer, 2018). Though there are variations within this general trend - Al Jazeera, for example, has continued to invest significantly in foreign correspondents (Figenschou, 2010) - the overall shift has come to create at least two relevant effects. On the one hand, newsrooms' increasing use of local stringers may be producing new challenges to traditional orthodoxies around how stories are told, as local-national stringers and freelancers occupy more space in bureaux (Bunce, 2010). On the other, there is evidence that outside major foreign bureaux such as Nairobi and Johannesburg (in the African case), connections between local-national journalists and their wires and commissioning organisations may be stretched to the point that some local-national reporters spend so little time in physical newsrooms that assumptions about strong conditioning effects of 'newsroom culture' on journalists' practices can reasonably be drawn into question (Bunce, 2011).

There is scant data on the funding models underlying conflict journalism specifically, though research does exist on the current landscape of funding for humanitarian journalism (of which the journalism of conflict might reasonably be considered a subset). Scott et al. (2018) have observed that sustained funding of humanitarian journalism is largely now the province of state-funded or assisted news agencies (such as AFP, Xinhua and Al Jazeera) and grant-funded endeavours ranging from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's subsidy for the Guardian's development section to the Thompson Reuters Foundation. Both of these categories of funding typically come with strategic - if not specifically editorial - influence from the funding organisation, as funding is typically related to whether or not a media organisation 'fits' with the broader goals of the funder in question (Scott et al., 2018, 2019). Outside of state- and donor-funded news agencies, there may be a handful of other opportunities with large wire services (e.g. AP, AFP, Reuters), independent project or professional grants[3], or - more typically - a mix of regular pitches to these organisations combined with freelancing as media producers for NGOs who need material produced for their communications and advocacy work (Wright, 2019) or fixing for other journalists, where one has privileged abilities to work in particular contexts (Palmer, 2019). The increased practice of NGO moonlighting is an ongoing area of research, for the questions that it raises about how those involved in this work navigate between journalistic norms and the norms of the NGOs for whom freelancers may be contracted to shoot and potentially sell-on material for (Wright, 2016b).

At the same time as a shift away from full-time correspondents to more precarious forms of freelancing is occurring, advances in technology are enabling reporting to be done from more and more remote regions. Cooper et al. (2014) have argued that these shifts have included increases in scale, speed, surveillance and saturation of reporting, as well as the creation of more sophisticated forms of mediated social relations between parties affected or involved in humanitarian emergencies and new possibilities of seeing disasters unfold (apparently) live in remote places Palmer (2015, 2018). Audiences across the world witnessing the 9/11 attacks live (Chouliaraki, 2004) is perhaps the most widely recognizable example of the kind of mediation of distant[4] suffering that is now possible thanks to satellites and increasingly lower transmission costs. Advances in satellite internet such as BGAN modems and compact satellite telephones (Livingston and Belle, 2005) and the increasing availability of mobile internet access - often even in conflict zones (Hamilton et al., 2004) have been used as evidence that filing stories from remote locations is becoming increasingly practical. These shifts have, the argument implies, compensated to some degree for a broader industry transition to 'flexible' stringer/freelancer journalism, allowing cheaper news production from distant parts of the world as a response to shrinking budgets for permanent foreign correspondents. Even more so when the costs of equipment (and safety) can be passed on to the journalist who is increas-

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[3] such as those by the Pulitzer Centre for Crisis Reporting, the MacArthur Grant and others

[4] Again, for some definition of who and where counts as 'distant', which I problematise in a later discussion on my choice of South Sudan as a case study.

ingly being constructed as a self-managing, neoliberal 'competitor' in a market for (frequently dangerous and difficult) reporting (Palmer, 2018).

On the one hand, these shifts can be read as democratising access to the tools of media production and - at least in principle - the ability to reach audiences directly from the field. On the other, the danger and expense of reporting from conflict zones - which has, if anything, increased[5] - may exacerbate dependencies between journalists and non-news organisations able to subsidise these costs of access and safety (Cottle and Nolan, 2007; Kalcsics, 2011). It is not often recognised that for all the innovations in recording and transmission technology, journalists (whether 'citizen' or professional) still generally need to physically reach and return from zones of conflict in order to do their reporting well. While augmented in their capacity to capture and broadcast testimony from dangerous places, journalists' bodies are fundamentally no more protected than they ever were, and are increasingly vulnerable to being targeted for death or capture by states, armed actors and various elites. Palmer (2018), drawing on Butler's (2009) arguments on the grievability of life and precarity points out that both the risk to life and the significance of a conflict journalist's death are differently distributed between different types of bodies, according to distinctions of (at least) race, gender, nationality and affiliation to a professional news organisation.

2.2.1 Critiquing the straightforward account

The story emerging from the work on humanitarian reporting and foreign correspondent studies over the last decade or so shows an overall picture of financial pressure increasing the precarity of journalists working on humanitarian and conflict stories. We should be cautious of this account in a number of respects, however. In the first instance, any implied argument that technologies such as satellite phones (Livingston and Belle, 2005) or smartphones in the hands of citizen journalists are able to offset the effects of a lack of funding for these forms of reporting is, I suggest, counter-intuitive and ought to be treated with suspicion.

Further, when discussing the history of humanitarian and conflict journalism, there is a tendency for previous work in this field to focus on the experiences and histories of journalists from Europe and the US working abroad (Nothias, 2015; Bentley, 2013; Wright, 2016b; Hamilton et al., 2004; McLaughlin, 2016; Schmickle, 2003; Rodgers, 2016; Palmer, 2018). Exceptions do exist, such as Palmer and Melki's (2018) discussion of gender in war reporting in the middle east and work on the professional lives of fixers Palmer (2019), but the overall interest of researchers in journalists of *conflict* remains largely preoccupied with the work of recogniseable figures attached to large international news organisations. This observation should prompt a critical reflection on who we think of when we think of conflict journalism, and more especially who is *not* being thought of. It should also prompt a more thorough reflection on the degree to which the study of a journalism of conflict and humanitarian emergencies is deserving of the postcolonial critique of having examined the experience of European/American journalists abroad, and taken this to be a universal category to the exclusion of attending to experiences of journalists and journalism as practiced by the rest of the world in the rest of the world.

The case against technological optimism

Taken together, the changes in technology and the economics of journalism reflected on earlier can be naïvely read as a shift towards depending on freelance/stringer journalists at the same time as they are being given expanded abilities to do the work of reporting distant suffering

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[5] The Committee to Protect Journalists tracks these figures, and they make grim reading:
https://cpj.org/killed/

more competently. But a picture this straightforward should be treated with suspicion. In the first instance, there is no reason to believe that innovation in satellite recording, smartphones, and other forms of democratised recording devices will do much to compensate for what is taken away from journalists' security and well-being through the shrinking of newsrooms, a scarcity of safety training, support, and equipment, and a general shift to conditions of precarity for journalists (Sambrook, 2010) - both economic and increasingly, violently literal. Livingston and Belle's (2005) observation that satellite phones reduce the effects of remoteness on news reporting was, after all, made in a time before the devices began being tracked and their owners detained or killed.[6]

There may well be reasons to see these technologies as in fact being complementary to the logic of journalistic precarity. Seen this way, they enable a shift from access to institutional equipment and support within a framework of institutional responsibility for staff to a more neoliberal form of entrepreneurship, where freelancers must increasingly find their own recording and safety gear, pay for transmission of images and copy, and generally assume more and more of the financial and personal risks of the job. Rentschler (2007) and Palmer (2018) offer critiques of journalism's 'safety culture' of precisely this kind.

If you succeed in capturing the story, the network may buy it. If you are imprisoned or killed, you are on your own. Such cynical divisions of responsibility are not universal (though certainly more widespread than ought to make media professionals comfortable) but the shifting of costs and risks from news organisations to journalists raises ethical questions about whether this new economics of crisis and conflict reporting is not perhaps leading to terrible choices between incentivising under-funded, under-trained, under-supported journalists to cover stories in dangerous places or refusing to take stories from those places. Neither is an attractive option.

The argument for increasingly widespread access to technology also masks important complexities in what exactly 'widespread' means and how straightforward it is to obtain and use various technologies that might augment reporting from dangerous contexts. Body armour is an instructive case in point. Otherwise known as a 'plate carrier' consisting of a dense nylon vest containing ceramic plates backed by kevlar in front and behind the wearer it is a potentially life-saving item when working in or near places where there is a high risk of armed conflict. But obtaining and using one makes clear some of the difficulties with conflating an argument that specialised equipment *easier* to obtain with the argument that such equipment is *easy* to obtain.[7]

The nylon jacket itself can (from a limited set of countries) be purchased from eBay as a military surplus item fairly inexpensively, but the internal armour plates must generally be purchased new, as second-hand ones are not typically available for sale, and may not be usable if they are.[8] They will cost around £600, with each plate weighing between 2.8 and 4kg, making the total weight of a protective vest (without helmet) between approximately six and eleven kilograms. Plates may occasionally be obtained from one's commissioning news organisation - Reuters, for example, provides these to its correspondents in South Sudan - as long as one is on a large enough commission for them or employed on a long-term basis. For freelancers, some not for profit organisations may provide body armour on a short-term rental basis, but generally against a deposit of up to £1,000.[9]

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[6] There is reason to believe that journalists Marie Colvin, and Rémi Ochlik were tracked by the Syrian government through their satellite phones before being killed (Hilsum, 2019), and advice to journalists being trained for deployment in hostile contexts now routinely includes warnings against using satellite phones frequently and from the same location repeatedly. In various conflict zones, including South Sudan, being caught with a satellite phone is grounds for arrest and interrogation by state security.

[7] An unexpectedly helpful observation that I was able to make thanks to strict university rules on risk management and research. Which is an essay for another day.

[8] The ceramic plates that make up most of the stopping power of a typical plate may develop micro-fractures if dropped or mishandled, which are not visible to the naked eye but can cause the armour to fail catastrophically in practice.

[9] Personal communication with freelancers in Kampala.

This example illustrates a few of the reasons to be cautious of a narrative that the increased availability of various technologies might compensate for the overall degradation in the safety and security of journalists working in conflict zones. In the first instance, many of the technologies most suited to enhancing the ability to report from conflict regions are highly specialised - and therefore expensive and with limited access. Like body armour, obtaining a satellite phone requires significant financial resources. Second, simply possessing it may produce new security risks. As with satellite phones, being caught with body armour in your luggage is likely to entail an immediate appointment with the police, military or airport security. Finally, using such specialised technologies in the field immediately marks one out in ways that may not in fact contribute to safer, more effective reporting. Wearing it changes the relationship with non-combatants that one might want to interview - implying a high degree of danger directly to civilian interviewees who likely have no such protection themselves[10]. How one is read by potentially hostile forces in the military and security institutions of a country is also sharply altered. Like the quick-application tourniquets, Celox[11] and Israeli bandages[12] in a reasonably-stocked first aid kit, the technology of ballistic protection is one with an obvious military history, making a decision to use it a decision to invite potentially harmful readings of who you appear to be. Less textually, a journalist in body armour, carrying a satphone and a first aid kit full of items used to treat severe trauma invites suspicion and the potential for misidentification by authorities.

This last observation is also part of a more subtle observation generally - that the various technologies available to enhance reporting of violence and its consequences in many instances have specific etiquettes and skills that journalists must come to learn if they are to make use of them effectively. *Having* body armour is one problem, solvable through spending money or having the right kind of connections required to obtain it through special arrangements. *Knowing* when it is acceptable to wear it (or to use a large DSLR camera, a sat-phone, or even the photographic function on a smartphone) requires developing a certain sense of the social rules and risks relating to various technologies while in context. The fact that one can beg, buy or borrow equipment that can assist in reporting from dangerous spaces is not enough. What is sociologically relevant to the study of practices of journalism in risky contexts - beyond asking what structures who can beg, buy or borrow the equipment - is how these technologies in turn enable or constrain the kinds of practices that can be carried out. They may affect where one can travel safely, but also how one is 'read' on arrival, and whether the user is made safer or made into a target. Livingston and Belle's (2005) satellite phone may help diminish the effects of remoteness on reporting. It may also get you killed.

Whose conflict reporting?

Beyond questioning whether technology is, in fact, compensating for increases in other constraints on journalists, one would do well to take a postcolonial pause to consider what kind of journalist we imagine when we imagine a conflict journalist. Despite an admirable recounting of the history of the war correspondent and the rise of military embedding as a form of control, McLaughlin's (2016) war reporters (as one example of this lacuna) are generally white, Euro-American (or South African) male journalists who fit well with a specific conception of what a war correspondent ought to look like. A genealogy of the generally white, once-but-no-longer-male foreign war reporter stretches from William Howard Russell's 'luckless tribe' (Best, 2012) to the exploits of South Africa's 'Bang Bang Club' during the dying days of apartheid (Marinovich and Da Silva, 2001). Generally absent from the orthodox discourse of the conflict reporter are all those from outside this European/American cultural universe.[13]

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[10]This point was made more colourfully by an interviewee: "you're a dick if you're sitting in body armour talking to someone who doesn't have any."

[11]A powder used to rapidly clot traumatic bleeding, developed out of medical practice in the US war in Afghanistan.

[12]A combination bandage, absorbent padding and compression device developed for the IDF in the 1990s

[13]Wahutu (2019) makes this point eloquently in reflecting on the field of journalism in Kenya more broadly, as do Høiby and Garrido (2020) more broadly elsewhere

The stories of Sorious Samura in Sierra Leone and Sam Nzima in South Africa, for example, exist as echoes beneath the retelling of Tim Hetherington (Huffman, 2013) and the Bang Bang Club (Marinovich and Da Silva, 2001) in those same countries. Having made this observation, the story of the history of conflict journalism begins to resemble a Western universalism of the form robustly critiqued by decolonial theorists for many decades now (Mignolo, 2011).

Recognising the invisibility of local-national journalists (*as* journalists, rather than in roles as fixers or precarious labour support to others) to the history of conflict journalism is more than simply critique for critique's sake. It raises questions of what we can say we know about conflict reporting, when what we know about conflict reporting is so narrowly focused on certain kinds of journalists. Moreover, there is good reason to suspect that the practices of local-national journalists may not be the same as the foreign correspondent archetype might suggest. They may not see their professional roles or view the conflicts they cover and their responsibility to them in the same way as their predecessors (Bunce, 2010). They may be less able to write critically about conflicts involving their own governments (Bunce, 2011). They may also have less access to the 'innovative technologies' of the naïve account outlined earlier, and less of the social and cultural capital required to access prestigious commissions with media organisations or grant funding for investigative projects, while simultaneously enjoying much better access to sources and understanding of the contexts in which they live.

In line with resisting a 'Western' centre to who we consider when we consider conflict journalists, we ought also to draw into question who we think our conflict journalist has in mind as their audience when reporting, and what they see their normative role as being. A journalism that imagines itself within a humanitarian imaginary linking suffering to action (Chouliaraki, 2013) through reaching audiences and decision-makers who can materially affect the course of events in 'other places' doesn't necessarily mean a journalism whose stories are directed at Washington, New York or London. News from South Sudan that reaches Kampala[14] or Nairobi, news from Somalia that reaches Addis Ababa, and news from Lesotho that reaches Pretoria (to name three examples) may all be more likely to produce a meaningful response than the news that makes it to capitals in the global north. Bearing witness, in the sense of telling others about morally important events that they may be able to intervene in, may be understood very differently by journalists who are reporting on conflicts in their own countries, compared to foreign journalists.

Technology and shifts in the economics of foreign reporting undoubtedly have effects on the manner in which practices of journalism can be pursued in conflict spaces. What I have so far tried to make clear is that while we ought to take these perspectives seriously in attempting to understand how these practices are enacted, there is much complexity in the detail of how these forces will come to structure any particular moment. Researchers interested in the work of journalism(s) of conflict, humanitarian affairs, and related areas of focus ought to also pause to consider who they imagine when they imagine their subjects, and what avenues of enquiry might lie in the shadows of those figures. Additional components useful to theorising the practices of conflict journalists includes work on the sociology of humanitarian interventions, journalistic identity, and the particular, affective nature of this form of journalism. It is to these that our discussion now proceeds.

2.3 PRACTICING JOURNALISM IN 'AIDLAND'

Contrary to expectations, a freelancer arriving in Juba, South Sudan, would very quickly notice that conflict zones can, in fact, be highly structured social and physical spaces. Just as

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[14]After fighting broke out in Juba, South Sudan, in December 2013, the Ugandan government was quick to respond to the news with airstrikes defending the capital from rebel forces

there is a yawning gap between the $1,500-a month, airconditioned apartments near the local UN base and $20-a-night dives shared with rats,[15] so the lifeworlds of those engaged in reporting on, ending, fighting, funding or managing the conflict are often highly structured. Rephrased perhaps less hyperbolically, there is sociological reality to the world of marginal conflicts[16] that must be borne in mind when studying the practices of journalists working in such contexts.

The past decade has seen the development of a literature in conflict studies and humanitarianism that examines the effects of the social structure of the international humanitarian and peacekeeping world on the micro-level practices of peacekeeping and humanitarian work (Schwartz et al., 2010; Autesserre, 2012, 2014b,a; Dandoy, 2015; Roth, 2015; Jennings, 2016). Yet a similar project and its attendant theorising has yet to fully emerge in media and journalism studies concerning the freelancers, stringers, and other journalists who circulate in what is (perhaps self-indulgently) referred to as 'Aidland' (Mosse, 2011) or, in the sociology of peacebuilding work, 'Peaceland' (Autesserre, 2014b; Heathershaw, 2016; Jennings, 2016).[17]

Some of the most prominent features of the sociology of these spaces are the discourses of securitization and 'risk management' that suffuse them (Duffield, 2010), and the practices of social separation and 'bunkerization' connected to them (Autesserre, 2014b; Roth, 2015; Dandoy, 2015). In examining the micro-sociology of staff working for peacebuilding organisations in South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo, Autesserre (2014a) has observed how discourses of 'risk minimization', often enforced through bureaucratic processes, affect living and working arrangements in conflict spaces. Relations with communities may become so highly securitised as to undermine attempts to establish the kind of productive relationships required to perform peacebuilding work. In the case of the UN peacekeeping presence in Liberia, Jennings (2016) has argued that minimisation and securitization as a formalisation of relations with local[18] communities is in fact an outlier for an international presence that is largely designed to bypass or exclude the local as far as possible, in favour of what she refers to as a 'peacekeeping bubble'.

The social geography of conflict space can be productively thought as *colonial* - not least because its spacial and social patterns are often literally situated in and resemble the context of former colonial geographies.[19] It is constructed as a binary between 'Peaceland' and its outside that carries further associated value binaries of comfort/hardship, safety/danger (Autesserre, 2014a), knowledge/object-of-knowledge (Duffield, 2010) and so on. Questions of the applicability of 'international' legal and ethical norms to 'traditional' settings (Arensen, 2016) betray a citizen/subject (Mamdani, 1996) distinction with distinctly colonial - and implicitly racial - roots. It is appropriate, therefore, to think of the social geography of conflict space as being manichaean in a sense resembling that proposed by Fanon (1963), including a suspicion that racial and colonial discourses may contribute to the production of what it means to be inside (and outside of) Peaceland. Though any colonial binaries mapped onto a conflict space will, of course, be complicated in context-specific ways.

Returning then, to the focus of this thesis on journalists' practices of witnessing as both discursive and material, the concept of a manichean social geography provides an entry point to theorising influences on journalists' work of bearing witness in a manner that is both critical and postcolonial. As a discourse containing a tension between objectivity and ethics, it

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[15]With whose existence I am unfortunately acquainted.

[16]A *marginal conflict* is understood as a conflict with specific characteristics. It is a 'stealth conflict' in the sense outlined by Hawkins (2011, 2008) It occurs in an underdeveloped/geopolitically marginal zone (e.g. South Sudan, Darfur, Somalia, Central African Republic), where access is difficult/expensive. In general, many such zones resemble 'New wars' (Kaldor, 2006), but this criterion is surplus to a minimally effective definition.

[17]see Harrison (2013) for a critique of the term

[18]The use of the term 'local' is problematic and imprecise in enough ways to merit an entirely separate essay. Fisher (2016) offers a comprehensive discussion of this issue, and it is being used here in a similarly imperfect-but-hopefully-precise-enough way.

[19]The ubiquitous 'expat bar/hotel' and hierarchies of racialised foreigner/local interactions are probably the most obvious features of this social pattern.

seems reasonable to ask how journalists' senses of being inside/outside peaceland (or perhaps in some liminal position) might produce different forms of what it means to bear witness. As a practice, the differential distribution of resources between Peaceland and its outside can be expected to combine with the journalist's own access to spaces - conditioned, in part by their personal and professional identity - to structure different proximities to suffering and positions of speaking from which witnessing may be more or less successfully enacted.

One consequence of a manichaean geography of safety/danger, is that 'safety' becomes both a resource needed to do journalism in spaces like South Sudan (to a greater degree than elsewhere) *and* a force that structures how practices of journalism may proceed and what it means when they do. Duffield (2010, p. 2) observes that the humanitarian space of South Sudan resembles a kind of 'archipelago of international space' connected by highly securitized land or (more generally) air transport links, connections between nodes that journalists are not equally free to traverse. Who may travel in relative speed and safety, or often at all, is in part connected to whether journalists have access to various kinds of capitals. UN Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) offer safe travel to most major hubs outside the capital at a cost of $550 return, while the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) offers free flights on UN planes, but selectively, according to the perceived utility of transporting and potentially having to accommodate the prospective traveller (generally at their own expense) on the other side. Travelling overland is largely impossible in the country's rainy season, and considered highly unsafe in the dry season - a pattern mirrored in other contexts, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Central African Republic.

This 'infrastructure of safety' has structuring effects. It creates a market for the supply of safe travel which constrains the movement of journalists through the geography of a conflict according to - at least in part - the aims and objectives of the institutions who control it. This is primarily UNMISS, various UN agencies, and major NGOs such as the ICRC and MSF who either have shared access to UNHAS that they can grant to journalists, or aircraft of their own. But other actors inflect the functioning of this structure too. Security services, for example, may be better able to screen all passengers leaving the airport in a capital, removing 'troublesome' journalists or other individuals from flights. Private airlines do exist, but do not generally offer the same levels of overall safety as the infrastructure of the major actors in Aidland - offering no safe compounds and airport-to-base escorts on arrival, for example. Moreover, this infrastructure serves to normalise a perception of an inside/outside, safety/danger binary within which journalists' safest location is 'naturally' inside the compound, the UN base, the 'journalist hotel'. Put differently, the securitization of space that characterises Aidland serves to naturalise the idea of a humanitarian 'inside' as safe, and that which is outside as (potentially) not.

2.4 JOURNALISTIC IDENTITY

It is insufficient to attempt to theorise journalists' ability to navigate the social geography of Peaceland or the changing structure of foreign reporting without considering professional and personal identities. From the limited accounts presently available in the study of journalism in other contexts, there is good reason to believe that gender will have an effect on the way in which any practice of journalism will unfold in a conflict setting (Playdon, 2002; Ohanesian, 2017; Palmer and Melki, 2018). Palmer and Melki (2018) in particular have outlined some of the ways that the performance of gender might affect practices of conflict reporting, given the highly masculine conceptions of the space that often circulate in both popular culture and the in-the-field culture of journalism. Yet while gender and journalism practice is a productive area of research in general (Allan et al., 1998; van Zoonen, 1998), much less work has been done on the role of gender in practices conflict reporting specifically.

There is also reason to believe that journalists' status as foreign or local-national has a significant effect on their freedom to shape the nature of their coverage. Bunce (2010) has argued that local journalists may have an expanded ability to challenge foreign stereotypes - particularly in reporting on violence - but that this power still operates in tension with the norms of the bureaux for which they file. In examining the work of correspondents filing from Sudan on the conflict in Darfur (Bunce, 2011), she finds evidence that being local-national to a conflict may mean that journalists are subject to concerns over retribution by conflict actors that foreign journalists are largely exempt from. Given the shift towards depending on local-national journalists outlined earlier, better understanding the effects of local-national identity on journalistic practice remains a valuable area of enquiry. Palmer (2018) productively complicates these categories, pointing out that while words like 'local' fail as general categories, they nevertheless have value in capturing something of the differences between journalists when used critically.

Finally, I believe that race may also be a useful conceptual approach to studying the influence of journalists' identities on their practice. Work on the influence of race on the construction of narratives of distant suffering is readily found - Banivanua-Mar (2008) and Clark (2009) are a small example of a large literature studying Conradian 'Heart of Darkness' imaginings of the violence of racial others. Work on how race structures practices of journalism and the identities of journalists (Hesmondhalgh and Saha, 2013) and which journalist lives matter in the US media (Palmer, 2018) has been undertaken, but studies on the more detailed dynamics of race in remote (for the particular 'center' assumed in this paradigm) places is far less common. Examining the dynamics of race as an element of journalistic practice seems a reasonable proposition, given the colonial nature of the social world in which conflict journalists are assumed to circulate. It is a component of a journalist's identity on which the structuring forces of a manichaean humanitarian social space may operate with particular strength, allowing safe passage for some, in certain instances, and creating danger and hazard for others. Moreover, where racial discourses are a by-product of longer, colonial histories, it would be reasonable to expect them to be to be entangled with nationality, modernity and other discursive baggage from the past.

2.5 A MORAL ECONOMY OF CONFLICT JOURNALISM

So far, I have sketched an outline of (some of) the material and discursive structures that one might expect to constrain the practices of journalists in a context such as South Sudan. What is needed to complement this structural focus is a way of thinking through how journalists as agents fashion their practices in these contexts. While there are certainly meaningful constraints in terms of money, safety and identity, a perspective limited to understanding journalists as simple, utility-maximising agents would fall short of decently capturing the logic of practices of journalism in such contexts. There is more happening than rational, personal-value-maximising behaviour within pre-set political-economic structures, given that the work of observing and reporting contexts of suffering is - as I have argued previously - both normatively and discursively a moral kind of work.

Wright (2016a) has argued, in the context of journalist-source relationships, that one ought to take a moral-economic approach to thinking about the work of journalists in situations where their actions may be shaped by principled norms and values in ways that may drive them to act counterintuitively to what a naïve 'rational actor' might do. Indeed, seeking out situations of violence and their aftermath on the salary of a modern freelancer is straightforwardly irrational if one fails to consider that many of the journalists working in such contexts are driven as much by particular principles as by considerations of broader structural forces and the constraints

they pose. A moral-economic approach goes a long way to being able to think about much of the conditions under which journalists need to make the decisions they do, but in the case my project, it needs to go further. I would argue that in trying to understand why those working in conflict contexts do so, the affective, embodied nature of being a journalist in a space so tightly structured along lines of risk/safety can contribute to understanding how this work proceeds as it does, in situations where contextual constraints and normative commitments are insufficient.

On a general level, anyone who has spent time in a conflict context would immediately recognise that such spaces are fundamentally affective in how they are experienced. Whether through the effects of insecurity on one's physical body (such as pain, exhaustion, tension) or broader mental state (anxiety, fear, euphoria), to fail to accommodate the affective reality of work and life in conflict spaces would be to fail to theorise them in a recognisable way. This argument resembles Grossberg's revelation, in trying to teach a sociology of rock and roll, that without finding a way to accommodate its affective dimensions, one fails to "capture something important, something which was intimately connected to rock and roll's power as well as to its cultural politics" (Grossberg, 1984, p. 225). However else rock and roll and war in South Sudan may differ - and it is a very, very long list - this observation is true of both. Indeed, part of *why* war and suffering is of journalistic and moral interest is precisely because of its affective intensity. A theory of the practices of the journalists who pursue stories in such contexts must therefore have an account of where affect might both be present and how it might inflect the practices of journalists.

So while a moral-economic approach might be able to explain particular forms of cooperation (as Wright uses it in her analysis of journalist-NGO-News organisation relations), it cannot by itself tell us why a journalist might choose to undertake or refrain from undertaking highly dangerous work for minimal economic gain, except to offer that if they choose to do so, normative commitments to ideas of justice and voice might motivate these decisions. This explanation is essentially correct, but we need to extend moral economic thinking to include bodies and their vulnerability in order to be able to say something about what tempers normative commitments in high risk contexts and undermines the effectiveness with which they can be pursued.

In the first instance, physicality complements a moral economy perspective by drawing into view that different bodies and their associated experiences provide different capacities for 'doing moral work' through conferring safety, speaking authority, and the ability to occupy different positions as they move through space. These differences in (reasonably anticipated and actual) embodied experience make pursuing normative commitments to human rights, justice, or other outcomes more or less possible for different journalists in different ways. Different embodied experiences can be expected to condition where, how, and as who journalists are able to work, for example.

One approach here is to acknowledge the work by Wright (2018b) and others pointing out how journalism in places like South Sudan is being structured by the moral-economic circumstances in which it takes place, and then augmenting this perspective with a focus directed towards the complicating role of affect. To do so is to start from the observation - neglected in the work of journalism studies so far - that such journalism always requires bodies, that bodies are vulnerable, and that this in turn creates certain imperatives. These include that cooperating with humanitarian organisations (such as in the case of photojournalism) may only partly be the result of moral or economic concerns, but may also arise as the most obvious strategy for responding to the fact of vulnerability that is acutely felt in conflict contexts.

2.6 EMBODIED JOURNALISM

The bodies of journalists are being rendered more vulnerable and placed in greater precarity by changes in journalism which, on a naïve account ought to be mitigated by the fact that technologies of reporting are becoming smaller, cheaper and more ubiquitous, rendering remoteness less important to reporting conflict. This implies a kind of equivalence in which technology is able to go where bodies cannot, which I hope I have fairly thoroughly dispelled by this point. Rather than replacing them, technology *requires* bodies. It may augment them, but bodies must still go to the dangerous places, and the ease with which technology may be wielded by them (ignoring social, economic, practical and various other obstacles) does not obviate the fact that for journalism to happen, for bearing witness to happen, bodies must be present to enact the practice.

Bodies ought, as a result, be brought back into discussions of what it means to 'do journalism' in dangerous places (and, most likely elsewhere). The study of journalism in situations of conflict (and humanitarian emergency more generally) must go beyond questions of technology, funding and infrastructures of safety to include the embodied, affective experiences of working in these spaces. Straightforwardly, these environments make you feel in particular ways. And these feelings do things. That is to say they have effects in the world, and thinking about those effects helps us better understand what is happening when this work is being done, or being prevented from being done. That bodies and their affects/emotions might be useful in thinking through the practices of conflict journalists would be a useful contribution to existing work in the study of journalism of this type.

Anxiety, fear, euphoria, boredom and exhaustion ought to be understood as simultaneously the force of structures (of safety, of precarity) acting on the bodies of journalists, as well as an element of the practice of bearing witness. That is, as the experiences which certify a particular kind of moral journalistic identity. Strikingly, questions of affect and bodies in conflict journalism appear to be rather under-theorised, given the centrality of these concerns to the bureaucratic management of risk in 'Aidland' contexts,[20] and the degree to which those working or living in such environments would recognise them as being highly affective contexts. Palmer (2018), for example, describes the work of conflict journalists as "precariously embodied labour" referring to correspondents as "the labouring body that strives to survive but may encounter a shell at any time". Kotisova (2019) and Wahl-Jorgensen (2019a) have argued that emotion and journalism more broadly remains an under-researched field in general, though one perhaps at the beginning of an 'emotional turn' amongst researchers. The literature discussing emotion/affect in terms of specific practices of journalists as they go about their work is presently underdeveloped, notwithstanding work on the internal emotional work of journalists reporting disaster Jukes (2017) and Kotišová's (2017) work on the emotional culture of a Czech newsroom during periods of crisis reporting. Work on the specific emotional practices of conflict reporting is even scarcer, with many of the most-cited texts in the field either omitting specific discussion of the role of emotion in the practices of journalists (McLaughlin, 2016; Allan and Zelizer, 2004) or reverting to now-familiar discussions of the fear involved in the work and the difficulty of returning home from war (Tumber and Webster, 2006).

If *affect* and *embodiedness* are important to understanding journalists' practices of bearing witness, what is the role of affective experience in everything we have discussed so far? I propose that it matters in at least three ways. In the first instance, affect interferes with how one can execute a practice effectively. Insofar as journalism requires the performance of 'objectivity', thinking affectively [21] exposes how impossible a rational journalism of conflict might actually be. Between fatigue (remember our eleven kilograms of body armour), fear (from

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[20]What is securitization if not, in the final instance, an attempt to engineer away particular affective experiences for certain people.

[21]in the double sense of a theoretical perspective and the experience of the journalist in the field

working outside of Aidland's inside, for example), anxiety, euphoria, and the simple fact of affective resonance in the face of suffering and testimonies of suffering, the idea of a disconnected, rational journalist simply capturing 'the facts' of the situation seems both theoretically ridiculous and - were it even possible - morally outrageous. Without thinking of a journalism of conflict affectively, it becomes impossible to hold on to the *raison d'etre* of conflict journalism - the fact that conflict is fundamentally terrifying, awful, exhilarating, grotesque. In a word, affective. This is no insignificant observation. To the extent that journalistic norms insist on detachment, it is a journalism that is fundamentally incompatible with what it is about suffering that we find so horrifying - and worthy of telling others.

Secondly, affective experience can be thought as the force that structures exert on the bodies of practitioners. Principled commitments to giving voice to others and telling the story of those who suffer may inform the intended direction of practices of bearing witness - the decision to travel to remote locations and collect testimony, for example. Yet the fear and anxiety present while enacting practices of journalism can be understood as the affective result of having internalised discourses that construct one's working environment as being on the 'outside' of Aidland, as taking place in spaces of danger and violence. Massumi's (2010) observation that future threat (of, say, armed violence) can exert political and affective force on the present captures this dynamic well. Working within a space of practically continuous threat, the journalist's identity, their access to technologies of witnessing and speaking (the camera, the satphone, the first aid kit), the degree of access to infrastructures of safety that they enjoy - all of these together produce different affective possibilities that might range from the terror of complete vulnerability to the relative affective comfort of a safe and comfortable working environment.

Finally, the affective experience of conflict journalism is not simply an outcome (in the sense of the force of Aidland's structure's on the body), but is also an element in the discursive construction and certification of a particular kind of moral and epistemic authority. Harari's (2009) flesh witness is nothing without her affective experience of that which she speaks about. It is the incommunicable part of the experience of encountering danger and suffering which may underwrite the authority of the journalist's claim to authoritative speech. Returning to our discussion of bearing witness, affective experience can secure the epistemic authority of the witness, and on which the work of the conflict journalist in particular relies. The embodiedness of the work - the anxiety, fear, pain, exhaustion are precisely what confer on the journalist a privileged moral position from which to speak, but with it the weight of obligations that come with being a witness. It is precisely because witnessing is a form of (potentially) dangerous speech that nobody has a right to demand others undertake that the journalist becomes morally praiseworthy for reporting from conflict contexts.

The idea that affective experience can affect practice is not particularly new, of course. Wood (2006) recounts the emotional strain of extended fieldwork as a researcher, and how it can interfere with one's ethical reasoning and general functioning, Gregory (2019) has examined the role of affective states including exhaustion on the decision-making abilities of soldiers at checkpoints in Iraq. There is no reason to believe that journalists' experiences are fundamentally different to this, given the many activities they undertake which resemble these (worrying about research subjects, concealing data from the authorities, encountering armed actors, traversing checkpoints and other dangerous and affectively-charged encounters). What I am proposing is that we ought to explicitly theorise the work of journalists in contexts of danger and suffering as being intrinsically affective in a more than incidental way, and to follow the implications of this connection as faithfully as possible.

2.7 COMPLICATING FIGURE OF THE CONFLICT JOURNALIST

Starting from an understanding of journalism in conflict as a form of practice, this chapter has been interested in developing practical discussions of some of the discursive elements that might structure it from moment to moment. I have pointed to work on discourses of witnessing - and bearing witness in particular - as a potentially complicating thread in how journalists might think of their normative obligations. In particular, there is reason to believe that tensions might exist between certain norms of professional journalism and the attached, denunciatory obligations of bearing witness that arise from being a spectator to violence and injustice, as the journalist might often find themselves being.

In addition to making the case for the norms of bearing witness in the practice of conflict journalism, this chapter has explored how the practices of journalists working in and on conflicts might be materially structured in different ways. I have argued that current theorising of the structure of journalistic practice in such contexts ought to be critically reflected on and extended in various ways if accounts of how journalists work are to come closer to describing the reality of the job in ways that journalists themselves might recognise.

I have argued that the existing story of how technology might compensate for the changing economics of foreign correspondence generally (and conflict journalism as a subset of this) ought to be more critically interrogated. In particular, I have highlighted an often latent assumption in accounts of technologised reporting from conflict spaces that technology somehow makes bodies less endangered in reporting violence. Such assumptions ignore the fact that technology still generally requires a body to wield it in such contexts, and that it is far from clear that technology makes a journalist safer or is democratically available if it does. Alongside this, the study of journalism of conflict has historically had a limited conception of who it thinks about when it thinks about the journalists who cover war, with the result that many of those hidden under the label of 'local' journalists are often only studied as fixers in these news economies, when they are studied at all. Broadening who is counted as a conflict journalist opens up to researchers a much richer picture of where and how accounts of conflict and suffering are actually produced.

Journalism studies of at least this kind of journalism, I have suggested, can also draw fruitfully from work done on the sociology of humanitarians and peacebuilders - the 'Aidland' and 'Peaceland' literatures - for the work they have already done describing an essentially manichaean geography of conflict space. Work done here exposes not only the inequalities in infrastructure of various kinds, but also the often racialised, colonial discourses that make the cosmopolitan interior of UN missions, NGO compounds and other valuable sites (in)accessible to journalists depending on how they may be read.

Finally, I have argued that to describe and explain the practices of journalists in these contexts, journalism studies needs to take seriously the embodied, affective dimensions of working in what are often physically and emotionally taxing contexts. A moral economic perspective, I suggest, has pointed to a way of thinking of journalists as something more sophisticated than utility-maximising actors, but this approach can be usefully complemented with a focus on the role of bodies and affects/emotions as both structures within which journalists practice and an element in the practice itself.

This chapter is not intended to give an exhaustive theoretical schema through which journalism in conflict ought to be understood. Rather, it is meant to point to some of the primary considerations that orient this research project and some of the gaps in existing theorising about journalism of this type that this project will make a contribution towards. With this

goal in mind, the next chapter describes this project, its research questions, case selection and other elements of its methodology in more detail.

3 | METHODOLOGY

Chapter 2 has so far discussed some of the approaches to thinking journalism as it takes place in conflict contexts that inform this thesis. In so doing, I hope to take this practice theoretically seriously on precisely the terms that it presents itself - as a form of labour that is both morally particular and practically difficult. This chapter begins by outlining the two research questions that I address in the course of the remaining chapters. I discuss in more detail both the practical and theoretical appropriateness of South Sudan as a case and sketch out something of the landscape (in various senses) in which my data gathering ultimately took place. This is done partly to acquaint the reader with the various institutional and other factors whose role in structuring journalists' professional lives are more thoroughly discussed in chapter 5. It is also done as a preface to discussing my approach to ethics, risk management and generally collecting data during fieldwork between January and April 2018, so that comments made here may be better read in light of the context in which data collection took place.

Data, in this case, was gathered via a combination of semi-structured interviews and participant ethnographic methods. Interviews were conducted with 48 respondents based in Nairobi, Kampala, Juba and Malakal, of which 40 were currently working or had previously worked as journalists in South Sudan since its independence. The remainder were communications staff at various NGOs in Juba who provided opportunities for investigating the relationships between NGOs and journalists in the capital in additional depth. Participant-ethnographic research involved maintaining a series of daily fieldnotes during a month and a half spent in Juba, as well as almost a week spent travelling with two journalists to the United Nations protection of civilians site in Malakal as they investigated potential war crimes that took place during fighting in February 2017. Fieldwork resulted in 268 pages of fieldnotes over three months which included a range of daily observations that served to both inform my understanding of interviewees' accounts of the difficulties faced in their work and as a series of reflections on the psychic and physical effects of living and working in Juba and Malakal. This process of data collection is described in more detail in subsection 3.3.1 below.

Having outlined the process through which data gathering took place in more detail, I then discuss my approach to analysing this material using a combination of thematic analysis and critical discourse analysis. In my case, thematic analysis served as both a means of organising my fieldnotes and interview accounts in order to detect common themes that may inform a more nuanced story of how journalists' work is structured, and as a precursor to a more detailed critical discourse analysis of journalists' reflections on the work that they do, how they understood its value, and worked through the normative tensions it produced. This discussion takes place in subsection 3.3.2.

Finally, I discuss my approach to risk management and ethics during data gathering. This is done in part to justify why decisions such as anonymising almost all interviewees' identities were taken, as well as to explain why I felt that certain possibilities in my fieldwork - such as interviewing South Sudan's media authority - could not be safely pursued. Beyond this, though, I feel that there is a pedagogical value to sharing particular experiences and decisions made, so that they might allow others embarking on similar research projects to make informed preparations for the challenges that occur during data gathering. At a conference some months after I had returned from South Sudan, LSE's Prof. Milli Lake commented during a panel that it is ridiculous that there is so little discussion of what working in risky contexts involves. The consequence of experiences of previous researchers not being written down is that new ones

often end up effectively using practical fieldwork in conflict environments as an introductory education in doing practical fieldwork in conflict environments. There are better ways to prepare before departing, and frank discussions of dealing with the practicalities of risk by those who have already done so is one of them.

3.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In the previous chapter, I outlined the idea of bearing witness as a norm that might inform the practice of actually-performed reporting in situations of conflict and violence. In this sense of a normative duty, we find a language to describe what it is that makes the work of reporting on suffering a distinctively *moral* activity and some of the conceptual tools needed to examine what is demanded for it to realise this (potentially) moral character. As a discourse, bearing witness is something that is (re)articulated by journalists both during the 'doing' of practice and as an constellation of ideas invoked in reflection on and justification of what they do. I have also outlined particular areas of existing work on the shifts occurring in foreign reporting, the social geography of conflict space and the identity of the journalist which I believe contribute to exploring how something that it recognisably journalism succeeds in being enacted as a practice from moment to moment. From this perspective, two research questions will be pursued in the subsequent chapters

3.1.1 How are journalists' practices enabled and constrained in the context of South Sudan?

How is the work of creating witnessing accounts of conflict and suffering actually undertaken in practice? This question is directed towards clarifying some of the key material and discursive resources that structure practices of bearing witness as they are enacted in South Sudan. This question is explored in chapters 5 and 6.

3.1.2 What normative tensions arise during practice?

Norms around bearing witness imply obligations to represent suffering in ways that can, in principle, sit in tension with 'objectivity' as an element of the discourse of professional journalism. Journalists may also occupy unclear roles from moment to moment as they live and work in contexts of risk, suffering and political struggle. Whether one is a journalist, a witness (in the 'bearing witness' sense) or a spectator capable of assisting is in principle a potential site of normative tension and incoherent practice. This research question is directed at both exploring what kinds of normative role tensions occur in the work of such journalists, and how these are understood in their reflections on their own practices. This question is explored in chapter 7.

These research questions do not, of course, exhaust what might be asked about the practices of journalists reporting in and on conflict. They do, however, allow me to begin to make claims about material and discursive elements which stand out as particular to their work - claims which might open up new theoretical and empirical questions in (at least) the study of journalism in and of conflict.

3.2 THE CASE OF SOUTH SUDAN

South Sudan, 'the world's youngest nation'[1] is the context in which my research was conducted. The country gained independence in 2011 after a protracted civil war with the Sudanese government, and has had an unstable political existence ever since (Johnson, 2016a,b). After a major split in the ruling Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) (Small Arms Survey, 2016), the country's humanitarian and security context has gravely worsened, with attacks on civilians becoming widespread (Medicins Sans Frontieres, 2016; Arensen, 2016). At the time fieldwork took place, the question of whether or not the country was in a state of civil war was increasingly a taxonomic, rather than practical one, as an oncoming rainy season yet again threatened to bring famine conditions and the conflict continued to produce the largest refugee crisis since the Rwandan genocide in 1994[2], and recent lower-bound estimates suggest that at least 383,000 people have died as a result of the ongoing fighting and associated displacement and destruction (Checchi et al., 2018).

The conflict in South Sudan resembles a type of low-level, long-duration, state of 'small war' that is an instance of what Kaldor (2006) terms 'new wars'. A conflict operating without significant great power involvement and according to an internal economic structure that allows it to potentially continue indefinitely. There is some criticism over the degree to which Kaldor's taxonomy in fact recognises a 'new' phenomenon (Kalyvas and Kalyvas, 2001), but conflicts that appear to proceed intractably in the face of governments that are unable to establish a monopoly on violence in their territories do appear to be of a different type to 'old' wars such as the invasion of Iraq by the US, of Georgia by Russia, and the multi-actor conflict that characterised Yugoslavia in the 1990s. Moreover,the conflict in South Sudan has a particularly marginal character that distinguishes it from larger, more geopolitically relevant ones. It is a 'stealth conflict' (Hawkins, 2008, 2011) - largely ignored by international press organisations and absent from the core foreign policy preoccupations of most governments with an ability to exert decisive pressure on the combatants.

3.2.1 Motivation for South Sudan as a case study

Given the wide variety of possible scenarios that can be reasonably understood to be 'conflict contexts', any attempt to provide a deeper understanding of the practice of conflict journalists inevitably encounters a problem of the incommensurability of different settings. The resources, both material and discursive, available to journalists working in different conflict contexts will be sufficiently diverse across contexts that the dynamics of, for example, journalism-NGO relations or the micro-level sociology of the work (Autesserre, 2014b) may manifest quite differently in different settings. Equally, perceived security, ease of access, and the logic of 'bearing witness' itself may all function differently in, say, Somalia versus Indonesia, Mali versus Crimea, and so on.

In the interests of producing a research project directed at an in-depth understanding of a particular case, rather than a broader understanding across many, this project focused on the specific case of South Sudan. In this way, elements of the material and discursive structure that are specific to this context can be more clearly described and explored. A commitment to studying one particular practice context in detail does not, of course, imply that *South Sudan* should be that case. The country does, however, have additional practical and theoretical advantages as a case study. In the first instance, it is possibly the most paradigmatic case of

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[1] It is difficult to pinpoint the origin of this now-ubiquitous phrase, but one mention can be found here. It likely entered use at, or right after, independence in 2011.

[2] http://www.unhcr.org/news/press/2018/2/5a7222da4/aid-appeals-seek-us3-billion-south-sudan-set-become-africas-largest-refugee.html

Figure 1: South Sudan, showing major towns and state boundaries (prior to recent re-districting). They have changed since with the 2019 unity government negotiations. Source: UNOCHA

an ignored conflict presently existing - for some unpleasant measure of human displacement and misery compared to the size of its media profile. In the second, the risks and logistics of conducting research in it safely were far more manageable than in alternative candidate cases.

More importantly, however, South Sudan's language policy and regional politics made it an attractive case for challenging previous approaches to foreign reporting. Firstly, its status as an officially English-language country made it possible for me to interview and study directly the work of local-national journalists as a productive contrast to the foreign freelancers that are often the primary focus of research of this type. Secondly, regional neighbours Kenya and Uganda both possess large English-language news media and a degree of interest in the politics of the conflict in South Sudan. As a result, both countries possess journalists who have worked as foreign correspondents in South Sudan at particular moments. Being able to include the practices and understandings of the work of these journalists (as this case study allowed) helps to destabilize the figure of the conflict journalist as a European-American interloper in foreign lands. Phrased less verbosely, non-westerners do journalism in and of conflict too, and the case of South Sudan offers a particularly elegant opportunity to study their practices alongside those of stereotypical 'international'[3] conflict reporters.

During the time that I undertook my research, the situation in South Sudan remained relatively stable, with only minor engagements between government forces and rebel factions in more remote areas of the country, though a number of political developments did take place over the period that I was conducting interviews and travelling in South Sudan that are worth mentioning in order to provide more detail as to the context in which I undertook my data gathering. This background is intended to give the reader some intermediate-level detail of the broad political currents present at the time that data collection was being done. A full reading of the copious day-notes taken during this period would admit any number of bureaucratic and practical headaches that would be familiar to researchers in such disciplines as conflict studies or politics, for whom fieldwork[4] of this kind may be a routine undertaking, a full accounting of which would have taken a chapter unto itself.

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[3] The term in fact conceals more than it reveals in terms of the very limited nationalities of this group.

[4] 'The field' as a metaphor in research is itself problematically associated with colonial relations of power. Berger (1993) develops this argument in some detail, and I acknowledge this critique.

During the first quarter of 2018, much of the senior leadership of the South Sudanese government, civil society and various rebel groups were engaged in a High Level Revitalisation Forum (HLRF) in Addis Ababa that was intended to breathe new life in a long-stalled peace process. While this particular effort would ultimately fail, to the surprise of few in Juba, it did mean that certain elites from all parties were unavailable for interviews in the capital (in the case of the government) or Kampala (in the case of senior press officers for the rebel opposition opposition). At the same time, humanitarians and armed groups alike were, to various degrees, engaged in preparing for the rainy season, in which very little major fighting or movement of heavy vehicles is possible. The combined effect of these macro-events were that the security situation in the country was one of general stability, allowing me to proceed with data gathering without encountering any direct violence. Which is something that I am most grateful for.

More locally, Juba saw three events occur during my research which likely inflected the environment in which my fieldwork took place. The first of these was an attack on two Juba-based foreign journalists, Sam Mednick and Stefanie Glinski, which took place on February 6, just over a week before I arrived. The attack took place while they were covering an anti-US demonstration in response to a largely symbolic arms embargo on the country by the US government, and the pair were targeted by members of the protesting group on the grounds that they appeared to be American (Sam was Canadian, and Stefanie was a German/US citizen) and they were were severely beaten before being rescued[5]. The attack was recent enough when I arrived in the capital that Sam still had wounds on her arms from the assault when I encountered her at the hotel I stayed at, and the attack became a reference point in a handful of interviews with many journalists in the subsequent days, as an illustration of the physical dangers of working in the country.

Also occurring during my stay was the conclusion of the trial of William Endley[6], a South African national accused of assisting rebel forces as a mercenary. I attended the session at which he was sentenced to death by hanging[7], as a part of observing the work of journalists in the city going about reporting a news event in which the international wires had taken an interest. Some weeks later, when South African journalists A and B arrived in Juba for an investigative reporting project that I accompanied, they were briefly in trouble with the customs official for having body armour in their luggage - something which may have been problematic for the authorities normally, but which felt as though it had a slightly different valence due to their South African passports and the recent high-profile conclusion of this trial. I was also aware, as I attempted to keep a low profile in Juba with respect to the authorities, that Endley's trial reinforced a particular stereotype of large South African men working as mercenaries in war zones that I would certainly fit at first glance, given my accent, obvious strangeness, and residence at Logali House - the 'journalist hotel' which would occasionally have as lodgers a mix of reporters, national security staff, shady businessmen[8] and a cast of officials that would resemble a badly-written John le Carré novel.

Finally, the South Sudan Media Authority - an entity effectively run by elements of the country's national security service, and a recurring theme in my day-notes towards the end of my fieldwork - ordered the suspension of the United Nations' radio station, Radio Miraya, on 12 March[9]. This was done via a press briefing at their offices that I attended, in line with my commitment to seeing how journalists cover press events in the capital, particularly ones run by an organisation that many in the South Sudanese press have come to fear for its complicity in the persecution of journalists. I would later learn that my attendance at this event was the

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[5] http://www.nydailynews.com/news/world/american-journalist-suffers-serious-attack-south-sudan-article-1.3802329
[6] https://www.reuters.com/article/us-southsudan-trial/south-sudan-sentences-south-african-to-hang-over-aid-to-rebel-chief-idUSKCN1G70W0
[7] He would later be released as part of a deal with the South African government.
[8] I had the experience of sitting at a table one morning, opposite a group of two probably-British businessmen and an local fixer where they openly discussed how to get around financial rules to obtain a kickback on the fixer's behalf for facilitating a recent deal.
[9] https://www.ifex.org/south_sudan/2018/03/12/radio-miraya-suspension/

point at which the media authority's NSS representative first took note of me, something that would come to produce some of anxiety towards the end of my time in Juba, and which is reflected on more fully later on in this thesis. The banning order was purely political theatre, as the media authority lacked the legal powers or access to UN facilities required to actually give effect to their order, but this moment did make clear a number of tensions between the media authority, journalists, and the wider humanitarian international community in the country. This, in turn, prompted me to more closely examine the text of the act that established the media authority and stumble across the alarming disconnect between the organisation's limited, fairly liberal mandate in law and its de facto form as a highly undemocratic extension of the interests of the South Sudanese security establishment, in ways that starkly contradicted its legal structure.

3.3 METHOD

No method survives contact with reality, to butcher Helmuth von Molke's now cliché quote on military strategy, and this project no different. While the practicalities of conducting interviews were in many ways quite straightforward, what was intended to be a more hands-off ethnographic observation of journalists at work on an investigative assignment ultimately became a period of participant ethnography for reasons of ethics and social context. This shift, as well as more detail about the process of collecting and analysing data more generally makes up the remainder of this chapter.

3.3.1 Data collection

Data was collected between 5 January and 29 April of 2018 across four primary sites. I spent three weeks in Nairobi, three weeks in Kampala, and the remainder of the period living in Juba, conducting interviews with journalists based in each of these locations. During my time in Juba, I spent six days accompanying two journalists, A and B[10] on an investigative reporting trip to the Protection of Civilians (POC) site in Malakal, which is described in more detail in chapter 4.

Semi-structured interviewing

Between January and April, I managed to complete 48 semi-structured interviews (Holstein and Gubrium, 2003; DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006), of which approximately half took place in Juba (22 interviews) and the remainder being split more or less evenly between Nairobi and Kampala. The first three weeks of fieldwork was spent in Nairobi, as the city functions as something of a center of gravity for foreign journalists covering East Africa, and so was a convenient base from which to conduct interviews with these people. I stayed in an AirBnB in the Kilimani district during this period, rented a desk in a coworking space up the road named Nairobi Garage[11] and took Uber rides across the city to conduct interviews with respondents at locations of their choosing. These were generally coffee shops in major Nairobi malls, though a handful of interviews also took place in some respondents' homes.

On conclusion of this phase of my research (and a fifteen-hour bus ride later), I spent the next three weeks in Kampala, conducting interviews with a handful of foreign (to South Su-

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[10]A was willing to have their name used in this thesis, but B was not, and so to practically respect B's request, both names have been removed

[11]https://nairobigarage.com/

dan) journalists who had made their home in Uganda instead, as well as a small number of South Sudanese journalists living in the country after having fled South Sudan in fear of being targeted by the state for their reporting work. During this period, I stayed at the Bushpig Back-packers[12] on Acacia avenue and conducted interviews in the backpackers' outside restaurant areas or up the road at the Acacia Mall, as my respondents preferred. The choice of Bushpig was not only a matter of convenience, however. The owner of the backpackers was a freelance photojournalist named Will Boase, who had family ties to Uganda and whose partner, Anna Kucma, was active in the photojournalism scene in the country. As a result, Bushpig was a location known to and seen as safe by many respondents, as well as having a reliable trickle of journalists passing through most evenings.

On the 15th of February, I flew from Entebbe airport to Juba, and spent the next five weeks staying at Logali House[13] until 23 March, when I set off to accompany two journalists on a reporting trip to Malakal, Upper Nile for a week. Logali was again an intentional choice, being the de facto 'journalist hotel' in Juba and home to Al Jazeera's South Sudan office. During this time I was able to interview a large number of South Sudanese journalists as well as many of the foreign journalists permanently/indefinitely based in Juba (there were two of them). I was also able to interview a number of South Sudanese reporters working for an assortment of major international and national news organisations. Interviews took place in locations negotiated with participants, and the majority of these occurred either in the garden of Logali House or at the Association for Media Development in South Sudan (AMDISS), a compound located near the main UNDP offices where many freelancers often hot-desked and took advantage of shared wifi access to file stories on weekdays.

I conducted interviews with journalists who had worked or were currently working in South Sudan (see section 3.3.1 for sampling considerations) and used an interview topic guide (see appendix) to guide the interview in a manner intended to elicit both reflexive constructions of why respondents did the work they did, as well as their views on the practical considerations involved in working in South Sudan. Where respondents brought them up, these interviews also included discussions of specific stories reported on in South Sudan or moments of practice that stood out as significant in various ways. These diversions acted as useful prompts for reflection on the specific decisions and elements of practice that participants recalled from the cases they related.

My preference for semi-structured interviewing was motivated by a need to balance consistency in the general themes explored during interviews with a flexibility to pursue interesting responses and justifications in more depth where it was productive to do so. My topic guide was structured so as to allow for initial rapport-building via a straightforward introduction asking about how the respondent came to be working as a journalist in/on South Sudan, and I attempted to ensure that the opening and closing themes involved discussions that reinforced the respondent's authority, so as to end the interview in an emotionally appropriate way. This was in recognition of interviewing as a method that may produce intense emotional experiences for subjects that should be managed in a responsible way (Dickson-Swift et al., 2007). For the most part, interviews were generally not deeply emotional affairs, but there were enough exceptions to this rule to justify my concerns in this regard. Respondents reflecting on narrowly-avoided violence at Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) roadblocks, imprisonment by the government, and visiting scenes of particularly horrific massacres committed by SPLA troops were all difficult moments emotionally, yet which respondents consistently insisted on raising during interviews. In such cases, I found that discussing questions of the value of journalism in/on South Sudan and respondents perceptions of any obligations to report were often best held until the end of the interview, as it provided many respondents with an opportunity to reflect on what they felt the value of this often-difficult work was. In some cases, unrecorded conversation would resume once the interviews had formally been concluded, the

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[12]http://bushpigkampala.com/. I was able to secure a cheap single room for three weeks here, as I was friends with - and had made a website previously for - the owner of the establishment.
[13]http://www.logalihouse.com/

function of which - in at least a couple of cases - felt to me to be directed at least partially at restoring a degree of emotional balance (for lack of a better description) after the interviews. Wetherell (2012), for example, has pointed to the fact that practices may generate affective 'resonances', and this describes the dynamic well. Post interview chat was often valuable for both the information it provided and as a way of making sure that the interaction ended the 'right' way, emotionally speaking.

Broadly, I accept the argument that interview data should be thought of as context-specific, constructed performances that are discursive in nature (Holstein and Gubrium, 2003), rather than 'objective' data that can be verified through observation. I would add the caveat, though, that interview data nevertheless contains useful information about real, material constraints on the work that journalists do, which cannot simply be approached as being solely an 'interview performance'. In terms of Geertz's (1973) famous example of the constructed meanings of winking, it is possible to gather from an account both that a subjective (re)presentation of the meaning of a wink is being constructed *and* that a particular physical movement occurred, in a non-subjective sense. In a similar manner, I have taken respondents' interview accounts as both discursive constructions to be analysed in terms of the imaginaries they construct and as subjective accounts of the realities of doing journalism in South Sudan which nevertheless contain references to broader, less-constructed, material constraints on reporting from the country.

During pilot interviews, a challenge emerged of how to ask respondents how they thought about justifications of their work in a manner which didn't appear to be overly antagonistic or as though I was 'fishing' for particular kinds of responses. Simply put, asking respondents to justify why they were doing dangerous, underpaid work that might be liable to being interpreted as voyeuristic was difficult to do in a 'neutral' way. I tried various approaches to this theme in the interview schedule, from asking it as a kind of hypothetical third person question ("why would someone do this work?") to asking it directly ("how do you justify this work?") before ultimately settling on a more humorous phrasing of the question after earlier discussions on the economics and danger of the job had been concluded ("so given how poorly paid and dangerous this work appears to be, why do it?"). The tongue-in-cheek humour of the question in this format appeared to disarm some of the judgement carried in earlier formulations and allowed the question to arise from the world that respondents had themselves described (as risk and the precarity of the work were virtually universal responses in the first half of every interview), rather than a view of the world I might assume myself.

Selection of respondents

Interview respondents were chosen using a combination of theoretical (Warren, 2002) and snowball (Cohen and Arieli, 2011) sampling. Eligible respondents were all those who had physically worked or were currently working as journalists in South Sudan, covering either the conflict directly, or its effects on other aspects of life in the country (such as those on infrastructure, healthcare, society and politics). This was a deliberate decision, taken to avoid an unrepresentative focus on the tiny number of journalists who seek to do active conflict 'war reporting' in favour of being able to say something about the broader ecosystem of journalists who take as the object of their interest the effects of war as a social/political as well as physical phenomenon.

Respondents were initially sourced through a combination of my own professional contacts with journalists working in East Africa from a brief period spent as a photojournalist and a search through articles published on South Sudan since the country's independence in 2011. From there, referrals and suggested additional respondents were followed up with gradually to expand the sample. In practice, this worked exceptionally well, and many respondents went so far as to provide me lists of suggested contacts and their email addresses which helped greatly

in expanding my interview set. After initially worrying that I would not find enough respondents, I ended up a list of 119 potential contacts - many more than I was able to schedule interviews with in the time that I had available in each destination. In addition to this, Respondent 13 (a South Sudanese freelancer) went out of his way to connect me with a number of colleagues at the Association for Media Development (AMDISS) in Juba, which provided both the bulk of my interviews with South Sudanese journalists and much-appreciated insight into the day-to-day life of South Sudanese journalists.

I found that specific themes around risk and precarity began to reoccur regularly after perhaps a dozen interviews, fitting with experiences of interview saturation elsewhere (Guest et al., 2006). It had been my intention on setting out to complete 20 to 25 interviews, but by the end of fieldwork, I had completed 48, ranging from 45 minutes to three hours, with an average interview length of just over an hour. The large number of interviews was partly motivated by a desire to produce evidence in support of any eventual conclusions that would be as strong as possible, but also due to wanting to make the most of the opportunity to collect primary data from respondents actually working in Juba. It seems highly unlikely that interviews of this depth and (particular) focus will be conducted again any time soon, and I was keen to collect as much useful material as I could while the opportunity presented itself.

Of the 48 interviews completed, three respondents did not return consent forms, requiring me to disregard their contributions, and five were interviews with individuals who were not, strictly speaking, journalists themselves, but were people whose perspectives were tangentially useful to exploring the concerns of journalists. These interviews included communications staff from humanitarian and media NGOs, the UNMISS public information office, and Journalists for Human Rights - a Canadian NGO engaged in training and working with journalists on a variety of technical and political issues in the country.

Ethnographic methods

In addition to the collection and analysis of semi-structured interview data, I undertook observations of journalists in South Sudan using ethnographic methods[14]. I attended a number of press events in Juba during my time in the city, including the sentencing of William Endley at the Juba high court, the announcement of the suspension of the UN's Radio Miraya by the Media Authority and a press conference at UNICEF announcing a large donation from the German government (described in more detail in the next chapter). A serendipitous convergence of a number of events also led to me being able to undertake participant-observation style research through accompanying journalists A and B on an investigative reporting trip to the UNMISS protection of civilians site in Malakal in the far north east of the country.

Prior to becoming a PhD student, I had worked for African Defence Review[15] - a small, special-interest publication reporting stories around conflict and defence, predominantly in East and Southern Africa. African Defence Review had recently obtained grant funding from Innovate Africa[16] for developing new models of doing conflict reporting using a combination of satellite imagery, open source information and on-the-ground reporting. African Defence Review had had some discussion previously about wanting to use some of this grant money on a reporting project in South Sudan around the government's destruction of various villages in Upper Nile region, near the town of Malakal, during the course of the war - acts which may have amounted to ethnic cleansing.

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[14] I use the expression 'ethnographic methods' to indicate that I did not undertake a fully-fledged ethnographic study in the sense recognisable to professional anthropologists and ethnographers, but made use of many of the methods employed in such work.

[15] https://www.africandefence.net/

[16] A grant making organisation with funds sourced from, inter alia, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Omidyar Network, the Knight Foundation, the World Bank and others. Their work is focused on developing new technologies and models of journalism on the continent, and their website can be found at https://innovateafrica.fund/

My long-stay presence in Juba meant that I was able to assist with arranging the necessary invitation letters and letters of no-objection from the media authority required for two journalists to enter the country and work, both of whom had indicated they were willing to let me accompany them on their reporting trip to Malakal. As a result, African Defence Review arranged for their reporting trip to take place over the last few days of my time in Juba, so that I would be able to accompany them on their work, helping out with some of the filming and recording while keeping my own detailed notes and reflections on the days' activities.

While not specifically intended, it turned out to be practically useful that both they and I exited South Sudan within a day of each other and soon after completing work in Malakal. It became clear during the reporting trip that the interviews we were recording included a great deal of testimony about attacks on civilians by government and rebel troops - material that was far too large to upload to servers abroad, and too risky to keep in our possession for very long. There was no good reason for the national intelligence service to suspect that we held the data we did, as the reporting trip had originally been described to the country's Media Authority[17] as a soft feature on the social life and activities of the Malakal protection of civilians site. That said, we were well aware that the state would likely intercede if they *were* to become aware of the full scope of what had been obtained. This made leaving the country fairly quickly afterwards an unintentionally effective way of managing the potential risk carried by this data. This experience of being engaged in work that might be perceived by the host state as spycraft - or at the very least against national security interests as the state perceived them - resembled in many respects the situation outlined by Driscoll and Schuster (2018), in which the researcher risks being indistinguishable from a bad actor in the (real or imagined) gaze of the state. This perception, correct or not, was both one that I discovered was shared with the journalists that I was travelling with, and which made clear some of the affective structures present when working in such an 'anxious' situation.

This 'anxious situation' was safely brought to a close as I left Juba carrying a copy of A and B's data[18]. It was also extraordinarily useful theoretically, in that it made clear the affective nature of these practices of journalism - something that had permeated my experiences in Juba generally, but which had not quite become an explicit object of focus until the time spent in Malakal. I explore this perspective and its implications for the field of journalism studies in more detail in chapter 6.

Pursuing fieldwork in such a dangerous environment posed obvious safety challenges which are addressed in practical detail in section 3.4. Aside from the practicalities of risk management, Hoffman (2003) argues (and I agree) that such research poses particular methodological and political questions that should be taken seriously. In the first instance, to undertake participant observation, to record descriptions and to produce interpretations is inevitably and unavoidably political. To use the tools of ethnography is always to use them *from* a specific position and to raise questions of power and agency. Bearing this in mind, it has been important to maintain - as far as one can - a reflexive disposition, paying attention to my own subjectivity, hopes and anxieties during the process of gathering my data. While transcending my subjective position for some abstract 'view from nowhere' is a myth, being as clear as possible about my own agency and position at least allows for my interpretations to be more accurately read in the context of the subjective position that produced them.

As Shesterinina (2018) observed during her own work in Abkhazia, living, socialising and working in a polarised, risky context is to find oneself unavoidably caught up in its struggles. During my time in Juba, the extent of the threats to journalists combined with my increasingly tangled position as participant ethnographer returning from Malakal to draw me into seeing similar threats to those perceived by my respondents. In particular, this meant an in-

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[17]An organisation heavily involved in media repression in the country and described in more detail in chapter 4.

[18]It was agreed that since I was leaving the country first, I would carry a copy of the data with me on an encrypted drive and stay in contact with A and B until I was safely in Nairobi. That way, if I was intercepted, they would have time to try and hide their copies of the material to keep it safe.

creasing unease with the country's Media Authority and the National Security Service which made interviewing them an increasingly dangerous-seeming proposition. In another design of research of this type, undertaken without as close a connection to the lives and interests of journalists themselves, I believe it would be valuable to attempt to interview the Media Authority and NSS agents about how they imagine the threat posed by journalists. After months of listening to stories of imprisonment, deportation and death threats of journalists by state agents, however, I make no apologies for not extending the scope of my interviews to agents of the state. My position with regards to the Media Authority is explored further in chapter 6, but the methodological point here is that as a researcher working in an active context of repression, it was inevitable that my own sympathies, feelings of safety and choice of subjects would be caught up in this dynamic and I have tried to be as honest about this in my discussions as I am able.

Secondly, it was necessary to find a balance between range and depth in the structure of my fieldwork (Hoffman, 2003, p. 10). Describing the broad dynamics that structure the movement and access of journalists in South Sudan in general is useful. Equally so are detailed descriptions of the specific challenges encountered by individual journalists in their endeavours, and their reflections on the decisions made at various points during reporting a story. By seeking to follow A and B during their in-field work in Malakal, it was my intention to give weight to the latter, where possible, in order to provide 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973) of practices that might add specific, practical nuance to more frequent, but shallow observations such as the press conferences that would routinely take place in Juba. That said, I believe there was value to less-attached observation of the banal, daily routines of the press in Juba. Where particular journalists met, who attended what kinds of social and professional events, what the implicit rules of association and other practices that manifested at a more macro-level were - these were things that I found useful to keep in mind too.

Third, Hoffman (2003) argues that researchers in conflict spaces must work with definitions of 'the field' that imagine it beyond a 'Clausewitzian' space of soldiers and guns - a position with which I agree wholeheartedly. Seeing 'the conflict' in South Sudan as extending well beyond specifically military zones to incorporate elements of society, the economy and the broader lived experience of people outside of periods of extreme, direct violence was essential. Conflict journalism is a journalism that bears witness not simply to attacks as they happen, but to their after-effects and the conditions of life and forms of society that conflict produces. The study of conflict journalism must have as its focus the practice of journalists who work in this broader 'field' as much as those who go in search of front lines and men with guns - though there were certainly enough of these as well.

Ethnographic methods provided at least two important contributions towards my research questions. In the first, it functioned as a useful form of triangulation alongside interview accounts in helping to confirm how journalists' practices are actually structured in field settings. Stories of the anxiety of media repression or the gatekeeping procedures in place for domestic travel can be usefully assessed against actual encounters with these phenomena. Secondly, participant observation provided a familiarity with the context about which research participants were speaking. The manner in which an interview unfolds is, in part, the result of the identities and viewpoints of both participants (Atkinson and Coffey, 2003; Warren, 2002). Rather than simply being truth-obtaining exercises in the manner of some naïve empiricism, they are moments of co-construction that are structured, in part, by the subjectivities of both parties. What questions are asked, and what meanings are parsed from the answers given by respondents are not pre-determined, but depend on the availability of shared conceptions of what is being talked about and what is of sufficient interest to be developed in further questioning.

Communicating something of the phenomenology of the spaces in which distant suffering occurs encounters the problem - and interview contexts are no exception - of the perhaps essential incommunicability of much of the experience (Sontag, 2003). This is even more strongly the case when describing situations and activities quite far removed from those that a

listener might be familiar with. Participant observation helped to provide some of this missing context between myself and respondents, thereby allowing a fuller parsing of respondents' accounts. Furthermore, a familiarity with the context being described allowed for more detailed interpretations of the accounts of practice that respondents provided.

3.3.2 Data analysis

With over 48 hours of interview audio, 268 pages of fieldnotes, assorted images and documents, and more than 600Gb of reporting material collected during my time in Malakal, a triage process for managing the data was essential. After removing the interviews for which consent forms were not received and those whose respondents were not themselves journalists, I then elected to focus on the twenty highest-quality interviews. This meant those interviews with journalists either presently or very-recently having finished working in the country, as well as interviews with journalists who had held particularly significant professional positions or who had been personally involved in some of the stories many respondents told. I elected to transcribe my interviews myself, partly due to the unaffordability of transcription services on the scale required and partly as an exercise in re-familiarising myself with the detail of the various interviews on returning from South Sudan.

Of these twenty, eleven were foreign journalists, nine were South Sudanese and together they worked in a range of roles and media formats. All but two of the South Sudanese interviews took place in Juba. They also comprised a group that had been in the country at variously overlapping periods over the last four to five years (though some had much longer careers, reporting from independence in 2011 or earlier). Some worked for large international news organisations, others for smaller South Sudanese publications and others still were freelancers with varying degrees of experience moonlighting as content producers for NGOs in the manner described by Wright (2016b). The group included writers, videographers, photojournalists and combinations of these, as well as those who had seen front line combat of various intensities and others who had not. My intention in this selection was to include accounts from a wide and representative range of what might constitute a 'conflict journalist' in South Sudan. Where shared perspectives then emerged they were the ones did so from as wide a field of journalists as possible. The selected interviews were then transcribed in full for analysis.

Fieldnotes were used during analysis in two main ways. During my time accompanying A and B in Malakal, my notes served as a valuable auto-ethnographic insight into the affective nature of working in the environment of the protection of civilians site. In other moments, they allowed me to check what I recalled about my time in Juba against re-imagined memories I had after the fact. I discovered that I believe myself to consistently be more perceptive than I was, and my fieldnotes were a helpful reminder of this.

Thematic analysis

I conducted a thematic analysis (Aronson, 1994) on my interview transcripts and fieldnotes using the NVivo software package and proceeded in a mixed deductive-inductive fashion. Material was thematically classified according to themes that prior theorising suggested might emerge (including, for example, references to constraints and opportunities, impressions of life and work there, justifications and so on). Each of these themes were then further subclassified as far as was productive to isolating specific types of material and discursive resources involved in the practice of journalists, or specific forms of justifications that respondents offered.

These themes were then complemented by additional themes that emerged from the interview accounts themselves. Most notably, pre-fieldwork theorising did not include perspectives from theories of affect - these emerged inductively from interview accounts and my own notes in Malakal and were then subsequently theorised in what became a valuable 'affective turn' in this thesis. Interview data also made clear that the repetition of particular stories across respondents might be serving as shared morality tales within a humanitarian imaginary, such as that of UNMISS peacekeepers trying to evict journalist Justin Lynch from the Malakal POC during an attack (related in more detail in chapter 5). These, too, became themes as coding proceeded.

Themes containing journalists' reflections on the constraints on their work and the resources required to operate successfully in South Sudan became the basis for addressing the first research question (how practices are enabled and constrained). Chapters 4, 5 and 6 largely arise from these common themes - descriptions of the conditions of life and work in the country that journalists related time and time again.

Critical Discourse analysis

To answer my second research question (on normative tensions that journalists navigate in reconciling the roles they occupy while working), I made use of material classified in the preceding thematic analysis as being justificatory/normative talk of various types and proceeded with a more detailed discourse analysis on these extracts. Here, I was interested in reading respondents' accounts in terms of the imagined relations and norms that they implied and the rhetorical work done to resolve conflicts in norms that arose during there reflections. I was primarily interested in the kinds of articulations that were present in journalists' explanations of why they did the work that they did and the obligations that they described as inherent to it.

I adopt the position of seeing respondents' accounts as being both structured by discourse and able to re-present it in new configurations (within limits) during the course of speaking it (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999b). A discourse justifying the work of conflict journalists as being somehow an act of witnessing sits in potential tension with norms of objectivity, which requires rhetorical 'work' for respondents to overcome and straighten out. I argue that is is clear from respondents' explanations that work is being consistently done to justify the practice of conflict journalism as (morally) good, while at the same time many struggled to reconcile the subject positions of the witness and spectator in their reflections on the obligations they felt to report.

I consider the analysis presented here to be critically oriented in the sense that it has an interest in considering the implications that particular articulations have for the structure of power (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999b) - such as the power that sets the 'appropriate' limits to a witness' duty and ability to testify to suffering. My analysis is potentially critical in a second sense as well, in that instabilities in the relationship between objectivity and bearing witness may be a form of 'immanent contradiction' (Celikates et al., 2014) that demarcate an area of uncertain, unresolved norms where agents may be more flexible in the form of their practice. Phrased differently, where what makes a good journalist and a good witness sit in tension, there is a space for practice to renegotiate these norms and their relationship in potentially new ways from one moment to the next.

3.4 RISK MANAGEMENT

A research project examining practices of journalism in South Sudan necessarily involved extensive planning and management of risk. Beyond LSE's mandated risk assessment and training, I took a number of other precautions before departing. I refreshed an existing first aid qualification and undertook additional hostile environment and trauma medicine training through a three-day residential programme run for journalists and others headed to high-risk contexts.[19] I was also fortunate enough to possess appropriate protective equipment[20], as this was not readily available from the university. Before departure, I met with others who had recently returned from, or were working in, Juba for additional travel advice and notes. In this regard, I was more prepared for fieldwork that is perhaps typically the case for PhD fieldwork of this type. Pollard (2009), for example, has described an inventory of difficulties encountered during PhD fieldwork that I was thankfully able to avoid, with the exception of experiences of fear/paranoia, which are discussed more fully in chapter 4.

It was clear even before departure that elements of the state and its security forces were actively hostile, in potentially serious ways, to journalists and researchers interested in questions of human rights, war crimes, or media freedom more generally. While it would have been valuable to talk in some depth to representatives of the government and its internal security services such as the Media Authority or the National Security Services, I did not do so in the end for a number of reasons, which accumulated as fieldwork progressed.

Firstly, I was concerned that associating with officials from the security apparatus and media authority might affect the trust that respondents in South Sudan were willing to show me. This suspicion was, as it turned out, confirmed by at least one respondent during my time in Juba, who explained that they had waited until they were sure that I was who I said I was before electing to meet with me. In part, they had made this assessment based on what they knew of where I was staying in Juba (the journalists' hotel) and what they knew of my movements from colleagues.

Secondly, when I asked my respondents about interviewing security or government officials involved in interacting with and managing journalists - specifically, the media authority - I was advised that if I did so, it should be the very last thing I do before immediately getting on a plane and leaving the country. Their reasoning was that I was enjoying a degree of safety by not being on the radar of the government, the media authority and the security forces on arrival in the country and that this would be sacrificed on interviewing them, potentially placing myself and those I was talking to and who had helped me at risk.

Thirdly, after my run in with the Media Authority prior to travelling to Malakal (related in chapter 4), I became increasingly convinced that they were hostile to me, my work, and likely that of the journalists I had followed to Malakal. On balance, then, it seemed to us the safest strategy was not to try and talk to the media authority directly. And to certainly not talk to agents of the NSS.

Other strategies of managing risk to myself and respondents included a number of decisions made during daily fieldwork and in later data analysis. While in South Sudan, interview audio was uploaded daily to a cloud storage folder disconnected from my laptop storage, after which it was deleted from the recorder. Field notes, too, were periodically copied from a text document on my computer to delinked cloud storage and wiped clean. Material from Malakal could not be copied to the cloud in a similar way, as the dire state of internet access in the country made uploading hundreds of Gigabytes an utter impossibility. In this case, reporting data obtained during time spent in Malakal was stored on hardware-encrypted external hard

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[19]This training was run by RPS partnership who, it turned out, had also trained some of the respondents I would later meet.

[20]In this case, an NIJ IV-rated ballistic plates and helmet, as well as trauma and general remote-travel medical supplies

drives. While not optimal, this did mean that data could be less easily seized than other storage formats would have allowed.

Before being interviewed, all respondents were given information about the project and my contact details. This included clarification that participation was absolutely voluntary and that they were free to decline to participate at any time without consequence. Per LSE's requirements respondents were asked to sign a written consent form, which was in most cases sent to them electronically some days before the interview. In a small number of cases where this was not possible, they were given hard copies of these forms in person, along with an overview of the research project and were encouraged to ask any questions that they might have. Some respondents indicated verbally that they were happy to be interviewed and would return the consent forms afterwards - where these consent forms were returned, their interviews have been used. While no respondents declined to be interviewed, three did not return written consent by the end of the project and proved hard to follow up with. In these cases, I have elected to treat this interview data conservatively, and have not included it in my analysis on the understanding that not returning written consent might possibly indicate that they had had second thoughts on the matter.

Returned hard-copy consent forms were photographed and uploaded to delinked cloud storage, while the originals were given to respondents to keep. Respondents were free to elect to be anonymous and to have the audio of their interviews deleted on completion of transcription if they wished. Surprisingly, respondents overwhelmingly consented to be identified. Despite this, however, I have elected to anonymise virtually all respondents. I took this decision on the basis that the number of journalists actively working on South Sudan is small enough that attributing every quotation whose respondent allowed it would effectively risk deanonymising the few who had chosen - for good reason - to remain anonymous. The one exception to this rule has been quotations attributed to Jason Patinkin. He insisted that his name be attached to his views, and I have honoured this request.

In addition to this exercise in anonymisation, there was also information that emerged during interviews about how journalists were able to keep safe from state security forces and other actors which I have elected not to discuss in this thesis. This decision is taken on the grounds that the academic benefit to understanding the structure of particular networks of or strategies employed by journalists is outweighed by the obvious value such information would have to those who would do my respondents harm. On balance, some things are better left unpublished.

3.5 ETHICS

This project involved - indeed, was specifically interested in - potentially vulnerable people. It also depended on the use of information that risked identifying participants and took place in an environment where the consequences of ill-considered research ethics could, in principle, be severe. The risk of retaliation by an unsympathetic state applied not only to me and my formally designated, consent-form-signing research subjects, but also to others I might deal with more broadly - others who are not always considered in discussions of research ethics (Shesterinina, 2018; Cronin-Furman and Lake, 2018). More than this, though, thinking about ethics in research ought to involve more than thinking about how to minimise bad outcomes (though it is certainly this too). It ought to extend to thinking about how to ensure good ones too.

With this in mind, I found Sim's (2010) principles of ethical research to be a useful framework through which to think through some of my ethical commitments. Firstly, this project

was undertaken with a commitment to a principle of *benificence*.[21] This included disseminating draft chapters to interested respondents and ensuring that my project is one that could be of practical benefit, wherever possible, to both my research subjects personally and their professional field more generally. More than this, I have tried to maintain a commitment to reciprocal obligations wherever possible, so as to be of benefit to those I met in practical ways beyond the dry text of a thesis. This is, in part, a specific rebuke to a conservative research 'ethics' that limits the terrain on which the researcher's life connects with others to the moment of the interview and the text of the research documents they produce.

In practice, this included helping a journalist in South Sudan create a portfolio website, donating medical supplies from my first aid kit to hosts in Malakal, assisting A and B in their reporting or simply helping respondents with follow-up requests for information, quotes and commentary on media regulation for their own stories and professional connections. Entertaining a commitment to keeping up one's own end of the relationships developed with others during research should not be revolutionary, but it is worth stating explicitly that any reasonable ethics of care in conducting research must include a commitment to helping others with their good works in order to have any just claim to their help with your own. This has been a principle that I have sought to apply as consistently as I possibly could.

In line with a principle of *non-malificence* - my research should not cause emotional or physical harm to my respondents or betray assurances of confidentiality where these have been given. I have erased recordings of interviews after transcription where required and declined recording events or subjects where such recordings might place them at risk of harm. Due care was taken to encrypt devices on which electronic notes and other resources are kept. Notes taken during fieldwork were written electronically and stored on delinked cloud storage, to minimise the possibility of their seizure.

I took seriously the *autonomy* of research participants. I made no use of deceptive techniques towards them, and made my status as a researcher known to those with whom I engaged. Even when, in the case of the Media Authority, this was not especially welcome or believed. Informed consent was treated as a non-negotiable requirement of my research, and has been treated as an ongoing process in which respondents were free to cease participation *in toto*, decline to answer particular questions during interviews, or have me observe their work at particular moments. All participants also received a written statement outlining these rights and I have honoured all requests to redact or anonymise the accounts that they have trusted me with.

This research has also been pursued in a manner compatible with having a *respect for persons* that included a commitment not to invade participants' privacy, treating them as means to my own research ends, or otherwise pursuing interviews or observation work in a manner that would undermine participants' sense of dignity or self worth. I regarded this commitment to be of particular significance for field observation in a context that was often marked by extreme power differentials. In line with this commitment, I have also tried to give as much space as I could to respondents' own words in my empirical chapters - illustrating the presence of particular views or accounts through the words of multiple respondents. This has been an explicit choice not only for showing that certain views were widely held, but to also give the reader a more direct impression of the terms in which respondents understood various issues. The responses by journalists I spoke to were far more than 'data'. In many cases, they (unsurprisingly) had spent a great deal of time theorising questions of risk, affect and ethics before I came along - my task was partly one of becoming acquainted with the terms in which many of these issues had already been thought. While this thesis makes its own contributions to these and other discussions, I have made a deliberate choice to foreground respondents' own phrasing of particular understandings as much as I reasonably could.

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[21]This importance of this principle is echoed by others too. See also Ford et al. (2009)

Finally, this research is, I believe, consistent with a commitment to *justice* in the sense of a commitment to "treat others fairly; if individuals are treated differently, this must be on the basis of differences between these individuals that is morally relevant." (Sim, 2010, p. 81). If chapters 4 and 5 seem critical of the South Sudanese state, the Media Authority and the National Security Service, this is because of the very real physical and psychic threat that they create in the lives and work of journalists in the country.

One might imagine a drier, more 'objective' media-policy oriented version of a thesis like this, presenting the dynamics of journalism in South Sudan more in terms of markets and incentives. I make no apologies for not writing that thesis. It would be theoretically incompatible with ideas of witnessing as a rebuttal to complicity and everything affect-theoretical approaches have to say about the material effects of risk on minds and bodies. More than this, however, it would do a disservice to the experiences of those whose daily struggles to report from the country are often struggles with these actors in particular. I consider my duty as a critical researcher to stand with those against whom power works. In South Sudan, power generally works against those who witness.

4 | CONTEXT

In chapters 5, 6 and 7 I will put forward a number of arguments related to the structure, affects and imagined role of conflict journalism in South Sudan. In order to do so, though, it is necessary to first take a moment to provide an overview of some of the people, organisations, history and basic structure that make up the world in which this research took place, so as to give the reader a sense of the context in which the discussions to come take place. That said, it is not the intention of this chapter to provide a complete - or even recent - history of the conflict in South Sudan, as excellent books of this type are already available (Johnson, 2016a,b; Copnall, 2017; Martell, 2018; Vertin, 2018; Deng Kuol and Logan, 2018). Nor is it intended to function as a standalone ethnography of the lives of journalists in the country. Rather, this chapter is intended to give the reader a finer description of the space in which fieldwork took place in early 2017, as well as providing context to some key events that would be repeatedly invoked by journalists during research. Though this chapter is primarily oriented towards building context, it is also intended to provide a description of how an environment of risk of the type referred to in chapter 2 actually looks and feels. As a part of this task, I also give an account of what the bureaucracy of journalistic repression in the country looks like from the point of view of journalists.

It's difficult to find a single, independent point from which to begin a discussion of the contextual features of life as a journalist (or researcher loitering in their spaces) in South Sudan. This is largely due to the fact that while academic analysis may favour neatly compartmentalised discussions of different aspects of 'the context', this is not how life in Juba (or anywhere) works in practice. Elements of context are deeply interwoven, such that choosing any particular thread with which to attempt a linear discussion will inevitably mean falling short of capturing the complexity of reality as experienced. By way of example, the country's feared National Security Service - the agency most often involved in the practical work of repressing journalists - ought not to be understood as a standalone force that structures the lives and practices of journalists *ex nihilo*, but as an organisation which is more usefully understood as *entangled* in various ways in the practices of journalists, the social and economic context of the country, and various levels of political manoeuvring that take place in South Sudan more broadly, and Juba in particular.

The work of the NSS has very direct, material effects on the lives of those who report in the country, insofar as journalists may be trailed, threatened with death and imprisoned. It also produces discursive effects, in the fear that sticks to the figure of the NSS agent and their headquarters - the Blue House[1], in ways that would be familiar to those acquainted with Ahmed's (2014) ideas of affective 'stickiness'. But the NSS is not a unidirectional force. Agents of the country's security and journalists in many cases know each other, with the former occasionally helping journalists escape custody or avoid harm, something which complicates the organisation's ability to act as straightforwardly and consistently ruthlessly as might be assumed. Moreover, the same economic structures that make journalism difficult affect the functioning of many other people and organisations in the country, with the NSS being no exception. Moreover, just as journalists (and others) might 'read' the NSS and respond in various ways, so those working as agents of the security services must read journalists back.

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[1] I was told a story by a journalist in Juba that the Blue House's reputation was so fearsome that a photographer charged with photographing it for a story (a potentially criminal offence) did so by climbing Juba's only mountain with the longest telephoto lens he had, and taking the image that way. None, I was told, had directly photographed it since.
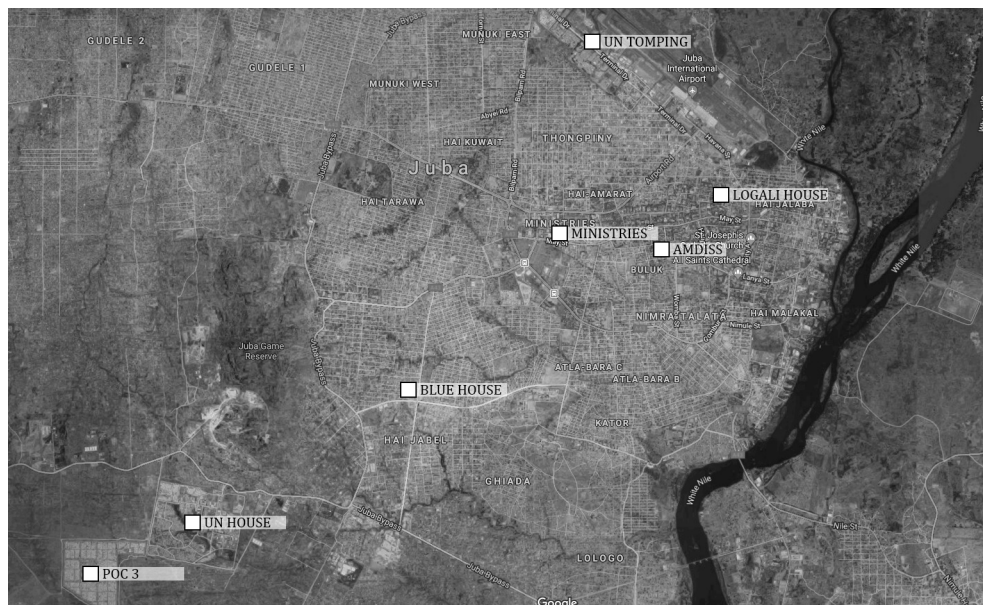
Figure 1: Juba town, showing major landmarks from fieldwork. Map data: Google maps with labels added by the author.

What does it mean to have someone of a particular race, gender and claimed professional affiliation entering a location with a camera?

I shall explore some of these themes over the next chapters, but the point I want to make before we begin is simply that there is no clear and simple point of entry to discussions of context. Exploring the significance of any particular element is made easier when all the others have been previously described, but one must, in the end, start somewhere. Since it is, in fact, the task of this chapter to bring as many contextual threads into discussion as space allows, and that I can only do so in a linear way, we are going to have to pick a feature of the context, run with it, and then gradually tease out the rest as they become relevant. Having laid out some of the most relevant elements of the context in this way, it is my intention to then proceed in chapter 5 with a discussion of how these various elements of the context make resources available that are critical to the practices of journalists - resources that are often available in varied and unequal ways.

This chapter begins with a discussion of risk as a form of potential threat, which journalists are obliged to respond to as though it were real, drawing on Massumi's (2010) observations on how threat functions as a political fact. Having done so, I proceed to describe some of the physical and bureaucratic structure of the space in which journalists in South Sudan function. This is partly as a way of illustrating the ways in which risk is often 'written into' the physical and social/political geography of the space and partly to give the reader a sense of the 'terrain' on which journalism is carried out, its safe harbours and its perceived threats. In the final part of the chapter, I discuss the country's National Security Service (NSS), its Media Authority, and some of the procedural elements of media repression in the country in finer detail. Both of these organisations and their actions were considerations in the minds of virtually every journalist I interviewed. Many had been detained, harassed or even driven out of the country by one or the other, and the threat they represented was one of the most common 'potentials' that journalists had to cope with as though real. While the next chapter discusses some of journalists' tactics of coping in more details, this description is intended to give a fuller account of what it is that these tactics of coping are directed towards.

4.1 NOTES ON THE ONTOLOGY OF SOCIAL LIFE IN CONFLICT

Years ago, in preparation for a reporting trip to the Democratic Republic of Congo, I'd asked a journalist who'd previously travelled to the country for advice on travelling to the Epulu rainforest in the east of the country. Her cryptic explanation was that on any given day "everything is fine until it's not". Verging on oxymoronic, her advice highlighted the juxtaposition of a daily reality that may appear entirely banal with the existence of structures that do in fact produce actual or potential suffering and violence of the worst sort. Robben and Nordstrom (1995) echo this point in their caution not to treat 'violent' conflicts as somehow linear stories of awfulness. Capturing both the banality of the everyday work of journalism in a city like Juba and the potentially dramatic and terrifying nature of some of the deep structures that underlie the environment is a difficult and delicate task. To write too much of the banality of the everyday is to risk downplaying the fact that the circumstances in which journalists go about their work are in fact unsafe and 'abnormal' in profound ways. To write too much of the terrors of insecurity, however, is to risk guiding the reader away from the understanding that even in contexts of insecurity, journalists go to press conferences, editors demand deadlines be met, reporters sit on phones for hours trying to get commentary. They drink. They laugh. They misplace the USB-to-micro-USB cable.

The challenge in writing this account, then, is to develop an appropriate description of both the banal and the extraordinary. By which I mean drawing attention to manifest elements of the context in which ordinary daily practice occurs, as well as those elements of context which 'exist' more as latent potentials for spectacular violence, yet which nevertheless affect (in both the literal and somatic senses of the word) the practices of the journalists working in the country. In the manifest case, something of the structures of (inter alia) geography, performed identity, and economics can be inferred from watching routine, daily practices. In the latent case, I have in mind the effects of general (in)security and the presence of agents of state security[2] on the practices of journalists. Latent elements of the context do not, in general, manifest directly in the practices of journalists on any given day. They exist as a kind of threat, whose possible future appearance demands that one act in the present to mitigate it. Even if the potential turns out not to become real, journalists are not wrong to have acted as though it was, since it could have been. This logic resembles the way in which Massumi (2010) has argued threat can function politically in the present, regardless of whether what is threatened actually comes to pass. He examines this function of threat through specific, limited moments in recent US history after 9/11, such as 'anthrax' scares in airports, but in the context of South Sudan, potential threats of violence at the hands of state and non-state actors function pervasively and continuously in the present. They haunt daily life and the geography of space in ways that range from its architecture (homes and offices built to withstand small arms fire) to the bodies of journalists (and others) whose daily movements must indefinitely accommodate the potential threat of an attack, an unanticipated policeman, a call from the authorities.

4.2 THE GEOGRAPHY OF JUBA

An obvious element of the context in light of what has so far been discussed is the geography of the capital city, where much of the life of the country's journalists takes place. Juba is largely built along one bank of the White Nile river and served as a garrison town for Sudanese government forces during the war, before becoming the capital of South Sudan after its inde-

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[2] By which I mean those with the authority to visit violence of various kinds on journalists with the implied bureaucratic sanction of the state. In South Sudan, it's not at all clear that such personnel are always working in the 'interests of the state' in any uncomplicated way.

pendence referendum in July 2011. Public infrastructure in the city is poor to non-existent - there are few paved roads and most houses which have electricity at all produce it using a combination of solar panels and/or generators, while water is gathered in tanks or delivered via tanker at regular points in the week for those individuals, NGOs and businesses who have the money to purchase these services. Juba is a city that runs on generators. Fuel enters in a line of trucks to the south, where the road from Nimule on the border with Uganda finally crosses old, riveted iron bridges that span the Nile, allowing traffic into the city. Then it gets burned. Day and night. In industrial generators the size of shipping containers and small home generators the size of cooler boxes. Like an army of mechanical muezzins across the city, the sound of generators is near-constant, punctuated occasionally by moments of actual electricity as local grids periodically connect and disconnect. In my fieldnotes, my overwhelming aesthetic memory of Juba, after dust, heat and bougainvillea is the sound of generators.

The country has no landline internet connection to the rest of the world, with most of its international data traffic being transmitted via satellite from ground stations belonging to private companies or the UN's own network providers (in the case of organisations inside the UN bubble). As a result, internet access is both poor (high latency, low bandwidth) and relatively expensive. Actually getting a SIM card and airtime is straightforward, with vendors on the streets able to set up a SIM card in a few minutes via a process that involves text messaging some activation details and uploading a photograph (in my case[3]) of the biographical page of my passport. The poor quality of internet service in the capital means that the transmission of moderately sized files can take hours to complete, and any on-demand live streaming of high definition video is for all intents and purposes impossible without some kind of dedicated, preferential satellite internet access. Coverage outside of the capital declines rapidly, as mobile service carriers are limited in their ability to service outlying radio masts, given the insecurity present when travelling outside of Juba. In principle, large second-tier towns that were not flattened in the major conflict periods of 2013 and 2016 should have mobile signal from at least one of the three carriers (Zain, MTN or Vivacell), but in the case of Malakal, at least, the protection of civilians site a few kilometers outside the town had no reliable data capacity on any of the mobile networks.

Road traffic in Juba consists of a mix of predominantly NGO-branded landcruisers, private cars, bodas (small motorbike taxis), occasional minibuses and pedestrians, and the overall cityscape is compact enough that one could travel from the journalists' hotel, Logali House, to the main UN House base in about 30 minutes on a typical day. Most roads in the capital have a half-dozen potholes en route, which motorcycle taxis are able to navigate well enough around, but larger vehicles will need to slow and navigate more gently. In particularly busy areas, during the day, one may also encounter police attempting to direct the traffic in busier parts of the city, while at night traffic virtually disappears and journalists I had interviewed would report that military road blocks would typically be in place by nightfall. None of those I spoke to would travel around the city after dark by choice. Any event that approached 9pm would often force those attending to have to make a decision between an early exit or staying over to avoid travelling the city at night. For many NGO staff, an earlier, generally enforced curfew of around 19h00 made the question of staying past 21h00 at most events moot. Most South Sudanese journalists I encountered either had their own transport in the form of bodas or occasionally a car, while the small number of resident foreign journalists I encountered generally relied on drivers in cars for travelling around the city for safety reasons. Not having the money to do the same, I would travel between destinations sitting on the back of boda bikes, which appeared to be an abnormal and vaguely comical thing for a white foreigner to do, judging by comments I received on this behaviour from staff at Logali House during my stay there.

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[3] It is not clear whether this process is the same for South Sudanese SIM card activations

4.2.1 Logali House

The 'journalist' hotel' in Juba is Logali House[4], named after Hilary Logali, the first (pre-independence) southern Sudanese governor of Equatoria state in the early 1970s. Logali provides near-constant electricity, room service and, importantly, access to slightly-better-than-terrible internet due to the presence of a satellite uplink station across the road, in partnership with whom they run an internet voucher scheme that provides guests of the hotel with vouchers for internet time. In addition to the attractiveness of relatively-decent internet access, Logali House has a reputation for being a safe haven for journalists, in part due to having never been directly attacked at any point in the country's recent history[5].

Physically, the hotel is located perhaps a ten minute drive from the Juba airport, and by extension, the airport's adjacent UNMISS base at Tomping. Like most hotels, Logali has high, spiked walls, steel gates and security guards, but levels of security are much lower than at many UN and NGO compounds and other, more expensive hotels, while nevertheless remaining secure enough for UN-agency employees to be able to stay overnight[6]. Since fighting in the capital on December 2013, all UN staff and most international NGO staff are under a curfew requiring them to be back in their home compounds by 19h00[7] or face potential disciplinary action. Being secure enough for the UN to allow its staff to stay overnight means that Logali House often hosts NGO staff who have committed to staying out drinking past 19h00 on weekends and prefer to then book a last minute bed in the hotel rather than attempting a return after curfew. Unlike many other, hyper-bunkerised locations, Logali House serves as a meeting point for a wide range of people living in Juba. On any given day, the tables in its outdoor garden will host a mix of international interveners of different kinds, various people in town for business, professionals from around Juba, the occasional artist and journalists of all stripes. A large television at a covered end of the garden nearly always shows the current news from Al Jazeera English, unless there is a specific reason to show something else (a sports game or a movie screening, say).

The choice of television news channel is unlikely to be incidental, as the Al Jazeera office in South Sudan is, in fact, based in Logali House. On the first floor, in an office air-conditioned to the point of feeling freezing after the 35 degree heat outside, the Al Jazeera correspondent Hiba Morgan and her production team work on producing and uploading their material on a day to day basis. The office serves as both a cramped production space, with laptops and other gear required for video editing, and as a store room for cameras, tripods, computers and other bits and pieces stored in stacks of flight cases. Besides Al Jazeera's office, other residents of Logali House at the time of my fieldwork included Sam Mednick[8], who was working as the South Sudan correspondent for Associated Press (AP), and a number of trainers from the Canadian NGO Journalists for Human Rights[9] (JHR) who were staying at Logali on year-long contracts to help develop sustainable business models for South Sudanese media organisations and trying to gently wrangle the country's Media Authority into behaving more in line with its formal legal mandate and less as a barely-disguised interface with the NSS. On any typical weekday at Logali, Sam would be first down to the garden to order the same exact breakfast, including a sausage whose sole function was to feed the hotel cat which she had befriended, before heading out for the day. Shortly afterwards, members of JHR would also appear down at the hotel breakfast area before heading off on their way to work with the various media organisations that they had been assigned to.

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[4] http://www.logalihouse.com/

[5] Though soldiers did, in previous moments of citywide violence, enter the hotel, its residents were spared the violence that befell other locations - most infamously the Terrain hotel.

[6] Many UN agencies and other NGOs have minimum safety standards for accommodation, and staff may be forbidden from staying overnight at any facility which does not satisfy these.

[7] At the time that research took place, though the curfew time is prone to shifting as the situation changes and staff push back against restrictions.

[8] http://sammednick.com/bio/

[9] http://www.jhr.ca/en/

Figure 2: A view of the garden area at Logali House.

Unlike these residents, the Al Jazeera team did not, as far as I could tell, actually live in the hotel on a permanent basis, and would typically appear later on in the morning on their way in to collect gear and work on the day's stories. In this way, Logali was a home for some of the foreign journalists, such as Sam, the JHR staff, and the occasional freelancer passing through on the way elsewhere. For others, such as the journalists of Al Jazeera, the various South Sudanese journalists (whether working for international outlets or not), and stringers like Stefanie Glinski (writing predominantly for the Reuters Foundation), Logali served as more of a shared meeting point on some days and a reliable location for hanging out to use the internet when the power went down elsewhere . This, of course, assuming that one could obtain one of the hotel's slip-of-paper codes for internet access, or had connections to someone who had access already - such as the journalists of the Al Jazeera office or other staff or guests of the hotel.

For the remainder of the day, Logali's garden space would function as a kind of a mixed coworking space, in which staff would serve drinks and food while meetings and conversations of all kinds were conducted. Sam and members of JHR would occasionally conduct meetings at tables in the garden, or in the indoors portion of Logali's breakfast room, while the occasional South Sudanese journalist writing for an out-of-country organisation would pop in to use the internet to file stories and charge their mobile phones and other devices from the hotel's plug points[10]. While local journalists would not often buy drinks, food or internet beyond what they needed to in order to be left alone to work, Logali House management appeared to exercise a reasonable use policy towards them taking up space to charge phones and file stories, which may have been based in part on an affection towards the establishment's history as a 'journalists hotel' and what appeared to be convivial relations between the hotel staff and regular visitors. One example of this was providing free catering for one journalist's training workshops for their colleagues.

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[10]Logali would run an off-grid solar power setup during the day, with generators filling in until late in the night, once the day's battery reserves had run down.

Spy games

The overall effect of this mixed use pattern in the daytime gave the hotel garden the feeling of being a scene from a Le Carre novel, made somewhat more believable by the belief - shared by South Sudanese and foreign journalists - that the occasional, suited visitors who loitered in the garden area charging their phones and doing little else were in fact NSS agents. Interviews conducted in Logali's garden during the day often contained moments where respondents would look around and shift to quieter tone of voice when sensitive issues were being discussed. It is impossible to know for sure whether NSS agents did, in fact, hang around Logali 'charging phones' and listening in on people's conversations, but the belief that this was happening in some form was pervasive. As my interview fieldnotes at the time reflected:

> What is particular about our conversation in the hotel garden/bar (mostly about African politics and recent resignations of the presidents of South Africa and Ethiopia) is that whenever [my conversation partner] turns to speaking about South Sudan, she would look back up to the bar, and lower her voice considerably. [She] explains, when I ask about getting a SIM card, that I will likely need to register for it using my passport, and that I can virtually expect the government to listen to my calls. [Interviewee] explains how, whenever [they] phone back to [news organisation's] head office, they don't even try to hide it - there is always a beep a few minutes into those calls.

Fieldnotes, Juba

It seems implausible that telephone surveillance in the twenty first century is so low-tech as to be preceded by a beep on a phone line, but the belief that the NSS was interested in infiltrating the professional world of journalists was widespread and extended well beyond perceived surveillance in the garden of Logali House. Journalists in Juba, and South Sudan more generally, were frequently members of two Facebook groups[11] as well as a shared Whatsapp group through which contacts were occasionally exchanged and information on press conferences and other events were shared. The Whatsapp group would occasionally go quiet, after which it would gradually filter down to members that conversations had moved to a new Whatsapp group containing only a trusted subset of the participants of the original group, on the basis that the old group had become too large and now contained non-specific, insufficiently-trusted participants that might now include NSS agents. Over time, people in the new group would add trusted contacts and the group would grow until, it was explained, it would become necessary to set up another 'clean' group once more.

Furthermore, the structure of journalists' Whatsapp groups also involved maintaining a separate group for South Sudanese journalists specifically, as one interviewee explained:

> **Respondent 14:** We have a Whatsapp group. And we have two Whatsapp groups, by the way.
>
> **Interviewer:** Oh, I only just saw the one that had [foreign journalist] posting on it.
>
> **Respondent 14:** No no no, there is another one for, for all of us as journalist[s]. Even you come from March, from where, from where. There is one. And there is one just for South Sudanese (laughs).
>
> **Interviewer:** Aaaah. So, like, I am not allowed to join the South Sudanese one?

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[11]Journalists of South Sudan (JOSS) at https://www.facebook.com/groups/214205395339437/ and Journalists in Juba at https://www.facebook.com/groups/214205395339437/

Respondent 14: Maybe if you come with your passport from South Africa, we will allow it (laughs).

Interviewer: Become a citizen first. So there is a separate one?

Respondent 14: (laughs). But it's not, it's not bad, it's not. It's just to make something, yeah. Because sometimes, and this is true, not all of journalists are serious journalists. There are some journalists, they get benefit from you and left. Most of them are foreigners. And some of them, they are not journalists. They are doing this for some areas, I don't know. Maybe intelligence, maybe what, maybe some are NGOs, they are doing...

It is interesting, on this interviewee's account, to see the separate group structure as working not simply as a defence of journalists' communication space from the state in the form of the NSS, but as insulating the work of South Sudanese journalists from their foreign colleagues, NGOs and others too. While it was not possible to learn much of what was discussed in this group, its existence implied a professional boundary between foreign and South Sudanese journalists in the eyes of South Sudanese journalists themselves.

Whatever the NSS' actual level of interest and engagement in infiltrating the world of journalists in South Sudan, the belief that this was in fact a phenomenon was pervasive. The result of this perception was that journalists are forced to coordinate their communications *as though* they were being surveilled since, as Massumi observes with his example of anthrax packages in US airports, one is compelled to respond to a threat as though it were true even when it isn't, because it could be. In practice, since being able to trust and communicate securely with colleagues is an important part of working as a journalist in Juba, the threat of surveillance is managed in a number of different ways. The constant reconstitution of the Whatsapp group on the basis of trusted personal ties was one strategy for semi-regularly shedding unwanted listeners. So, too, was conducting one's business away from Logali House's garden when it is sufficiently sensitive. For chatting to sources in NGOs and the UN, their defended residential and office complexes were reasonably safe from casual surveillance, while for many South Sudanese journalists, their newsrooms or (for freelancers in particular) the shared office space of the Association for Media Development in South Sudan (AMDISS, discussed shortly) provided safe places to discuss and work on stories.

4.2.2   The United Nations Mission in South Sudan

The United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) maintains two bases in Juba, the *Tomping*[12] base adjacent to Juba's airport and the *UN House* base on the outskirts of the city, behind the large mountain, or *jebel*, that rises distinctively from the otherwise flat landscape around Juba. Both bases were established through a status of forces agreement (United Nations, 2011) between the United Nations and the government of South Sudan, which allows the UN to keep military and other personnel in the country and (among other privileges) run a radio station, Radio Miraya, outside of the regulatory processes of the country, in a similar manner to how certain UN staff and operations are exempted from taxation and other host country laws during their terms of service.

It may not be obvious to outsiders, but UN operations - at least in Juba - are bifurcated in important ways. The UN's peacekeeping force - the United Nations Mission to South Sudan (UNMISS) - in many ways functions as a separate, military component to the alphabet soup of other UN agencies present in South Sudan (the UNHCR, UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, etc), despite coordinating with them in various ways. While organisations like the World Food Programme have offices within the UN House base, both Tomping and UN House are primar-

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[12]Also sometimes written Tong Ping or Thongpiny

ily military facilities, with heavily armed security, fortifications and various nation-specific battalions, their vehicles and support facilities housed in smaller fortifications within the main base, along with bunkers made out of containers and reinforced with sandbags and hesco bastions[13]. These bases, in Juba and various locations throughout the country, are in some ways quite heavily tangled in the material structure of the space in which conflict journalism is done and in others largely irrelevant. Without an invitation from a suitably accredited UN agency, the bases are essentially off limits to civilians, whether local or international. As easy as it might be to enter an otherwise well-defended hotel in Juba on the basis of being a foreigner alone, UN bases do not accord visitors the same deference. Fieldnotes from attending an appointment with an interviewee at UN house paint a somewhat more detailed picture:

> Outside UN House, a large sign declares 'UNMISS Welcomes You'. Which is bizarre in its jovial tone, given where we are. I wonder who put it up? The base itself is a giant complex, spanning acres of gently undulating, dry land. The walls are a combination of hescos and tin sheets with a meter of earth between them, and two giant steel gates sit behind two layers of booms at the entrance, with a fortified guard hut on the right hand side for pedestrians (which is where I enter). The guard at the pedestrian entrance checks a folder marked 'FAO' to confirm that [my interviewee] has in fact filed a request/permission form for a visitor with my name before letting me through to a small building a few meters on, where I need to hand over my passport in exchange for a visitor's pass on a green lanyard before passing through a metal detector (which, for a change, is switched on and working) and sending my bag through a large x-ray machine of the sort that airports typically have in their oversized luggage sections. The guard picks up that I have a laptop, which I need to then sign into another, separate booklet. On the wall of the room, a portrait of UNSG Antonio Gutierrez hangs on the wall, in the manner of the portraits of presidents of some countries. It has been hung lopsided, which seems symbolically appropriate.
>
> Inside, the base is a mix of open, undeveloped space with offices and fortifications of various kinds mixed in with each other. There are a couple of positions inside the immediate edge of the base that have been fortified with hescos, and a large, barn-looking building with walls of tin that are actually two sheets of tin with about a meter in between them that has been filled with soil. This, [interviewee] later explains, is a protective building for many of the civilian personnel on the base that was built after the facility was partially overrun in the fighting of July 2016. It looks like it could certainly weather fire from small arms at least, but its position - perhaps 200m in front of the entrance - and the fact that it has no doors, just openings with additional tin-soil walling to obscure direct lines of sight inside, seems poorly chosen. It would be easy enough for advancing troops to simply lob a grenade or an RPG inside if they were so inclined. It was built, [interviewee] explains, because many civilian base staff simply had no shelters in their own buildings at all, so this was preferable to simply waiting out a firefight in a shipping container.
>
> **Fieldnotes, Juba**

The UN House base contains both the UNMISS Press Relations Office (PRO) and the offices of the World Food Programme. In the case of the PRO, their office consists of what appears to be modular, connected containers, judging by the dimensions of the interior space, furnished with mix of mismatched furniture that creates a feeling somewhere between a low-budget open plan office and a second-hand furniture store. The on-base presence of (at least) these two organisations puts UN house inside the world of concerns for journalists wanting to cover the conflict and its effects, as both offices are useful sources of statistics and commentary, and both are able to assist journalists with flights to other locations in the country and occasionally

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[13]The large canvas-enclosed blocks of sand that have replaced sandbags in most modern military bases

Figure 3: The welcome sign outside UN House.

with accommodation and security for field visits. In contrast to UN House, Tomping base has a different function. Attached to South Sudan's main airport, it functions as the logistics hub managing UN flights around the country, as well as the traffic of troops and other UN and UNMISS assets to various forward bases around the country. Where journalists are taking non-commercial flights, such as those provided through UNMISS directly, or the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS), they will need to enter and depart from the airport terminal connecting Tomping base to the runway after clearing NSS checks at the civilian airport terminal first. This process and its implications are discussed in more detail shortly.

In addition to the Tomping and UN House bases in Juba, UNMISS maintains a number of further bases around the country - primarily near the towns (or remains of former towns) Bentiu, Malakal, Bor and Wau. These field bases can be quite large and now serve primarily as 'Protection of Civilians' (POC) sites since the end of the first round of fighting in the current civil war - an unusual arrangement that is discussed in more detail below via the example of Malakal POC, which I was able to visit in the company of two journalists working on an investigative reporting project.

Under the terms of the status of forces agreement which legally grounds the UN's presence in the country, the government of South Sudan is responsible for allocating (but not deciding on granting) radio spectrum that the UN's Radio Miraya can use to broadcast on, but otherwise has no regulatory or other powers over the radio station (in law). This setup is not unique, as independent UN radio stations have formed a part of UN presences in other contexts, most successfully in the establishment of Radio Okapi in the Democratic Republic of Congo, as a part of the UN mission there. Miraya is an occasional source of friction between the government and the UN, as it is able to broadcast a wide range of stories to most major towns in South Sudan via up to 26 radio relays rebroadcasting from Juba [14] - material which often includes discussion of the conflict and human rights issues that the government, and by extension the Media Authority, would prefer not make it onto the airwaves. While unable to target the radio infrastructure directly, given its location inside fortified UN bases around the country, the Media Authority has in the past tried to influence reporting at Miraya through arresting and harrassing its South Sudanese staff, who do not live on-base and so are a point of

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[14]https://radio-miraya.org/index.php/radio-miraya/

leverage in disputes. During my fieldwork, the Media Authority ordered Miraya to be closed - to no effect - in an awkward press conference attended by a handful of state media and international journalists (who feared having their accreditation delayed or otherwise made difficult if they did not attend). Shortly after my departure, the government would detain a radio Miraya journalist, Sani Martin, after he attended a press conference on behalf of the 'banned' Miraya station. In the months that followed, Radio Miraya did not, in fact, go off air as the UN refused to acquiesce to the Media Authority's order and the Media Authority lacked any legal or practical powers to enforce it.

4.2.3 Media organisations

In the professional lives of journalists working in Juba, there are a number of organisations involved in supporting their work in various ways. My level of involvement with each varied during my time in Juba. In the case of the Union of Journalists of South Sudan, I came to know the organisation only through interviewees' accounts of it. In other cases, I interviewed staff from the organisation (Internews) or even hung out socially with staff as a part of my own routine in the city. This was an inevitable outcome of living and working from Logali House, at which many of those involved in media and journalism in South Sudan could be expected to make an appearance at some point.

Internews

Internews[15] was an NGO involved in news media development in the country that was, at the time I met with them, busy planning for the final months of a multi-million dollar USAID grant that they had used over the last few years to develop the capacity of a number of media organisations in the country. With USAID's money about to run out, they were facing the challenge of needing to transition news organisations that had up until then relied on donor funds to more or less guarantee their survival into organisations that would be able to be profitable in their own right. This was something that it was not clear would be possible to achieve in Juba, where private sector money to support advertising revenue is scarce, and no reliable sources of long-term NGO funding for news production lay on the horizon, even setting aside concerns of the kinds of problems that such lifelines might mean for actual or perceived control of editorial decision-making.

Journalists for Human Rights

The trainers from the Canadian NGO Journalists for Human Rights (JHR) who I had observed at Logali House were another of the institutional supports for journalism in South Sudan. They were involved in supporting various Juba-based publications to try and develop sustainable business models for the post-Internews-funding era that was a few months away, as well as working closely with various newsrooms to develop more professional journalistic practices, including developing norms around sourcing, attribution and story development. JHR was also involved in a soft-touch, educational relationship with the Media Authority (discussed shortly) following a philosophy that it would be easier to get the Media Authority to cease or reduce its harrassment of journalists through organising roundtables where media houses and journalists could talk to representatives of the Media Authority directly, to air their grievances with the manner in which it went about attempting to 'regulate' them out of all proportion to its legal mandate.

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[15]https://internews.org/about-us

Figure 4: A signboard at the AMDISS offices in Juba.

JHR had been in South Sudan for a number of years and its local office was led by Laura Bain, a Canadian who had been appointed after the previous head, Carolyn Thompson, had been nudged by the Media Authority to leave the country as a result of critical reporting that she had been doing in a freelance capacity. This coincided with what some journalist saw to be an aggressive crackdown on foreign journalists at the time. Eyder Peralta of NPR had been detained by the NSS for entering the country on a tourist visa and presenting himself at the Media Authority requesting accreditation. Simona Foltyn, had been instructed to leave and Jason Patinkin, whose reporting had been particularly critical of the government, was effectively deported in an afternoon.

After delaying the renewal of Carolyn's accreditation until the last moment, the Media Authority informed her that it would not be renewed, on the basis of five stories that she had written which the Authority felt were 'lies'. Rather than wait to be deported, Carolyn and another JHR staffer left the country the next day. It was in the period after Carolyn's departure that Laura took over managing the South Sudan presence of JHR, on a contract which explicitly denied her the ability to engage in freelance journalism alongside her work with media organisations in the country. This change was understood by JHR staff I spoke to as being a pragmatic move by the organisation, intended to preserve its presence in the country and avoid any ambiguity in staff roles that might afford the Media Authority similar leverage over them in future.

The Association for Media Development in South Sudan

JHR trainers would occasionally sponsor or attend events at the offices of the Association for Media Development in South Sudan (AMDISS) whose compound eventually became a regular stop on my interview schedule. AMDISS' offices were located in a compound that previously belonged to the *Juba Post* newspaper, which, it was explained to me, folded sometime in 2013 due to a lack of donor funds to support it and too few commercial revenues to substitute for them. AMDISS has a broad mandate to represent, support and develop journalists and media organisations in the country and provided an air-conditioned working space, a small library of old publications, training materials and copies of useful acts and laws. While officially meant to focus more on the development of media *organisations* than assisting journalists directly, AMDISS was a location that appeared to function as a safe work space for journalists who were not affiliated to any major news agencies and so had no proper workspaces elsewhere in the city.

Figure 5: Inside the AMDISS compound.

The AMDISS office was a site around which one could likely write an entirely separate ethnography. The existence of the AMDISS office as a safe space - with a guard at the front gate, desks and chairs for working at and reliable daytime electricity - only became clear to me mid-way into my stay in Juba, when one of the journalists I had interviewed took it upon himself to take me there and make introductions to South Sudanese colleagues working on the premises. Unlike Logali, with its cosmopolitan garden meetings and perceptions of surveillance, AMDISS felt to be a far more comfortable, safer location for the work of journalists. On any given day, the people using the compound appeared to be almost exclusively South Sudanese journalists, the occasional trainer or manager from one of the local media organisations, and a pair of women who would set up lunchtime catering on the second floor outdoor dining area. Everyone appeared to know everyone else, and more than one sudden press conference would gain a boost in attendance once someone at AMDISS received a WhatsApp message or phone call and passed it on to the rest of the journalists working there that day.

In terms of what will become an evolving discussion about resources for journalistic practice, AMDISS was interesting in other respects as well. Unlike Logali, or other hotel bar/cafe-type locations where some of the foreign journalists might occasionally meet sources or do work, AMDISS had no requirement that one socialise, or make purchases to hang out. It was primarily a working space that many South Sudanese journalists had access to apparently by virtue of simply being recognised as South Sudanese journalists. The only thing that one could purchase was lunch, which was approximately 250SSP (about a dollar) for a plate of food - less than a tenth of the cost of lunch at Logali House. This is worth mentioning, because it suggests that the spaces where many journalists would hang out during the day, and what they would hang out there to do, was in part just common sense and thrift. Logali's garden may have better internet (it is not clear where internet access at AMDISS was coming from, but more than one journalist appeared to be using their own mobile data), but it also meant trade offs in terms of the expense of hanging out there, its unsuitability as a sustained, quiet workspace and the level of privacy for journalists that it afforded. This is not to suggest that the two communities were entirely partitioned. South Sudanese journalists writing for overseas publications - including a clear friendship group of wire journalists - would often hang out in Logali to file material on the satellite internet, attend occasional events or drink tea with colleagues from Al Jazeera. With the exception of JHR staff involved at AMDISS-based training sessions, I never encountered any of the foreign journalists whose base of operations was Logali or private accommodation in Juba visiting the AMDISS compound, though.

The Union of Journalists of South Sudan

The Union of Journalists of South Sudan (UJOSS) is a professional body open in principle to all practicing journalists in South Sudan and was intended to lobby for their professional interests, including issues of pay, working conditions, legal rights and protection against harrassment and intimidation by security forces. Before the establishment of the Media Authority in 2016, they would also issue ID cards to members, offering them a way to formally identify themselves as journalists. This function was then taken over by the Media Authority after their establishment, despite their lack of an obligation to do so, and every indication that this is in fact against the organisation's legal mandate.

Membership of UJOSS was also heavily skewed towards South Sudanese journalists working for in-country publications. I encountered no foreign journalists who claimed membership of the organisation and South Sudanese journalists working for international publications were occasionally members out of solidarity with UJOSS' mission to protect (in effect South Sudanese) journalists, but expected little from it themselves and perceived an awkwardness in their relationship with the union. As one journalist put it:

> We don't interact with them, much. The only we time we really had a mutual interaction with them was during, again, 19th of July, 19th of August 2015, when Peter Julius was killed. But besides that, they technically speaking avoid us and we avoid them. Because they feel like while we are nationals, we have a stronger body backing us up. Like if you have Reuters backing you up, or you have Al Jazeera backing you up, it is not the same as having Juba Monitor staff backing you up. So they feel like we are already privileged enough that we don't need them. And they feel like we're, I'm not sure if we're too good for them, or they're too good for us, it's a mixture or something.
>
> **Respondent 9**

Journalists who were, or had been, members of UJOSS spoke of the organisation in disaffected terms as one which no longer had any real power to resist the demands of the Media Authority or agitate for the release of detained journalists:

> And with UJOSS, they deal directly with journalists, but they are not really effective. They are not. They are just like, toothless. They don't have a lot of power. They are afraid.
>
> **Respondent 5**

. . . .

> [...] they don't get any support, they don't get any support from, I mean, direct support. And sometimes I can say they're, the people who are right now running the Union, they have failed somewhere in knowing their duties and to bring the journalists together. Because at the moment, there is not that unity. I mean, like, a forum that can bring all the journalists. Journalists here always met, if one of our colleagues got killed or something happened. But there is no forum [anymore], there is no club that can bring the journalists. And that's why I say there is a failure of the Union of Journalists there, [they are] supposed to engage the journalists on, on [a] weekly and a monthly basis. So that if there is anything, we can, we can, UJOSS can use us as a media to send their message. Call us, we

will come with our recorders, ok? We come with our recorders, we come with our recorders and then we, we will record and then we will send a message out.

Respondent 8

. . . .

You know, like, if you look at 2017 and, hell, if you look at 2016 and 2017 and even 2018, we aren't what we were. So somebody can get in trouble, and they would ideally notify the UN if they're western, a local would notify maybe UJOSS, the Union of journalists, but then they're very limited, right, they don't have that standing power.

Respondent 9

I was not able to interview any of UJOSS' staff during my fieldwork. Unlike AMDISS, the organisation appeared to have no obvious office in Juba and did not arrange any events during the period that I was in the country. In the eyes of journalists - whose practices and perceptions of context are the focus of this research - the organisation had become largely ineffectual in the years since the Media Authority took over some of its core activities. Its most valuable function was being able to deploy political pressure to ensure the safety of practising journalists, but this was something that journalists mostly felt they were now better able to secure through other forms of affiliation. This strategy is something that is more fully discussed in chapter 5.

4.3 THE BUREAUCRACY OF REPORTING IN SOUTH SUDAN

Professional journalism in South Sudan takes place in a bureaucratic context that in many respects exists to control and frustrate various kinds of journalistic work - particularly work involving human rights violations, investigative reporting and reporting on the humanitarian effects of the ongoing conflict in the country. The accreditation and control of journalists is done primarily through two organisations - the Media Authority and the National Security Service (NSS). In practice, these organisations appear to be neither distinct nor adversarial and are perhaps better understood as entangled. Multiple journalists asserted that John Mahou Chadal, the deputy head of the Media Authority was in fact an NSS agent with a history of informing on journalists to state security during his earlier career working for local publications in Juba. He was seen as the most obvious indication that the Media Authority was in many respects subservient to the NSS in its work controlling journalists and the media, rather than an institution interested in the defence of a free press against the state. When forced to obtain 'researcher accreditation' with the Media Authority before departing on a journey to Malakal, it was instructive to see from the stamps on the returned documents that my paperwork had been forwarded to the NSS headquarters in Juba for approval - an organisation which ought to have had no interest in or say over my arrangements. Yet while they may work together in various circumstances, the Media Authority and the NSS are nevertheless distinct institutions, with different legal and de facto powers in the lives of journalists. This section provides a brief sketch of these.

4.3.1   The Media Authority

To try and tell the story of the constraints facing journalists in South Sudan without discussing the role of the country's Media Authority would be tantamount to an academic crime. The Media Authority was established in 2016[16], in terms of the Media Authority act of 2013 (Government of South Sudan, 2013). According to the act that created its legal foundation, "[t]he Authority shall ensure that media development and press freedoms in South Sudan are consistent with Constitutional and International guarantees of freedom of expression and shall promote public interest in the media sector" (Government of South Sudan, 2013)[s(19).1], it is meant to operate transparently as a media ombudsman-type organisation, as well as handling the allocation of radio spectrum, the development of technical standards, the issuing of broadcast licenses to commercial media organisations, advising the government on media policy, and assisting in transforming the state broadcaster into a public broadcaster.

The Media Authority Act is in many ways a model legal document, which is unsurprising when one considers that it was created with the involvement of UNESCO and a number of other media organisations and NGOs in the country as part of a desire to transform a largely unregulated and unaccountable media landscape in the country into something that more closely resembled responsible, professional journalism. The act provides, amongst other best-practice elements of media policy, a shield clause allowing journalists to protect their sources and broadly protects journalists from criminal prosecution in the course of their work. It also explicitly requires that "no government license shall be required from any person practising journalism as a profession". The Media Authority constituted on the basis of the act was intended to give life to these prescriptions and transfer the work of government-media relations from the country's Ministry of Information to an entity situated less firmly in the formal security apparatus of the state.

During my fieldwork, the organisation was physically located in a dusty office near the Hai Cinema area of Juba, in what appeared to be a converted residential house, judging by the layout of the rooms and the outside space. It was located some distance from the Ministries district where most of government's daily business takes place, somewhere between the Ministries complex and the NSS' infamous Blue House on the edge of town. It had a small administrative staff consisting of the Managing Director, Elijah Alier Kuai, his second in command John (whose alleged NSS ties I described earlier) and what appeared during my visits to be handful of administrative staff, whose primary work appeared to be screening applications from foreign media workers and sifting through material written about the country via Google searches in order to find objectionable material being written about the country by journalists currently based there. The work of application screening formed a crucial part of a larger bureaucratic system through which journalists are unable to practice journalism in the country without purchasing accreditation documentation from the Media Authority. Failure to do so could result in refused visa applications abroad or - in the case of NPR's journalist Eyder Peralta[17] - detention by the NSS before deportation. If, at this point, the astute reader might find this description at odds with elements of the Media Authority Act, they would be entirely correct in doing so. One journalist who had dealt with them characterised this disconnect succinctly:

> They are the ones who denied half the journalists coming in [to South Sudan], and have kicked journalists out. They're the ones with the highlighters. They are also the ones who are also very adamant that they don't like outside influence. So if you are trying to get a press pass and you try and invoke the US embassy, or the UN, or whatever, that's not going to work for you. If you invoke National Security or a local journalist, or someone here, that will work for you. They don't like to feel pressured, they don't like to feel undermined. They have inferiority

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[16] https://en.unesco.org/news/unesco-welcomes-establishment-south-sudan-media-authority-0

[17] Peralta recounted elements of this experience in an NPR episode at https://www.npr.org/2017/06/16/533176641/npr-reporter-recounts-detention-in-south-sudan

complexes and they don't like to be yelled at. So you really have to, you stroke their ego and be really nice to them. Which you hate doing, because they don't believe, I mean, I've had... chats with them... I interviewed the guys, and know exactly what they don't like in stories. And so, they're sort of like on another planet when it comes to journalism and freedom of the press, and you kind of like, have to just listen to it. And decide how badly you want to stay here.

Respondent 10

In effect, the distance between the Media Authority as it exists in law and as it exists in reality is significant. In the eyes of virtually every journalist interviewed, the organisation's primary functions are managing the accreditation of local and foreign journalists, gatekeeping the entry of foreign journalists into the country and intimidating those involved in reporting that the state finds objectionable. More than one journalist spoke of being told indirectly or in person that they had written material that the Media Authority disliked and of the anxiety that the organisation produced in its extra-legal role of enforcer of appropriate content:

> I'm not shocked when I see them calling on my phone. But then what I get concerned about is which stories are they worried about, right? And before I go there, I give my office an advance (call) saying, I'm going there, I'll be there in about thirty minutes, and give it an hour, maybe another thirty minutes. And then in two hours' time, if I don't check in, that's when you should start being concerned. Right. Call me back. If I don't call back we already have a situation. I can call [my organisation], call so-and-so, they would be able to go through the chains and figure out where I am. Because odds are if I can't talk myself out in an hour, I'm done. It's not going anywhere.

Respondent 9

The Media Authority was perceived by journalists to be engaged in actively undermining the work of journalists in two main ways. Respondents commented repeatedly on its role in denying accreditation and the ability to practice to journalists it found troublesome, its practices of threatening journalists with de-accreditation (and deportation in the case of foreign nationals) for reporting it disliked, and its role in policing the work of journalists through pre-emptive censorship at the Juba press. The latter scenario involved NSS agents waiting at the city's single printing press at printing time each day, to excise stories that they found objectionable from papers sending their copy to print. While I was unable to observe this process first hand, for obvious reasons, multiple journalists confirmed having either encountered the printing press censors or knowing individuals who had:

> [...]the Media Authority came in. They claim that they're trying to make it, improve the situation. But I think that they are just a tool of the government. Because if you are telling, if you are threatening people, banning journalists, and you say you are working for the journalists, no, I think you, they are just being used to say no, we don't like this story. Sometimes you come with a story and you ask yourself what is going on. Because it's, you write a story and it's going to Juba, to the printing press. They delete it.
> [...]At the []Juba printing] press, yeah. They first review, they work through the story, they check it and, there was a guy who worked with us. He was close to some of the security guys. And you, they were relatives, they lived together. And he told me, these guys have a list. Like, if they delete your story, they write your name down. The one who wrote the story. It happens like three times, then they summon you over there [to the Media Authority office].

Respondent 5

There is much more that could be said of the Media Authority and press regulation in South Sudan more generally, but my intention here is to cover some of the most salient elements of the practical regulation of journalists in the country. That the Media Authority diverges so significantly from its legal structure in practice and the sense of trepidation with which journalists encountered it are observations that would likely not have been made - or made to the same extent - were it not for having conducted many interviews in Juba and having encountered the Media Authority myself on a handful of occasions. I had met with them once as a fly on the wall during a press conference they held attempting to close Radio Miraya, while assisting two journalists I followed on a reporting trip with their press accreditation and, finally, when I was referred to them by NSS agents refusing to allow me to board a flight to Malakal without accreditation because I was 'reasearching media' and so fell under their jurisdiction. In law, this was a utter fiction, but both the NSS and the Media Authority were insistent that I ought to register with the Authority, that the government 'owned' my research, and that I had misbehaved in talking to journalists without Media Authority permission. This encounter is worth recounting in full as I recorded it in my fieldnotes at the time, as it was an excellent - if unwelcome - ethnographic experience of the practical and affective power of the Media Authority.

I had attempted to obtain pre-flight clearance at the airport for a journey to Malakal the next day in which I would accompany two journalists working on an investigative story. I was told by the NSS agent at the desk that I required a letter of no objection from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as I was travelling with journalists and had no clear bureaucratic capacity in which to do so:[18]

> On arrival, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, entirely reasonably, treats our request as ridiculous. There is no such thing as a letter of no objection for a re-searcher, and they refuse to simply make one up for me. They suggest - to my increasing sadness - that we should go and see the Media Authority instead. Jok [Solomun, currently fixing for the journalists I am accompanying] and I then head over to the Media Authority office, to see whether they might then be able to help me. I wait with Jok for fifteen minutes or so in the dark room where they issue permits and letters, before I get called into the office of the director general, Elijah Alier Kuai.

> In Elijah's office, the [alleged] NSS liaison, John, is also waiting for me, and the two of them give me a polite but thorough dressing down for essentially - in their view - 'breaking the law' by doing research on the media without getting a permit from the Media Authority. I play ignorant (because this is nonsense fic-tion), and reply that I asked at the embassy in Kampala about whether I needed any such documents, and they were absolutely clear that the material I submitted was sufficient, and said nothing whatsoever about needing to register with the me-dia authority. John continues before I am finished replying, adding that because I am researching media at all, I am under the authority of the Media Authority, and because my research is in South Sudan, South Sudan owns it. I just nod and pretend as though I agree, wondering silently how poor a grasp of both law and research you would need to have for that statement to make sense. When he fin-ishes his tirade, it becomes clear that they *will* in fact help me to get a permit to allow me to do my research, but I receive no better promise than that they will 'try' to do it today. The unstated implication being that they might just take two days to do a background check, just to leave me grounded, but without actually going so far as to provoke an incident by outright denying me anything. But what can I do. I leave Elijah's office feeling a mix of anger, incredulity, anxiety and de-feat. The whole experience is a mix of childhood memories of being asked to go

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[18]South Sudan does not have a visa category of visa for 'researcher', and I was clearly neither a journalist nor any obvious kind of NGO or UN worker.

to the headmaster's office for some minor infraction and being shouted at, combined with mild, time-delayed terror remembering that NPR's Eyder Peralta was imprisoned by these same people for four days for entering on the same tourist visa I have and having the temerity to go to the Media Authority and request a swap to a journalist visa.

The journalists, A and B, are waiting in the car outside when I emerge, having successfully both registered as aliens, and met with the South African ambassador for coffee and a lengthy chat and general chinwag. Their upbeat enthusiasm at what has been a productive morning only makes me feel even more like I am letting the team down. On our way back to Logali, though, A tells me that he mentioned my case to the ambassador, and that the he had said that he is willing to put in a call to the Media Authority on my behalf, in case it would help. I have a suspicion that it just might, as it would turn what is currently a one-sided situation of bureaucratic bullying into an exchange where the Media Authority - Elijah in particular -would become aware that someone more important than them was watching to make sure I am helped. South Africa, by dint of its role in mediating the never-ending peace process and continuing to keep Riek Machar under house arrest, enjoys political clout in the country that far outstrips its everyday geopolitical relevance. So I get Elijah's direct number from B, give it to A, and he calls the ambassador to set it up. The ambassador agrees to call Elijah to thank them for all their help assisting me (and to indirectly point out that he is watching), and when A and B settle down to interview MSF in the afternoon, I head back to the Media Authority to join Jok (who has been waiting there since my earlier scolding in case things change) to see how far the process has gotten. Replying that things seem to have sped up, Jok motions me into John's office, and to my surprise, a printed press card is sitting on the table, and only a few minutes later, a signed permit bearing stamps from the media authority and the NSS is ready for me. John mentions briefly that he is aware that the embassy is watching the application, and behaves like a changed person. Far more chatty, all smiles, zero chiding, and even asking me whether I will send him details for masters scholarships in Media Management. Jok, sitting behind me, is barely suppressing a grin. The difference from this morning's scolding is stark, and I put it down to the influence that the embassy's attention has had on the process. It's something that had never occurred to me before A mentioned it, and was a surprisingly effective way of putting pressure on the Media Authority.

Fieldnotes, 22 March, Juba

Prior to this encounter, I had already been primed to be somewhat wary of and anxious about the Media Authority as a result of numerous accounts of the organisation that journalists had given during interviews over the previous months. This anxiety was exacerbated by the aggressive tone of the meeting and discovering an NSS stamp on the accreditation I was subsequently issued. These feelings, I would later realise, were a thread in understanding the profoundly affective nature of the space I was in - something I reflect upon more fully in chapter 6, and which is echoed in Shesterinina's (2018) own account of coming to fear some of the people she engaged with in her own research. This encounter was also a vivid illustration of the effectiveness of a tactic of affiliating oneself with others who could intercede when tricky situations arise. In my case, this was the South African embassy, due to the country's long involvement in South Sudan and importance to the peace process[19]. This was a tactic for coping with threats from security agents that numerous journalists had remarked on, but which it was illuminating to see function in practice. This is something I discuss further in chapter 5.

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[19]South Africa was at that time still keeping the leader of the rebel SPLA-IO, Dr Riek Machar, under house arrest and far away from the battlefield

I've described features of the Media Authority at some length here, but I believe that this is appropriate to the large presence that the organisation has in the professional lives of journalists in the country. Having done so, it is worth then briefly also sketching out a description of the National Security Service as it emerged from my interviewees' accounts.

4.3.2 The National Security Service

Located on the edge of the city, close to the UN House base, is the *Blue House*, which serves as the headquarters for the country's National Security Service. The NSS is responsible for countering attempts to subvert the state, conducting domestic espionage, and pursuing a general mission of maintaining the security of the country. In practice, the NSS appears to operate with little to no judicial oversight and is able to act against individuals with relative impunity according to a broad interpretation of what counts as 'subversive activity'. The Blue House had long been feared to be an undeclared facility for the detention and torture of political prisoners whose ranks included South Sudanese journalists apprehended by the NSS. This was confirmed in October 2018, when a mutiny by prisoners at the facility made clear both that it was being used as a detention center and that a number of prisoners whose whereabouts were unknown were in fact being held in the building.[20]

The Blue House obtains its name from the blue glass used on the outside of the building, with the main structure itself set some way back from the road, behind fortifications that include watchtowers and sandbagged machine gun emplacements. The location would pop up occasionally during interviews with journalists, generally in reference to experiences of being taken (or threats of being taken) there by agents of the NSS. This was widely understood to be something to be avoided in all possible circumstances, as being detained by officers working in 'security' (often used as an indistinct reference to police, army, NSS or other 'security' officials) was a matter with considerably higher stakes when the possibility of being taken to the Blue House was invoked. In accounts of the death of US journalist Chris Allen, a handful of journalists familiar with the incident explained that his body was flown not to Kampala in Uganda (from where he had entered South Sudan) but to Juba, and the Blue House specifically, where at least one South Sudanese fixer was requested to come and view the body to confirm that it was not any of the foreign journalists that they had previously fixed for. Transiting Allen's body through Juba and the Blue House, while labelling him a "white rebel"[21] was understood by those journalists who knew the story as a hostile act, intended to send a warning to foreign journalists working in the country.

The relationship between the security services and journalists in South Sudan is an uneasy one, which appears to have had a long history of being worked out in practice over time rather than being formally grounded in journalists' and security officials' legal rights and powers. With the outbreak of war in 2013, many journalists commented that this relationship had become tougher, and that the NSS in particular had come to view journalism an potential threat to the stability of the country in a way that it had not done before. This was understood in part as being a change in the attitudes of the NSS as it became more paranoid about internal threats to security in a wartime context, but also due to changes in the actual staff in the organisation, which interfered with years-long understandings that journalists had developed with older NSS staff. As journalists explained the situation:

> The days when you'd be pulled over by a cop going why are you taking a photo, they'd get really angry, call someone up and say look this is what's going down, and the National Security guy would be like what are you doing, I was like oh I was here, it was a mistake, it was an honest thing and they would speak to the

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[20]https://www.voanews.com/archive/prison-standoff-south-sudans-blue-house
[21]https://www.cjr.org/special_report/christopher-allen.php

guys on the street, and they would be like let him go, he's alright. And so that sort of level of negotiation has, the extreme nature of the war has either pushed those guys out, or they've changed, or, or, or it's just not possible anymore. And I, I say that's gone across, in the army, in National Security, in the Ministries. So it's not just a thing about journalists, I don't think. And, and that was so important in a system that, if on paper it worked, but fundamentally, you know, it was still a system that basically was based around personal relationships with people. You know, you could get things done if you knew the right person.

Respondent 12

. . . .

South Sudan copied and pasted, the government, I mean, copy and pasted most of the, the, structure of the, the, this national security system that was already in Sudan, no? So it was really complicated, it is really complicated to work there, because it, and it's getting more complicated, it's getting really hard to go back as a journalist and as a photographer as well, because my first impression was that it's so hermetic, and so strong, so, I don't know in English, but so suspicious for everything, no? And there is national security members everywhere in the corner, and it's pretty hard to work, and it's getting harder and harder for journalists. That's why there are not many there now, because at the end of the day, you, you, its, you can only work just embedded to, to the UN agencies or UN or the UN peacekeeping, you know, NGOs. Otherwise on your own it's pretty hard.

Respondent 2

As mentioned earlier, the NSS was widely believed to have infiltrated the Media Authority, using it to perform the more public activities required for controlling the press, such as background clearances for media accreditation, calling journalists in to account for their work, and coordinating on censorship at the Juba printing press. Beyond these more bureaucratic elements of repression via the Media Authority, however, the NSS was also widely believed to be more directly involved in the intimidation, harrassment, and occasionally the murder of journalists. In Kampala, I was given a copy of a death threat received via email by a journalist who had fled the country after being sought by the NSS for a story he had published which they felt gave too much space to the leader of the rebel SPLA-IO, Dr Riek Machar:

Forwarded message ————-
From: "▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮" <▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮>
Date: ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮
Subject: Warning notice for ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ & ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ !!
To: ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮
Cc:

Human right activists, ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ & ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮,

Since the outbreak of civil war in 2013, the National security service have been closely monitoring you reporting bias in some media outlets such as, ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ and your reporting on ▮▮▮▮ as well. In fact, for several occasions, right from the beginning of civil war back in 2013, you have reported enough about the killing of civilian and other gross human right violations across South Sudan as you have allegedly said were committed by government soldiers, and that is why National security service had decided to blacklisted ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ for his bias

reporting and unfounded allegations last year. Therefore we in National security service wouldn't tolerate or compromise with your nonsense and empty accusations against the Government of South Sudan.Again we have enough information intelligent information that the two of you hailed from one geographical area and are strongly linked to the terrorists group (SPLM- IO) of Ex-first vice President Dr. Riak Machar Teny. Perhaps,on behalf of national security service I'm issuing this strong warning to two of you, to either stop/refrain from writing or reporting nonsense and empty accusations against the Government of South Sudan, otherwise we will consider other measures such as tracking your hideout , whether in Ugandan or else where and I'm sure that will have severe consequences on your personal lives, and to be honest once we find you, we will not compromise or spare you, because your reports have causes us some huge political standoff with the rest of the world.

███████████

National security service (NIS)

In another account, a journalist recounted how individuals he believed to be NSS agents had tracked him down for having taken images of fighting at the presidential compound, known as 'J1' (pronounced *Jay One*), during fighting that broke out in the capital in July of 2016:

So it's very tough. And in, the same in October, they came because I was covering the J1, the July 2016 incident. I was among the journalists that were enveloped in J1. So I had recorded using my phone, my [phoenix?] phone. So I came out to come and see after it had been, subsidised a little bit. I was in the compound there. Then I went there as a curious, with my curiosity as a journalist, I saw some dead bodies, so I had to record it and take some pictures there, and nobody saw me, actually. I was lucky enough to return to the room [...] when we, all the journalists were escorted from J1 to Logali House. We spent that night. Some weeks later, I call one of my friends, showed him what we, what I recorded and the images from there. I think my friend also had his friend, and he delivered the message that [my name] is having some footage of J1

[...]

Yeah, yeah. So somebody told him, OK, that [I] was the guy. So they followed me [on date] around airport road. Next to, next to the ████ Hotel. [inaudible], it's next to the presidency, because I reside along that side. So I was told, some two gentlemen approach me and they said, hey, give us your phone. And don't do anything stupid. And as somebody who is really equipped with safety, I just calm down. I said ok. If it is my phone you want, take it. They took it. And it was at gunpoint. So I gave them the phone. So from there, I told [media organisation] what I was going through, so they took me out from Juba [on date], and went to Nairobi. I spent eleven months there in Nairobi, so I, I returned to the country in September last year. So, it's really, you can see how risky it is.
Respondent 6

For all of the uneasiness they evoke, the NSS is also an entity whose presence cannot be avoided, as it suffuses key elements of the administrative and transport infrastructure that journalists must engage with if they are to work successfully in the country. Beyond its presence at the printing press in Juba, the gardens at Logali House and the offices of the Media Authority, the NSS also vets people travelling from Juba airport to other destinations in the country. Any non-UNMISS travellers are required to report to an airport security office the day before departure for approval, whether they are travelling commercially, on a humanitarian flight, or via UNMISS' own aircraft departing from inside Tomping base. Travellers may

have their travel cancelled and be denied permission to board by the NSS agent on duty at their discretion and no reasons are required to be given. It was this pre-flight clearance process that caused me to almost miss my flight to Malakal, and which allows the NSS to bar travel to 'sensitive' regions and keep a record of where journalists are travelling and with who.

> **Respondent 15:** It started last year [2016]. Maybe last year August, September. Before that, you could travel, no problem. Nobody would check. Now there's always a national, an NSS person, national security person, at the airport, who will check and make sure that you have this letter from the RRC [Relief and Rehabilitation Commission]. Before you were free to go wherever. So there was a time last year where, for a couple of weeks, journalists couldn't go anywhere. We were completely restricted, because they said if you don't have a work permit, you can't travel. Which applies to journalists. We don't have a work permit, we just have a press pass.
>
> ...
>
> **Interviewer:** Is it easy to find a spot [on UNMISS flights]? To take them up on that?
>
> **Respondent 15:** Yeah
>
> **Interviewer:** OK
>
> **Respondent 15:** Yeah, usually. They go all the time, they are never completely full. Rarely ever are they.
>
> **Interviewer:** And does that require RRC [Relief and Rehabilitation Commission] approval as well?
>
> **Respondent 15:** Absolutely. Not only RRC approval. A list submitted with everyone who's going, first has to be submitted to the national security, the national security has to then approve it, and then they can fly. So national security can ground flights any time. They have done that to us once. It was with [Medecins Sans Frontieres], and we couldn't fly. Because they didn't like the passengers, or, they don't have to give a reason.
>
> **Interviewer:** OK
>
> **Respondent 15:** They just ground the flight.

There is more that could be said, but what should be clear at this point is both something of the centrality of the Media Authority and the NSS in the security apparatus of the country as it relates to journalists. While it is not possible to know for sure the full nature of the relationship between these two organisations and their explicit views of journalists and journalism in the country, what is relevant is that they are perceived by journalists as a pervasive and potentially dangerous presence which must be avoided or accommodated in order to work safely. The practices through which journalists do so are explored more fully in chapter 5.

4.3.3 Getting accredited to enter the country as a foreign journalist

The NSS and the Media Authority together are responsible for administering a system of media accreditation in the country that would appear to run counter to the requirements of the Media Authority Act's demand that no governmental licensing of journalists take place. South Sudanese journalists writing for international publications are required to renew their press accreditation every few months, and this renewal is tied to paying a small fee and passing

a background check that includes checking previous work for 'unacceptable' content. As one journalist described the process:

> So, they still do background checks, you know, your bylines and stuff. And they point out the articles [that they dislike]. I don't remember any journalist, local journalist who says yes we've been denied accreditation, but then there's only ██████, █████████, maybe ████████, and then ██████████████ and ██████.

Respondent 9

For foreign journalists, the process is somewhat more difficult. Potential new arrivals require a visa to work as journalists prior to entering the country in order to avoid potential detention and expulsion (as the case of NPR's Eyder Peralta illustrated), and this requires additional steps in the application process. First, the journalist must receive a letter of invitation from a South Sudanese organisation or person, which must then be sent to the Media Authority, along with the details of the journalist and the project that they intend to work on. Once the Media Authority has conducted a background check on the journalist and satisfied themselves that they and their project are acceptable, they will issue a letter of no objection, which must accompany the journalist's application at a South Sudanese embassy abroad. Only then can a visa be issued. This requirement for a letter of invitation from a South Sudanese party is understood amongst journalists as functioning as a form of human collateral intended to prevent excessively critical reporting by journalists who will be able to publish from outside the country. This process was described at length by one journalist based in Nairobi, whose account carried a number of themes repeatedly pointed out by colleagues both outside the country and in Juba:

> [...] it used to be really straightforward. They just wanted your money, right. So you would, in the old days, you'd just, you'd just pitch up, buy a visa on arrival, buy a visa on arrival, go down to the media ministry , sit around for a while, hand over some money, fill in a form, hand over a picture, get a piece of paper. That was that. And then you'd often have to do that again at every different county you went to. And sometimes you'd have to go the police as well, sometimes to the army as well. It was just, but it was just balls aching bureaucracy. It wasn't, they never said no. And then it changed, you needed to get your accreditation in advance, which was just like another bureaucratic hurdle, because it's very hard to communicate with Juba, so often, often all that did was create an industry for fixers who would go and get your accreditation for you, you'd pay more money, and with that you could then apply for a visa. And then I can't remember when it was, but maybe a year or so ago, they, I think, I think someone in the intelligence services discovered Google and worked out that you could Google a journalist and see whether they'd written negative things. So then they started blocking a lot of the foreign journalists from going. Basically blocking any foreign journalists if they've been before. And I think the last story I'd done in South Sudan prior to that was about like government rape camps. So I was like, ok, what are the chances that I'll be let in again. So I was in the process of applying for accreditation, and I just didn't bother, when I heard that some of my colleagues had been blocked. I was like ok fine, and now that I don't freelance full time, I work for [organisation], so one of my colleagues who hadn't been there for seven or eight years, also writes predominantly in French, we had him apply, because he, nothing will come up. And he got his accreditation, went in fine, just at the same time as a lot of the proper press who'd been before were not getting in. This is the time when American news networks who'd never been there were getting in, but all the guys who'd been in, in Nairobi, were not. And the point there being that, you know, you send in like some big cheese from the States

who'd never been there, they end up writing a story about how poor South Sudan is suffering a famine, just like other places in the world, and they completely miss the fact that this is nothing to do with the weather, it's entirely to do with the government. Whereas all of us know that, and we are not getting in. So the government got the story they wanted, and there are any number of, I think, I cant remember the names, but all those big American networks with three letters flew in, were there, the guys from America and talked about the terrible humanitarian crisis, and neglected to mention that there was a war and this was man made, and the famine was all in rebel areas. I mean, it's just, they're all. But this, I think, you know, I sort of joke about the dumb intelligence people discovering Google, but I think there is a clever strategy there, which is don't let people in who know what they're talking about. There's, let, you know, let the dummies from far away come in, because they won't get it. And so the story completely shifted and it became one of humanitarian catastrophe, like with Somalia, you know, it was all put together. Which it isn't.

Respondent 11

. . . .

I used to write an introduction letter, for example, you, you are coming, you need to some. I will ask you, let your agency write the letter. You send the letter to me, plus the copy of your passport. Then I will come here again and I will write the letter here by my name. But the issue is that this letter I am writing here, is, if you come and write any story here against them, against the government, and then you leave the country, they will not ask you, they will come and ask me. Yeah? Because they will I say I was the one who brought you.

[...] I used to tell [journalists that I wrote invitations for] very clear, I am helping you, but also I need you to help me. If you know that you are coming to do something that is bad [reporting on the country], just tell me. I will not write any letter for you. Because you, you will not be in the country. I will be here. They can call me. If they don't want to call me, they know at what time I used to go home, where I am staying, blah blah. They just target me on the road. So that people don't know who kidnapped me.

Respondent 16

This press accreditation must then be periodically renewed, if a journalist is intending to continue reporting over a term longer than about three months. This process often requires an in-person visit to the Media Authority, which few journalists relished. Being found to have reported on the country in an overly 'critical' way can result in accreditation being denied.

And the thing also, here, is that just like any time they can tell you to go. Because this is what they do sometimes. You can find that one of the stories you wrote, they are not favour with it. They just call you, they say, you know what, leave this country now. And if you tell anybody at this time, we will jail you. So the person will just come from there and pack, immediately. Yeah.

Respondent 16

. . . .

There used to be many [journalists in country]. But after, during, after the conflict, it's become hard. Now, like, the Media Authority has banned some journalists. They do thorough background check on you. Then once they see that what you've written is critical, they don't give you a visa. they don't give you accreditation.

Respondent 5

. . . .

Respondent 15: Yeah, so the last time I went in, I, so the first time I came in, I had this accreditation letter from this small, small [country] newspaper, and they gave me, because I hadn't written much on South Sudan before, I had a few stories, so they gave me a press pass for half a year. The second time I went in, was, yeah, a bit more, a bit more recent. And they...

Interviewer: Was this for a renewal?

Respondent 15: Yeah, for a renewal of a press pass. So they sat me down and they asked me where I'd travelled. And I very quickly found out that they knew all the places and were they were kind of checking if I would tell them all of them. Which I, in my head, also thought about. Oh, should I tell them, all of them. But I did. And a couple of them were, of course, in IO [opposition] areas, and places that get a bit neglected by the government on purpose. [list of articles]. But they did give me a new press pass for three months. But they do ask, so..."

Interviewer: Is it always that short, like, the renewals? Every three months?

Respondent 15: Yeah, it used to be six. Now it's three. It's half the price, so it's not more expensive, but it's, I think they want to, yeah, want to keep us coming and want to have more control. Essentially, it's really a power thing. If you come back every three months and they don't give it to you for a longer period of time, then they can control your reporting. Yeah, so what they'd done the second time was that they'd printed out a number of stories that they'd written, and they'd circled a few things that they didn't like. And they asked me to explain them. So, then you explain.

. . . .

Respondent 10: They haven't called me and me and been like, hey can you come in. That doesn't mean though that when I come in they aren't going to have a list of articles of mine that they don't like printed up with highlighted lines as to I don't like this, I don't like this.

Interviewer: That's a thing?

Respondent 10: Of course it is, yeah. They do that. They discovered Google, so they, you know, print up your stuff and go through your articles and highlight everything they don't like.

. . . .

The people who work there are National Security Services Agents who now develop comprehensive files on journalists based on their coverage and who, who now have to invite you to come before you apply to the visa authority for a visa. SO you can't apply for a visa unless you have a letter from the Media Authority. And you are not going to have a letter from the Media Authority unless you have a clean record in their files. And the last time that I applied for an extension of my accreditation, I was summoned to the office of the executive director of the Media Authority, and he had a stack of my articles printed on his desk with certain sections highlighted and said that my coverage hadn't been favourable towards the government of South Sudan. That I was only reporting on rape, sexual violence and war, and that I was basically no longer welcome in South Sudan.

Respondent 19

When accreditation is denied for a foreign journalist in the country, they are generally required to leave promptly. Where they are outside South Sudan attempting to revisit the country for new reporting projects, they may then find themselves effectively shut out of being able to report from the country indefinitely. During my interviews in Nairobi, I encountered multiple journalists who had not been able to return due to the Media Authority refusing to issue letters of no objection to their applications. In Juba, many journalist commented on how few foreign journalists were now in the country, in large part due to the Media Authority keeping out most of those foreigners who were familiar with the country due to problems with that they had written in the past.

4.4 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter has been to sketch out something of the main features of the literal and political/security geography of South Sudan as it exists in the professional lives of the journalists who work there. Any one of these threads - from intermittent power and poor internet to the machinations of the NSS - could have been a chapter unto itself in a different kind of thesis. In this one, however, we shall instead turn attention to the practices of journalists in this context, the role of affective experience in this work and the justifications that they give for choosing to do it.

In chapter 5, I move from this glimpse of the world in which journalists practice to discussing the practices themselves. How, for example, do journalists approach challenges such as security and access in such context? In chapter 6, I turn to discussing the affective dimensions of these practices. Doing journalism in a dangerous space is more than simply a series of rational-economic decisions. Indeed, it would be insensible for a self-preserving rational actor to *want* to push their luck working as a journalist in such an environment. Journalists are influenced by everything from exhaustion and anxiety to anger and euphoria in a range of ways, which will be discussed in more detail. Finally, in chapter 7, I pivot from questions of practice to questions of justification. Sitting in the garden in Logali House, cafes in Nairobi and Kampala, and the rooftop of the AMDISS compound, I was able to ask dozens of journalists why they had decided to become - and persist in working as - journalists in a situation where it was dangerous to be one. From conversation to conversation, certain discourses - of bearing witness, of adventure, of pragmatism - emerged and bear reflecting on.

5 | RISK AND THE WORK OF JOURNALISTS

> I feel that I love journalism, and sometimes when I look around the east African countries, the standard of journalism in that country, I would never think of going somewhere else. I would spend my whole life [in South Sudan], because you become intelligent, you become a smart person doing journalism, you know. But with the situation, with the security after you, poverty after you. You have to think. Think twice. If it was only one side. If it was only security, and you have money, no problems.
>
> **Respondent 5**

Having discussed some of the major features of the context in which journalism in South Sudan takes place, this chapter focuses on how the practice of journalism actually proceeds in a context of risk. That is to say, I want to think about the effects of the environment described in chapter 4 on both the *possibility* and *form* of the journalistic practice of bearing witness - whether it can be done, and when it can be done, what it is understood as being. Having previously framed journalism in and of conflict as a practice that requires both material and discursive elements to be successfully enacted, the question of *possibility* can be understood here as asking what resources - material and discursive - are required to enact moments of practice under conditions of risk. More straightforwardly, this chapter is concerned with examining what is needed for journalists to succeed in producing news in and on South Sudan, as well as what is required for them to maintain a professional identity *as* journalists while doing so.

This chapter does not set out to provide an exhaustive list of everything that goes into 'doing journalism' successfully in the country, but to rather engage in a specific discussion on the relationship between risk - as one of the considerations cited consistently by every respondent - and the practising of journalism. In response to RQ1, asking how practices are enabled and constrained by the context, this chapter argues that the need to manage potential danger functions as both a constraint on the work of journalists and as something which can (and must) be engaged with as an element of practice if it is to be recognised as 'professional' journalism.

It is worth pausing briefly to clarify what I am referring to in this chapter when talking about 'risk', as the the term has a range of implied meanings in different scholarship on journalism and risk in different contexts. As was to an extent implied in the previous chapter and more explicitly discussed shortly, 'risk' here is taken to include the potential for a range of physical or psychological harms that might include kidnapping, detention, death or harassment of journalists and this inventory of threats is the result of an inductive parsing of the kinds of dangers that journalists related when asked to expand on comments made about 'danger' or 'security' during interviews. Perhaps unsurprisingly, this conception of risk resembles that present in prevailing safety discourses in the news media industry and the threats they articulate in the form of training documents (Rentschler, 2007), Hostile Environment Training (HEAT) courses (Palmer, 2018) and industry indices of journalism safety (The Committee to Protect Journalists, 2019).

Risk, in the sense used in this discussion, also serves to carry the potential of future danger forward in time, obliging journalists to behave as though the threat were real. Massumi describes this as the "future birth of the affective fact" (Massumi, 2010, p. 52), in which the logic of risk

is such that it does not require that it ever actually manifest in a harm for it to have structuring effects on the present. Even if threat never comes to pass, one is obliged to behave as though it will, because it could. The conception of risk underpinning safety culture and its training courses, body armour and conservative rules of movement and association subscribes to precisely this logic, in which risk is understood as a "calculable terrain on which risk factors can be interpreted" (Rentschler, 2007, p. 258) and agents can (and under a neoliberal ideal of self-management, *should*) behave as though these risks might come to pass and prepare accordingly. To do otherwise would be negligent.

Given these clarifications, this chapter begins with a discussion of risk and the geography of Juba, where most of my respondents - foreign and South Sudanese - spent the majority of their working time. Drawing on the importance of the geography of 'Aidland' for the work of journalists as discussed in chapter 2, I explore the structure of the Juba landscape and its implications for journalists' subjective perceptions of safe and unsafe space, as well as the ways in which particular spaces and resources are gatekept along logics of risk that reproduce racial, ethnic and other exclusions.

I proceed from here to discuss the idea of risk as something which must be productively engaged with and managed, rather than everywhere and always avoided, via the repeated references to (and evaluations of) the death of journalist Chris Allen by a number of respondents. Journalists' reflections on what professional journalists ought to do when doing risky work illustrate that how journalists engage with risk can have a discursive effect on whether the practice that results is recognisable as professional journalism, or destabilised into something the "war reporter, scarf-wearing crowd" would do (Respondent 11). I argue that the 'proper' management of risk is a part of what goes into enacting moments of conflict reporting in ways that are recognisably professional and in this way incorporates risk as an important element of the practice, rather than simply or only a constraint to it.

Finally, I discuss risk as a constraint that journalists must negotiate in their practice and examine some of the most common responses to working under threat that respondents related in their reflections. These included tactics of self censorship (Kingstone, 2011; Hasan and Wadud, 2020; Walulya and Nassanga, 2020) and the strategic shaping of identities (Palmer and Melki, 2018) that would be familiar to scholars of journalism and intimidation elsewhere, but also others which have been not been as thoroughly discussed in the literature, including the active cultivation of relationships with security officials, remaining within the safe spaces of Aidland's interior and the use of attribution to avoid retribution.

5.1 KEEPING SAFE

> [...]because it's just so difficult, logistically, in the country. It's not like you can just show up in these places now. Like, you can't, there may be commercial flights to Bentiu, but back in the day you could just get on a commercial flight, land in a town and stay in a hotel like a normal human, and then you could talk to people on the ground. Now, even to get to these locations, it takes, you know, a UN flight, and it takes support from the UN because Bentiu doesn't exist anymore, right. So you don't have this freedom. You always have to be under somebody. So you're going to have to be under the UN, you're going to have to be under an NGO, you're going to have to be under SPLA. So, there's a lot of different factors that, like, constrain your movement. And not just constrain your movement, but it's very evident where you, where you're moving now, what you're doing. You can't just go.

Respondent 1

In chapter 4, I described some of the ways in which life as a journalist in South Sudan is structured by risk. Even when it turns out to be nothing, risk obliges one to behave as though a given threat is real, on the grounds that it *might* be (Massumi, 2010)[1], and the consequences if that were the case could be severe. Threat permeates Juba, inscribed in the walls of the presidential compound, the bunkered geography of urban space, heavily armed soldiers on occasional street corners and the unwillingness of most to travel after dark. It circulates in stories shared amongst journalists about the death of Peter Julius and Chris Allen, the imprisonment of Eyder Peralta, and the fantastically violent days when the capital tore itself apart in 2013 and 2016. Threat is perhaps best imagined as a discursive universe whose 'reality' is written in the bullet-scarred walls of the presidential compound and the wrecks of cars abandoned in the streets years ago by owners who never returned from nights of heavy fighting. Its articulations are captured in bunkerised architecture and security practices designed to defend common-sense 'safe' spaces (and bodies) against others that are understood to be (potentially) dangerous.

As Montgomery (2009) has argued, via the bunkerised architecture of Kabul, there is a relationship between the architecture of space and the subjectivities of those who live and work in it. Expanding on this argument in the case of bunkerised living and its subjectivities in South Sudan, Duffield (2010) makes the point that defensive, segregated architecture creates a risk averse subjectivity which both normalises a particular imagination of where safety and danger lie, and shapes the relationships between the communities whose lifeworlds exist primarily inside or outside of the compound. In particular, Duffield draws on Petti's (2008) critique of globalisation as allowing borderless, unlimited flows (Castells, 1996), to make the observation that what in fact exists in places like South Sudan is a territorial system consisting of the *archipelago* as a defended, internally smooth space of flows and the *enclave* within it, as a space of exception from the socio-political reality of the world outside (Duffield, 2010, p. 3).

This geography is well-demonstrated through the vignette of a press conference in Juba. One or twice a week during my stay in the city, there would be a press conference of some kind called by the government, one of its agencies, or an NGO launching or celebrating some initiative or other. These would often draw a wide selection of journalists and I would attend where possible to take notes[2]:

> At 10h00, I take a boda[3] down to the UNICEF compound, where the press conference was advertised. The compound is nearly as heavily fortified as UN House, the main UNMISS base outside of town - though with no guns in evidence, because it is not actually an army base. The doors to the reception area are solid steel and about 5cm thick. Opening them takes both hands and real effort, after which I am in a security screening room with a locked metal turnstile on the other side. Inside, I have to pass though a metal detector while my bag goes through a large airport scanner. The main reception has three guards, and once I am scanned and they have checked my 'ID' (a cursory scan of my passport that seems more directed at determining that I have one) one of the guards uses his RFID card to unlock a metal turnstile at the exit to let me into the UNICEF compound. The compound itself is unusually well-kept, with neatly painted walls and manicured

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[1] Editing this chapter during the COVID-19 pandemic provides ample illustration of this argument every time one leaves the house

[2] Something which would come to haunt me later, when South Sudan's Media Authority accused me of being either a spy or an 'illegal' journalist on the basis of having seen me writing notes at these events.

[3] A small motorcycle taxi, allegedly named because they would be used to ferry people across borders in East Africa. The story may be apocryphal, as the border in question changes depending on where you here the etymology of the term explained.

hedges of chicken bush[4]. Past a few office buildings, I reach the main reception, ask about the media event, and get ushered into an air conditioned conference room, where an unexpectedly large number of journalists and UNICEF staff are gathered for the press briefing.

I see [list of journalists] and familiar faces of a number of other South Sudanese journalists. But no sign of any of the foreign journalists currently based in Juba. I ask [a South Sudanese photojournalist] about this later in the day, and he says that they never really come to these things. That they have other stories to keep them busy. The press conferences, it strikes me, might be a real world indicator of two different kinds of journalist. One that is more freely able to pursue stories outside the capital independently, and another that is more closely bound to the machinations of the media/press ecosystem here in Juba. But even that seems incorrect. [Foreign journalists] *are* wedded to the press/NGO system, financially at least. They just don't choose to come to these formal press briefings - either because they don't want to, or because something pulls them away. I make a note to ask them about this on the weekend when I go to the party that one of them is hosting.

The desk from which UNICEF and the German Ambassador to South Sudan will speak sits at one side of the conference room, while the long central desk has been crammed with seats for journalists to sit at, combined with chairs arranged around the edge of the room, against the wall in a large U-shape. I sit at one of these against-the-wall chairs, closest to the table where the speakers will sit. Back towards the far end of the room three or four video cameras on tripods are being fine-tuned, with their LED spotlights like a series of tiny suns. A UNICEF official bounds up to me and shakes my hand, saying "You must be Michael from X publication" - which I take to be inferred from the fact that I am the only white person here carrying stationery who is not obviously from an NGO. He is confused to learn that I am in fact not this person.

Other than this one case of mistaken identity, nobody has so far bothered to check that I am even a journalist. I was asked in passing at an earlier press conference at the ministry of foreign affairs, but I have otherwise been able to pass into these events entirely unchallenged. I am reminded of Respondent 3's argument that he is able to get much of the access he lost as a journalist by simply re-hatting himself a a 'researcher' and can't help but think that he may be correct.

There is also coffee and biscuits. I am delighted at the extravagance.

The press conference starts, with a US-accented host introducing what it is all about (a 30 Million Euro donation from the German government to UNICEF), followed with an introduction by a British-accented man who I take it is the head of UNICEF, and then the German ambassador. Finally the heads of the WASH[5] and nutrition programs talk a bit about what they have been up to, and what the donated funds will allow them to do. I realise, as they talk, that nobody bothers to clarify for the journalists what acronyms like WASH and IPC[6] refer to. The humanitarian vocabulary so saturates this place that everyone here is now assumed to be an expert in this kind of jargon. I'm not sure what that *means*, exactly. That the worlds of humanitarianism and journalism are intimately connected, perhaps? It might be circumstantial evidence that humanitarian concepts have come to infiltrate the worlds of journalists here in various ways. I am reminded of the literature about how certain other discourses (such as humanitarian ones, here) might come to 'colonise' the discourses of journalists. And the unproblematically

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[4] I don't actually know what this plant is called, but it is a small light green, almost yellowish bush that seems almost scrub-like. I was told during a research stint in Kitgum, Uganda, that it was great to plant in the region as it has no natural predators/pests and is thick enough to be used to corral chickens. Hence the name.

[5] NGO-speak for the water, sanitation and health specialisation in humanitarian assistance.

[6] Integrated Phase Classification - a measure of food insecurity used in determining whether, strictly speaking, a famine is occurring.

assumed familiarity with terms like 'WASH' might be an artefact in language of this process.

Sitting within perhaps a meter of the ambassador as he speaks, I can see his hand shaking as he talks. It seems so odd, the idea of a senior diplomat who appears to be so nervous of speaking in public. Though this is his only tic - he hides any nervousness in his actual speaking really well. He is extraordinarily clean-shaven and well dressed, in a firmly-pressed suit. Realising how hard all of the various sub-tasks required to produce that sartorial outcome here are, I can only imagine the kind of administrative setup at the German Embassy. He is every bit as polished and formal as I would expect were he to talk in Berlin, rather than Juba. While he talks, I can hear hundreds of tiny beeps from the autofocus on people's cameras constantly readjusting. This is a setting that is easy to turn off, and many professional journalists would, to reduce the annoyance of their devices to others trying to record audio of the briefing. That practice does not appear to be widespread here, but then again, isn't always amongst journalists in other parts of the world either.

Other elements of the assembled journalists' behaviour is universal. In the front row, a journalist is busy falling asleep. Jok is moving around the room, to get different angles of the various speakers. I catch his eye and we exchange smiles as he passes by to get some low-angle shots of the ambassador speaking to complement his earlier wide-angle pics.

There is much happening in this vignette. In thinking of how context - specifically, a context of *threat* - inflects practice, though, I would like to make a few observations. First, and most obviously, the very infrastructure of the press conference is bunkerised as a response to an ongoing perception of threat. Steel doors, weapons scans, double-door entry to facilities are all standard practice for most organisations in Juba (and similar bubbles elsewhere in the world) who can afford it. The intention of this infrastructure is ostensibly to keep those inside safe, but such physical markers of (in)security serve to reinscribe threat into the literal architecture of humanitarian space. The 'reality' of threat is in evidence even more dramatically elsewhere. On one particular journey across town:

[my boda driver and I] travel down Ministries Road, and past State House - the home of Salva Kiir. If I needed a reminder that Juba can be a dangerous place, State House provides it. Unlike the rest of the city, which has been pleasantly soldier-free, compared to my memory of it in 2014, State House has soldiers every few hundred meters, with heavy bipod machine guns, RPG-7s [7], and technicals[8]. The battle damage from fighting in 2013 and 2016 is also extensive and not repaired or hidden in many areas. Walls have been raked with machine gun fire, and one guard tower on the wall of State House looks like it took a pretty heavy beating. Its glass is still broken, sandbags perforated, and the surrounding cement marked all over with the impact marks of all the bullets that struck it. It must have been terrifying to be in the city when that much fighting was going on.

The reinforced walls of the UNICEF compound and the wrecked ones surrounding State House serve as evidence of both the presence of threat and its effects in the physical space in which life in Juba takes place. One cannot pass through a bomb-proof door, or recognise battle damage on the walls of the country's most eminent residence without having the sense that a plausible threat exists and developing a practical, tacit literacy around where and how it might

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[7] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RPG-7
[8] Pickup trucks with large calibre machine guns mounted to the rear. The name may derive from NGOs in Somalia in the early 1990s using technical assistance grants to hire mercenary escorts, when bringing in their own private security was disallowed.

manifest. Truly catastrophic violence may occur comparatively rarely, but one is compelled to navigate life in the capital and the country more generally as though it could. Reminders of this exist in the way in which space is so thoroughly constructed according to a logic of defence and exclusion.

The second observation one can make from the UNICEF press conference is that affect 'sticks' to bodies in different - including racialised - ways that resemble Ahmed's (2010)account of the affective effects of how certain bodies 'fit in certain spaces.'One's entrance into space, in the 'wrong' kind of body can function, she argues, as "an unwanted reminder of histories that are disturbing, that disturb an atmosphere" (Ahmed, 2010, p. 67). Ahmed cites the example of the black woman entering a white feminist space (ibid), but the phenomenon of 'wrong' bodies entering space and having the affective disturbance to others attributed to them is a more general one. Gregory (2019), for example, uses Ahmed's theorising in the case of checkpoints in Iraq to show the lethal consequences of being felt as dangerous in a context where feelings of danger are shaped by racist discourses.

At UNICEF, the latent threat of violence as a general potential may require the presence of guards and scanners and their linked processes, but no enquiries or serious vetting of *my* intentions needs to be undertaken, as the range of possible roles a (somewhat) clean-shaven white man arriving at the UNHCR compound might occupy does not include any that would make me a discomfort to others in any conventional way. Put simply, I am unimaginable as a threat, and I don't make anyone in the security checkpoint uncomfortable. This perception is at least partially racial, but it can be determined in other ways and even overruled by other factors in other contexts.

Numerous journalists from a range of backgrounds commented in interviews about the difficulties encountered when they were perceived as a threat. South Sudanese journalists perceived by hostile crowds as belonging to the 'wrong' tribe and potentially a spy. White foreign journalists attacked by a mob protesting US sanctions on arms purchases after being read as being American.[9] Journalists of all stripes being read as journalists in contexts where that was linked to the possibility of being spy, or dangerous for the attention they may bring to people who would prefer to remain invisible to the authorities. As one journalist put it:

> If there's something important in the community. If I go in the community, people will look at me, you will see everyone look at, like, this one, because they [see a] different person come here. They don't know that I'm this from this area. So this is the sad thing that we are getting in the community. Even community where I were I are, we are a spy, we are not citizens of the community. And I hate, it's happened to me sometime, when I go to the community, people start shouting, you, no, those journalists who are coming here, don't take this information out.

> **Respondent 4**

What one is perceived as being, and what that identity connotes becomes something that journalists are forced to take into account as a matter of safe practice. 'Journalist' is one such identity, but race, tribal affiliation, nationality, gender and professional affiliation - to mention a few - are equally important identity markers with potentially severe implications for safe practice. The kinds of identity markers that journalists reflected on are discussed in more detail further on in this chapter, but it's worth pointing out the links between one's perceived identity as read by others (the 'community', humanitarians, soldiers and so on) and the different kinds of threat that one might face. In some contexts, elements of identity may make it literally impossible to imagine someone as a threat. They may be waved, as I was, through a UNICEF security screening with minimal scrutiny.

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[9] Marking the importance of perceived over actual identity, neither was, in fact, a US citizen.

5.2 SAFETY AS A PRACTICE

Risk is a structuring condition of the context in which journalists work - that is to say, something to which their practices must respond if it is to be 'successful'. Success, in this sense, meaning both that their work is able to proceed at all, and that it is recognisable as being 'not reckless' (as 'professional' journalism ought to be). To not take one's safety seriously poses obvious personal, material risks, but beyond this, a wilful rejection of or indifference to resources that might make one safer threatens the extent to which a journalist would be read as being professional by their colleagues (and potentially others). More than once during interviews, journalists reflected on moments of risk that they or others had faced and evaluated the safety decisions that were made with an implicit (and often, explicit) judgement that linked safe practice to status as an experienced professional. In this regard, the case of the death of Chris Allen while reporting in the town of Kaya was one that prompted repeated reflections on safety by journalists, examples of which included:

> You never know, right, it's impossible to say, but I get frustrated with that [view] because it's like 'oh well, this situation, it could be any photographer, it could be any journalist that died in this situation', and I don't believe that. Because people operate very differently. And I would hope that if anything ever happened to me, that those questions wouldn't come up. I had an incident in [country] in [month], where it was like, ugh, I didn't prepare as much as I could have for that trip, and had, anything happened as a result of that, I would have been. I was very angry at myself and at the group, that we weren't more prepared. At the end of the day it didn't matter, because everything worked out, alright. But had something really gone wrong for the journalists, we could have very easily been criticised for not being prepared, and that to me is, like, unacceptable. And my fault completely. Not that it would have mattered, because maybe I would have been dead, but. But, yeah, the last thing I would have wanted to have happen was, well had you done da da da da, things would have turned out better. Not that you can prepare for everything, but you didn't check all the boxes, and I knew that.

Respondent 1

> Going into Equatoria itself seems, to me, for the level of risks and the interest in the story, you know, no-one's making money out of that. It's just gung-ho and a bit, negligent, naïve. I'm glad someone's doing it. I wouldn't do it. [...] We just felt sad that this poor freelancer had gone in and you know, I think if you'd asked anyone, should I do it, we all would have gone, like, fuck no. You know. Unless you really know what you are doing.

Respondent 12

> I think Chris Allen, like that really unfortunate situation, what that did for a lot of us was like a reminder of, it could have been any of us at any time. Because the number of times we've taken stupid risks that we didn't know were stupid until it was too late, and we were just lucky.

Respondent 7

Remarks of this sort were common, and appeared to reflect a tension between a professional norm that valued 'sensible' safety practices and an acceptance that risk could not be fully insured against. They reflect that practices of managing and proceeding in spite of risk are

an unavoidable part of the practice of professional journalism. Both because they ostensibly keep the journalist alive *and* because they indicate that one is a professional. Phrased inversely, 'poor' safety practices, such as those which may be unethical or poorly thought through, undermine a journalist's status as a professional as much as they may or may not get them killed. Returning to the view of conflict journalism as a practice with material and discursive dimensions, it is clear that practices of safety are no exception to this. They serve both a material function of keeping the journalist safe and alive *and* the discursive function of making the practice appear to be that of a professional journalist. Moreover, these two imperatives are not always in harmony with one another - journalists may refuse to wear body armour (discussed further on in this chapter) and may decline certain kinds of embeds with an overbearingly humanitarian or military character for professional reasons as much as practical ones. Safety practices must both keep the journalist safe and be what a 'professional' journalist would do.[10]

The resources for ensuring safety or accessing pre-existing areas of safety are available to different extents to different journalists. While I could simply enter spaces such as the UNICEF press conference with minimal screening, the same is not generally true of journalists who do not look as I do. The tactics required for accessing safe spaces, obtaining guarantees of evacuation, safe travel, accommodation and so on will of course vary from situation to situation - with the whitest, most cosmopolitan appearance in the world, one cannot simply walk into the UN House military base, for example - but the general point is worth making explicitly. Resources of safety are available to different journalists in different ways in different situations, that will require correspondingly appropriate tactics to secure. In some cases, these tactics may be structured by considerations of identity and how threatening one is perceived to be. In others, these may be matters of personal or professional rapport or even economic exchange, as might happen when journalists with access to institutional (or just large) funds are able to simply buy access to the safety afforded by the humanitarian or military infrastructure of the UN and others.

In interviews, journalists universally commented on the challenges of security and managing risk during the course of doing their work. It is to some of the most common approaches to doing so that this discussion now turns. How *do* journalists try to keep safe and how are these practices contingent on the journalist and the context in which they take place?

5.3 COPING WITH INSECURITY

Successful journalism practice in South Sudan requires - among other things - safety from surveillance, harassment and other inappropriate pressure. It requires safe navigation and safe locations for working and living. Since none of these forms of safety can be fully and completely realised, potential insecurity is pervasive - requiring that even after adopting various tactics to make their practice safer, a journalist must still often travel and work while at risk.

This section explores some of practices of reducing risk that journalists most often cited and which were most in evidence during fieldwork. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list, but rather to cover many of the most common forms of security practice and their implications for the professional practices of journalism in the country. These practices can be thought of as a collection of context-specific possibilities - as tactics that may be available to different journalists, to different degrees, in different moments, and which may even contradict one another (as in the case of strategies of association and avoidance discussed shortly).

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[10]This tension between safety and identity is not unique to journalists, and is in evidence in similar conversations around humanitarian principles of distinction. It is the reason that - in most circumstances - humanitarians will not live inside UN or other military bases.

Security through association

The first and most obvious practice of safety that respondents recounted was finding a metaphorical older sibling who will agree to make you their responsibility. This might be via an association with individuals or organisations who can be relied on if trouble calls, or whose willingness to assist in principle is enough to deter interference in a journalist's work. In retrospect, I was employing just such a tactic to ensure that the Media Authority would cooperate more readily when approaching the South African ambassador[11]. The journalists that I interviewed used association with organisations and individuals in a range of ways to achieve similar protection. For foreign journalists, diplomatic missions were often a reliable source of assistance in serious matters. Foreign journalists commented that with the (notable and extreme) exception of the killing of Chris Allen, a swift deportation, rather than death or imprisonment would be the most likely consequences for pushing one's luck too far in South Sudan as a non-national. This was understood to be because the diplomatic consequences of attempting to detain, prosecute or otherwise punish a foreign journalist were simply not worth the trouble for the Media Authority or the NSS, given the ease with which they could simply be evicted. Such protection was unequally distributed in much the same way as other privileges that passports from rich and geopolitically powerful countries are, but it was notable that even journalists from other African countries would generally be deported or encouraged to leave by the authorities rather than prosecuted - though the examples of such moments were few, given smaller number of African foreign journalists in Juba.

Beyond the protection afforded by association with diplomatic missions, the next most obvious protection would often come from journalists' employers, where they were appropriately contracted to news organisations that were prepared to look out for them. In such instances, many journalists felt that they could rely on their employers to kick up a fuss if anything happened to them, and a few had in fact relied on their employer for extraction from the country during periods that they felt unsafe:

> Sometimes I just leave the country and go and sit in [other city] for some time. [My employer] can provide me with meals, accommodation, if I feel like I am not safe here.
>
> **Respondent 8**

. . . .

> Maybe it has to take a certain kind of person and there's that's, already a lot of people don't want to do it, because you have to deal with all the annoyances, and you are moving to a conflict zone without the protection of an agency. Well, more or less, right. [My organisation] does have an evacuation plan. They actually offer quite a good package. [...] when [journalist] and I were attacked[...] [my organisation] called me within ten minutes. They said do you want to leave, do you want to be evacuated. Like, anything you want, we are going to do it. So, and they told me, don't think you are alone. You are not. Like, we are always here with you. Which I found quite, nice.
>
> **Respondent 15**

. . . .

[11]This story is recounted in more detail on page 65

The government understands [news organisation] as a powerful network, and has a very wide network of outreach, I would say. So they, like, even when we were suspended last year, they, one of my arguing points [was] you ban [news organisation], you are shutting yourself off to the world. So you have to calculate your steps. I'm not going to say we made a mistake [in our reporting], I'm not going to say we aren't going to continue covering South Sudan, but what I'm saying is that if you ban us indefinitely, then I will walk out [of South Sudan].

Respondent 9

In some case, the protection conferred by a news agency could be direct - including evacuation support and safety training in ways that resemble the duty of care that many major news organisations began to develop towards journalists reporting conflict since at least the Gulf War (Tumber and Webster, 2006; Palmer, 2018). In other moments it was understood as being more political, in which a news agency's ability to publicise the harassment of a journalist or a threat to cease coverage of the country (and opportunities for government elites to share their views) was sufficient of a deterrent to protect their journalists from the state. These views were a hopeful counterpoint to more cynical accounts of the broken economics of foreign reporting producing increasing insecurity, and suggest that at least some larger news organisations do in fact treat the safety of their staff - whether local or foreign - as something that they ought to take responsibility for. Such full-suite organisational support was rare among those I spoke to though, and generally limited to journalists holding dedicated positions with major news organisations.

While affiliations with diplomatic missions and news organisations were a more open-ended form of safe association when available, journalists would also be able to ensure a degree of safety during specific assignments outside of Juba through effectively making themselves the responsibility of NGOs, rebel forces or the UN mission, within whose infrastructure they would typically be travelling and staying while working. Reflections of this kind amongst respondents included:

I've always felt like, when I've been travelling with any NGO, that they see me as being with them, and so, I guess, I might enjoy whatever protection they enjoy

Respondent 11

. . . .

It's just not questioned, what you are doing there. Yeah. And that's helpful. Particularly if there's some, like, low-level bureaucrat-slash-security chap who can just make your day a misery, in the sense of just stopping you being able to work. Yeah, you know they're used to NGOs asking people questions, they don't think too much when there's someone else there asking questions. That said, you know, obviously when I interview someone, I explain who I am and what I'm doing there, and that I'm not with the NGO, but for the people who are watching who might otherwise cause problems, I think it makes life easier

Respondent 8

. . . .

You have to rely on organisations because your media outlet is saying well, what's your security gonna be like? We're not going to take responsibility, you know, if, an NGO will help facilitate then, you know, maybe it's doable.

Respondent 1

. . . .

the whole time [on assignment with IO forces] we were in a small group of like maybe ten. And the whole time they were like, yeah, there's a reconnaissance team ahead, there's a reconnaissance team ahead, like they've been there. They're the ones making sure everything is safe. And so we just kind of believed that and said OK. And then when when we came, we left [village] and then we, like, pulled out a few miles or whatever and stopped under some trees and, to rest and relax for a bit. Sitting there, drinking water, chilling out. All of a sudden, like forty guys, like forty of fifty dudes like fucking loaded with guns, just like, so, like so many bullets. Like so well armed, just like pull up and and they're like, yeah, this this is the reconnaissance team. We're like holy shit. They'd like mobilised like freaking fifty dudes at least, for us. And we were just, like, we feel safe now. (laughs)

Jason Patinkin

As these extracts indicate, the case of using NGOs/UN/rebel infrastructure opens up a much broader conversation about the interactions between journalists and NGOs during the course of their work - one which extends beyond considerations of safety alone. The non-existence of safe, long-distance road travel in the country and the poor infrastructure in many of the most violence-affected areas mean that often the only practical way to reach many of the more remote areas outside of Juba is through embedding in the system of flights and secure accommodation provided by the largest NGOs and/or UNMISS. Duffield's (2010) metaphor of humanitarian space as an 'archipelago' connected by air links fits the South Sudanese context well. This configuration of safe pockets of 'enclaved' space made association with NGOs in particular often the only route to accessing remote locations and communities and ensuring a degree of security while doing so. In a broader context where journalists often struggle to make ends meet through reporting work alone, this relationship is further complicated by the need of many journalists to depend on NGO work in order to make a living (itself a security strategy of sorts) in ways that risk the approbation of their peers, if not quite destabilising the nature of their work *as* the work of journalists.

Access to the safe 'inside' of humanitarian (and occasionally, rebel) space function as a form of information subsidy for the practice of journalism (McPherson, 2016) as they reduce the costs of safe travel and living when in otherwise risky contexts. That said, while NGOs and the UN in particular are able to provide access and a degree of security when working on assignments outside of the capital, this access is unequal. Journalists often perceived access to NGO flights and accommodation as being generally awarded on the basis of a utilitarian calculation in which NGOs' willingness to host them on field reporting trips was tied to their ability to produce material that would be instrumentally useful to the work of the NGO in question. To wit:

I remember when I first arrived, I met with a bunch of NGO comms people, just to talk to them about what I was doing, and that I wanted to do freelance work, and so I was working with these journalists [from local publications], and somebody who worked for UNICEF told me, to my face, he was like, look, if I get in like the New York Times or like the Washington Post, then I get donations.

Doesn't really make a difference to me if we get on the Juba Monitor. And I said, but doesn't it matter, like, that you're operating in this country and you need buy-in? And you know that you need the public to understand and that you should be held accountable? And he's like, we have buy in, we don't care. They just want money. So he doesn't care. Like, and sometimes they'll, sometimes they do like their promo, kind of events, but there are, there are definitely UN agencies and NGOs that just don't care. And there are others that really do.

Respondent 7

. . . .

If you want to travel anywhere on UNHAS it's just under $600. I try to fly UNHAS or UNMISS when I can because I feel more secure in terms of safety than a lot of the commercial flights. I speak to organizations to understand what's going on in areas that they're working and what issues they're focusing on, which might be of interest to look into. When I first arrived I questioned the relationship between journalists and aid groups. There seemed to be a mutual dependency that I hadn't seen before in other contexts, especially in terms of access. For example in order to get on a U.N. flight you need a supporting letter from an organization and so that automatically changes the dynamic. You're there 'under the group's wing' yet as an independent journalist you want to do your own reporting and need to make it clear that you're not there to report on their activities. Very few organizations will book tickets for you on UNHAS if they're not travelling with you or have projects in the area. It's understandable. Organizations can and do get in trouble if they're seen to be shepherding journalists around the country to report on things that the government doesn't like, such as human rights abuses. I've heard from some local journalists that they find it almost impossible to get aid groups or the U.N. to take them places. I think some groups lean more towards supporting international journalists because they think it benefits their chances at exposure, which might lead to increased donor money. This is too bad though and the balance and access should be equal.

Respondent 10

. . . .

...the issue really becomes one of how, then, if I decide I want to do the story I want to do, I need to lean on some NGOs. How do I persuade them that my story, that taking me with them is worth my weight in medical goods, or whatever. So then I have a conversation with them, and once I've got all those pieces together, then off I go.

Respondent 11

. . . .

In this way, NGO association is a complicated practice in both the dividends it pays to both parties and what is needed by journalists to make use of such infrastructure. It is an an exchange often understood to revolve around a quid pro quo bargain between what the journalist can do for an NGO that the NGO might not be able to do themselves at the same or less cost. Journalists may stand to gain access, security and either a literal income (if shooting NGO

material on the side) or an effective subsidy towards the costs of their own work. For NGOs, having a journalist along can be valuable in ways that are familiar to what the existing literature on journalist/NGO embedding(Cottle and Nolan, 2007; Kalcsics, 2011; Wright, 2016b, 2018b,a, 2019) - they may provide an audience, authoritative coverage of an issue on which the NGO is active (though generally not of the NGO by name) and the potential for additional material in terms of unfiled images that might cost an NGO considerable resources to arrange to create themselves.

While the majority of the interviews in this research took place with journalists, there were a number of semi-structured interviews with NGO communications staff whose perspectives largely confirmed this general calculus when assessing journalist requests, with two important caveats. The first is the observation that the cost in a typical cost-benefit calculation is different in practice for NGOs of different sizes and mandates. For large organisations such as the World Food Programme or the UNMISS peacekeeping force, the marginal cost of allowing a journalist 'inside' their security and logistics infrastructure is actually relatively small. Aeroplanes between different field sites often run on a regular schedule, often with spare seats, and accommodation in remote field sites may already be in place, maintained and unused. In such circumstances, it may cost little for such an organisation to simply add another name to a waiting list for a flight route and put them up for a few days[12] in a remote field site. In the case of UNMISS' remote base in Malakal, I encountered a number of staff employed in what appeared to be a full-time press relations role regardless of whether there were actual journalists on site, and so it is would be little extra work for these staff to liaise with an interested journalist for a few days in between their usual work collating press releases and other information for the mission.

Cost works differently for smaller NGOs, such as humanitarian agencies managing small, deep-field locations where flights may need to be specially arranged, and evacuation plans may place strict limits on the number of staff who can be in place in the site at any one time.[13] In such locations, the marginal cost of an additional spot for a journalist may be considerable, and the overall logic of whether their request will be entertained will begin to more closely resemble that of weighing up the cost of the journalist over the cost of medicine, as Respondent 11 framed the question above.

A second caveat is that occasionally NGOs (or rather, their communications officers) share many of the professional and moral instincts of journalists and would consider assisting journalists with covering stories that they felt needed wider attention in situations where they felt the costs were justifiable and the journalist might reliably deliver impactful coverage. This is not as surprising as it might seem, given how many NGO staff are deeply connected to the injustices of the conflict, whether through personal experience, personal or professional ethical norms or by virtue of being members of the communities to which grave injustices are often being perpetuated. Much as Wright (2016a, 2018b) has observed how shared norms between NGOs and newsrooms can create trust and cooperation whose outcome may be shared news material, the potential for a similar alignment of norms exists in decisions around allowing journalists access to the logistical and humanitarian infrastructure that NGOs maintain. Simply put, whatever the rational, organisational quid-pro-quo, sometimes NGOs help journalists access areas of a conflict because they share a broad set of moral/political norms and a desire to see injustice exposed.

During observational fieldwork accompanying A and B on their investigative reporting project in Malakal, it was surprising how willing various UN liaison staff were to assist their investigations. Their willingness to help went well beyond what would be expected of a professional

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[12]The average time UNMISS would grant journalists in one of their remote field sites was three days, unless there were exceptional circumstances.

[13]One NGO explained that the number of staff in a particular field location could not exceed the passenger space on the single aircraft that would be chartered to evacuate them in an emergency. Adding even one additional person would have required an additional aeroplane, an unacceptably high marginal cost.

role dedicated to promoting a conservative interest in managing the UN's media image, including allowing journalists to wander the site unsupervised for days and a complete willingness to let journalists travel with UNMISS troops on journeys to even more remote locations beyond the Malakal base. This enthusiasm to assist and arrange access to locations included accompanying a UN patrol to a village some distance away that had been forcibly evacuated by government forces in 2017 and which had been subsequently garrisoned by the SPLA[14]. It was made clear during our time in Malakal that the issue the journalists were investigating was one that resonated deeply with many civilian UN staff in the protection of civilians site, as they themselves had been displaced from the area during the war or knew people who had been, and wished that the atrocities of the last few years be brought to light.

In interviews with NGO communications officers in Juba, some shared that they had themselves worked as journalists, either in South Sudan or abroad, before becoming communications staff. These respondents were sympathetic to the work of the journalists who wished to access remote field sites, and would - where possible - try to assist wherever they could, as much out of moral principle as any desire to 'manage' the perceptions of their organisation. In the case of the journalists travelling to Malakal, the importance that the story of the POC site be told was cited by a communications officer assisting with their application as one reason for granting them a much longer stay in the UN's Malakal base than would typically be allowed.

These complications are important, as they point to wrinkles in thinking about NGO-journalist relations in the field as though they were purely rational calculations by organisations, taken according to conservative desires to manage a brand and increase funding. They signal that agents and their norms matter when thinking about NGO-journalist relations in the field, and that the organisation may not be the best or only level of analysis in thinking about who makes decisions to 'let journalists in'. These wrinkles should not be understood as the typical experience though. Journalists' accounts of working with NGOs in general ranged from benign assistance to being micro-managed on press junkets that many would prefer to avoid for the lack of freedom they offered. The most dramatic story of the UN enforcing media management rules on a journalist being the case of Justin Lynch, who found himself angering an UNMISS media officer in a story which was related more than once by journalists as a cautionary tale of what was possible when the UN's ire was raised:

> No, but the UN can be terribly vindictive, the UN, there was a journalist Justin Lynch [...] he was in Malakal and the UN, I actually flew out the day he flew in unfortunately, because the fighting hadn't started yet [...] And he also like was flying in randomly and then happened to be there when the thing was, was attacked. But UNMISS, once he started filing reports about how the UN hadn't protected civilians, they went to, like, door to door trying to find him, and he had to, like, hide. Like I know, I know the aid worker who, who like hid him in his, in his container and was, like, don't leave. And he was sitting there filing copy from inside a container as there was a manhunt for him, cos the UN was trying to, like, drag him out.

> **Respondent 3**

. . . .

> So think about that. Like, a door to door search for a journalist? Like, oh my god. That's appalling. And so, yeah, this is the environment that you are working in. Like, again, like the SPLA wasn't my problem, the UN was my problem. So when you have NGOs that self censor and cover up, when you have, the UN

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[14]This was on the face of it, a war crime that the journalists were seeking to expose.

self censors and covers up, when, and then it actively intimidates journalists, you know. I mean calling me and yelling at me and talking about flights, that's direct intimidation right? [...] fundamentally, these are massive, multi-billion dollar institutions who are doing every thing they can to stop three fucking underpaid hacks from finding stuff out. Like, just the scale of it is absurd. So, you know, all those PR people for every NGO, right? That adds up to so much. Literally a military peacekeeping mission that costs a billion dollars every year. This is billions and billions of dollars and thousands and thousands of people and the world and the UN security council behind it, versus a handful of twenty-something hacks.

Jason Patinkin

Another form of counter-intuitive association that emerged in discussions with South Sudanese journalists especially was the the Media Authority and the NSS. Despite their often-cited role in intimidating journalists, the Media Authority's accreditation system was seen by some respondents as a degree of protection against both queries from the NSS (as it provided bureaucratic 'proof' that one was in fact a journalist) and the Media Authority itself (from whom one was at risk of being picked on if uncertified). One journalist's failure to accredit illustrated the limitations it creates well:

Well, well, before the, they used to register journalists, like they give journalists IDs, like mostly the foreign, freelance journalists. Because the local journalists have IDs, but the foreign journalists don't have IDs. So once you're registered with them, they'd give you an ID, which would give you access to most of these places around. That's what they do. But also, to also register, you need to pay some amount of money, which is also, not, not very good for some journalists who cannot afford to pay for that. So you just, you stay without an ID. Like now, I used to work for that paper. I used to have the ID, but it's expired. Now what I do, mostly I do, I just call, from home. I just call from home sometimes, I just call. I mean I just call. When I find a news tip, I just call a news source, I just talk on the phone. No need for an ID. Like this. But once it gets serious, I don't know where I am going to get an ID from.

Respondent 5

The need to obtain a press pass from the organisation whose work creates the risks that the press pass protects one from is, of course, a perverse cycle. But given the broader structure of the bureaucracy of media suppression, a strategy of compliance allows for a significant degree of protection at comparably little cost. Other journalists who had worked in the country for years would also mention developing contacts in the police, NSS, army or government more generally as an extension of this tactic of having someone from inside the government and/or security service able to vouch for you:

I covered some demolition whereby the government was demolishing a market, whereby much number of people were surviving there, and I found that many people were displaced. And when I covered it, [security] did not like it, so they had to detain me for some couple of hours until the mayor came. The mayor who once, I had some contact with him, so he knew me and he said, ah this journalist, he is a good journalist, so let him go. So I was released then, without any other thing, after spending two to three hours [in custody].

Respondent 6

Developing contacts in order to ensure safety was an activity that took place both on the level of developing longer term friendships and through more practical rules of field reporting etiquette in which journalists would routinely seek out and introduce themselves to local leaders, government officials or army commanders when arriving in a new context. This would serve to establish their bona fides as journalists and ideally result in obtaining phone numbers of officials or letters of introduction that could contribute to safe passage and explaining oneself if confronted. Contact management was a subtle practice, though, in that it needs to be done in a way that gave one's challenger (especially in the case of a bureaucratic enemy such as the Media Authority) some ability to save face in order to not escalate the situation:

> So if you are trying to get a press pass and you invoke the U.S embassy or the UN or an international body that's not going to work. You need a local journalist to help you, it's impossible to get one without that link. In general having connections and support from well connected locals including lawyers, people within National Security or people on the ground who have influence within the government and the security apparatuses will work a lot better. Government officials don't like to feel pressured, they don't like external pressure and they don't like to feel undermined.
>
> **Respondent 10**

. . . .

> It takes a lot of, like I said, you have to know the right people. You have to have the right connections, and you have to know how you are dealing with them, you know, like, not so much as 'yes I'm guilty' to give them, all right fine, get out. But not so much as 'I'm right, you're wrong', so we're going to do this way. So you have to find, and this is the tough part about South Sudan, you need to find that little narrow line and walk on it, because if you walk on any side, then you are fucked.
>
> **Respondent 9**

Other examples of this need to 'finesse' the use of one's contacts included foreign news organisations being told on occasion to stay out of fights between journalists and the Media Authority, so as not to exacerbate the politics of trying to get the Authority to back down. Instead, the journalists in this situation made it known gently to more senior government figures that a dispute had arisen. These conversations would eventually filter down to the Media Authority, who would then judge that there was no support above them for particular persecutions of journalists and elect to de-escalate threats of banning and deportation to simple, if non-specific 'administrative issues'.

One journalist with expansive connections to figures in the NSS and government also reflected on the pragmatic decisions that needed to be made when using associations of this kind to escape trouble with security officials. After more than half a dozen arrests, his preferred strategy had become calling on the lowest-ranking official in his metaphorical pocket book who also outranked the security official he was being detained by. In this way, he reasoned, he could make the most effective use of his contacts to obtain his release without spending excessively valuable 'contact capital' to escape relatively minor arrests. A similar strategy was outlined by another journalist in talking about how the community of journalists in the country would try to go about securing the release of a colleague taken by the security apparatus:

> Here, sometimes, some of your colleagues, if they know [about the arrest], they just keep on talking to some of the security personnel who they know, you

know. Because sometimes there's some of the security who, you know them personally. And even is you ask them sometimes they can do their best. But if they found that that thing is beyond their [reach], you know, they will not. Because sometimes they will go there, they will find that those who brought [the prisoner] are bosses to them. So it's difficult for them sometimes to help. But if they find us [and] those you brought them are sometimes junior to them, they can do, yes. So sometimes it's very difficult.

Respondent 16

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[...]after they, after they took me to the office. I'll be known to one of the security officials there. One of the big officers. And he said, this guy, he [knows] this guy, he's one of the photographers and is doing his job, so you just leave him. He don't have any problems with us.

Respondent 13

This discussion has so far sought to make two points regarding practices of safety by association. First, that the ability to 'do' safety by association is both complicated and differently distributed. Association protections arising from consular services are simply conferred in some cases. Others require being judged suitable for admission into the infrastructure of Aidland's cosmopolitan 'archipelago' or being allowed to develop friendly relations with a range of bureaucratic and security contacts. Not all journalists are able to do all of these things, or do them equally well, for reasons of professional or personal identity, perceived utility to other actors or having the time, skill or other resources required to do such work. Second, that such practices are *practices* in the sense that they can be more or less successful and may rewrite what one is understood as being in awkward ways if not managed. Invoking pressure from the US embassy regularly, embedding in the world of NGOs to an inappropriate degree, or hanging out with spies and government officials all carry risks to how a journalist may be perceived by their colleagues, agents of the state, communities that they wish to access in the course of their work or even their colleagues. Practices both do things and create discursive effects that must be carefully managed in order to both keep safe and retain the role of 'journalist' in the eyes of others.

Avoidance

A more straightforward strategy of coping with risk was for journalists to occasionally just not do stories that were likely to get them in trouble with the authorities, or to do such stories without undertaking the travel that would require more complicated access to UN/NGO infrastructure. Though it may disappoint readers who champion a free press, sometimes the safest way to do journalism, given plausible and significant threats surrounding particular work, is simply not to do some stories, to do them from home or the office over the phone. In discussing some of the responses from journalists towards Chris Allen's security arrangements, the logic present in many responses was that there are some kinds of reporting that are simply too risky, given the value of the reporting that could come out of it. Some stories, to butcher the cliché phrase, are not worth your life.

Examples of this kind of reasoning were present in foreign journalists' evaluations of Chris Allen's killing, but could be found elsewhere in interviews too. In discussing the decision by journalists Simona Foltyn and Jason Patinken to cross illegally into rebel-held areas of the country to report on the war from behind SPLA-IO lines, for example:

But their sort of big trip into Equatoria, they were taking a fuckload of risks. I mean they came out with some great stuff, I mean. It wasn't, you know, I felt, the point I am slowly getting at is Christopher Allen died and he was with [experienced journalists] Siegfried and Goran, I think, and god knows what happened there. Going into Equatoria itself seems, to me, for the level of risks and the interest in the story, you know, no-one's making money out of that. It's just gung ho and a bit, negligent, naïve. I'm glad someone's doing it. I wouldn't do it.

Respondent 12

Whether or not a story is too dangerous to do is not only a consideration for foreign journalists hopping into the country temporarily. As might well be expected, South Sudanese reporters faced such decisions as an unavoidable part of any opportunity to do watchdog or investigative journalism. Examples of such decisions as they occurred to these journalists included:

I remember there's a colleague of mine who was working on a story on the fuel [shortage in the country]. He did investigative work, and when he reached to the, the, the state oil company, NilePet, to ask for information because he had got something he wanted to know from them, they told him go to the national security, go and get permission from them. They send you to national security and you are a journalist, you just give up. He said no, I can't. And he just dropped that story. They threaten you with these things. [...] I remember in 2016, there was a lady who was raped in my neighbourhood. You know, she was raped, and I felt bad about it, but what do I do. You already know that if you write something, it will get deleted from the paper. It will get deleted, and also you put yourself in, you are now marked. You've put a mark on yourself. You become a target. So what do I do? I am trying just to add another, to make myself another victim next to her. I can't do that.

Respondent 5

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As somebody who worked with the *Nation Mirror*, and the *Nation Mirror* is one of the independent newspapers, and the newspapers that they decided to be inciting the public against the government, and [I was] one of the journalists, prominent journalists who used to cover the president's conference and event[s], I quite often visit to those places. So I am very careful as to where I should get my news nowadays.

Respondent 6

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For me, let me just take the example for myself, I do it from indoors, yeah. Just call, make phone calls and then get some people, but online, and then you talk to them. Either you visit them, you can visit them to their offices, you talk to them, you know, get their interviews, but sometimes it's very risky to, to do an investigative time of a story. It's not easy here. Because once they get hold of you, you are dead. You expose anything which is [about] the system, you are dead.

Respondent 8

Unlike their (generally foreign) counterparts who may be able to file stories from outside South Sudan and enjoy a reduced level of risk as a result, South Sudanese journalists generally practice the craft entirely within the country. As a result, they are not able to 'context switch' to avoid reprisals for their investigations or published material and must instead develop a sense of where 'newsworthy' stories become unacceptably dangerous ones. Red lines that many South Sudanese journalists described included interviewing the opposition (either sympathetically or, more often, at all) and framing the conflict in terms of ethnicity - such as highlighting the fact that the SPLA-IO was a predominantly Nuer armed group while the government's SPLA forces were largely Dinka and that much violence involved ethnic targeting. Prohibitions on talking to the opposition were understood not to be enforced on foreign journalists or South Sudanese journalists writing for news organisations outside the country. Interviewees explained that this was because such a ban could not be enforced in practice, given the SPLA-IO presence outside the country and the ease of conducting interviews with them in Kampala or Nairobi. Framing the conflict in ethnic terms was a more universally enforced rule, with South Sudanese and foreign journalists alike being made to account for such reporting when called into the offices of the Media Authority.

This difference in risk relating to what could be reported was dramatically illustrated by a UN communications officer during an interview. They related the story of a South Sudanese and a German journalist meeting a district commissioner in an interview she had facilitated. The South Sudanese journalist asked a series of fairly polite questions, and the German then followed up with far more provocative lines of questioning about what was being done to save people who were dying in the area. The South Sudanese journalist turned off their personal recorder and started looking around the quiet space of the hotel where the interview was taking place, out of a fear of who would be listening and how dangerous these questions might be for them. Asking the journalist about it later, they explained to the communications officer that they couldn't write about the exchange, because it wouldn't hurt the commissioner, it would quite literally only hurt them instead. The German reporter had no such concerns.

The question of deciding what stories are worth reporting isn't simply a matter of avoiding the displeasure of the state, of course. Worrying about the state is a particular instance of a more general concern around what one's reporting might mean for those in power. Outside of the humanitarian archipelago, this may primarily mean the state - via the NSS and the Media Authority. Inside the bunkered world of humanitarians and the UN, the state's ability to see what a journalist is up to is much more limited, but their concerns may also be replaced by those of the UN or humanitarian organisations who may have much to lose from watchdog-style investigative reporting directed their way and significant influence on the personal security and employability of a journalist whose work might stand to harm them.

During fieldwork, a number of soldiers from the UN base in Wau were plausibly accused of sexually assaulting residents of the POC site that they were charged with protecting, after which UNMISS repatriated them back to their home country for further investigation and sanctions. At a social mixer for (foreign) journalists and communications officers while this story was breaking, one journalist commented in passing that they had heard rumours of sexual assault within UNMISS for some time, but that they dared not investigate, for fear of ending up on an informal UN blacklist and excluded from the non-journalistic PR and media production work that they needed in order to support their income as a journalist. From the stories told by interviewees who had dealt with UNMISS, a perception existed that individual UN press officers could potentially be quite vindictive, even if the organisation as a whole might be ambivalent, making the costs of severely critical reporting potentially (economically) existential. The example of Justin Lynch's reporting during the attack on Malakal resulting his near eviction from the base mid-firefight was a story that I heard more than once, as a kind of passed-on morality tale describing what was possible if one angered the UN enough.

It was interesting, though, that when speaking about weighing the risks of doing stories, any physical threat that journalists imagined feeling almost always involved an idea of the state as

the adversary - whether through the NSS, the Media Authority, the military, or less-specific references to people in 'security'. With the exception of the tale of Justin Lynch, NGOs and the UN were virtually never imagined as a threat to journalists' safety. They were, if anything, imagined as providers of safety, or at least an infrastructure of safety for those with access. This is a curiously generous observation, given the existence of clear lines of enquiry into their behaviour that existed - whether sexual abuse by UN troops or the staffers at Oxfam and elsewhere or unflattering questions about the management of human rights in the protection of civilians sites in the country.[15] The point being that one *could* imagine watchdog journalism that would examine NGOs and the United Nations in ways that could create adversarial relationships, but such work is not generally undertaken in practice. In interview accounts, the state and its agents are implicitly imagined as the adversary against whom security must be managed, and whose red lines are the ones that come most readily to mind.

There are reasons why this should be unsurprising. Self-censorship as a response to repression is a tactic that scholars elsewhere have observed under similar conditions (Kingstone, 2011; Hasan and Wadud, 2020; Walulya and Nassanga, 2020). Journalists interested in conflict and humanitarians are likely to share similar normative commitments towards ending violence and obtaining justice for its victims[16]. In less rational-actor language, both often share similar physical and social worlds and the affective affinities that come with that. After enough time moving together inside a bunkered world designed to protect against the violence of government and rebel forces, it is entirely natural to develop solidarity with those one does risky things with.[17]. As a result, it's not simply that it would be economically irrational to bite the hand that feeds (and houses, and pays, and flies) you, it may also be a kind of moral betrayal to do so. The result of this, then, is a journalism practice that is ostensibly situated in a social imaginary (in Taylor's (2002) sense) in which the state and rebel forces are typically the major 'threat', and NGOs and the UN are imperfect allies. This is not simply a discursive construction - there are very real threats from these parties. Yet it does naturalise a certain focus of watchdog/investigative work in which time is best spent focusing on the actions of the conflict's main national actors, rather than the malfeasance of the interveners.

Balance as safety

Questions of whether certain stories are too dangerous to do apply to both the risks involved in the act of investigating and the risks that come after the story has been published. Publication carries both the acute risk of offending the powerful and a more general risk of creating perceptions that a journalist is partial to one or another side in the conflict. In the case of South Sudan, many journalists would reflect on the need to manage this position in the material they wrote, so as not to allow perceptions of bias towards either the government or opposition. 'Balance' in reporting was often cited as being important not (only) for its value in accurately reflecting reality, but for its protective function in deflecting accusations of bias or editorialising. For example, many journalists would make sure to include government quotes in stories, even when government claims were quite clearly disconnected from reality, so as to be able to defend their reporting as having given all those concerned the opportunity to air their views and therefore being impartial:

> I mean, like, it's very important. It's very important as a journalist in this conflicting zone like South Sudan. It's very important to balance your story, because

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[15]There are complicated problems with the UN's policies towards managing law and order in their protection sites, in what is often a barely-concealed form of extrajudicial punishment. This is explored in much more detail here: https://www.iom.int/news/if-we-leave-we-are-killed-lessons-learned-south-sudan-protection-civilian-sites-2013-2016

[16]If not a always publicly in the case of humanitarians, as they must manage an 'apolitical' organisational identity in ways that journalists don't have to

[17]This is in fact a banal observation that outdoor teambuilding events rely on for their effectiveness as much as embeds with military or humanitarian organisations.

people are watching you, ok? For you to be clean. For you to be, to be, not to get into problems for example, you need to make sure that you have to balance your story. And whenever they read the story and they feel the story's balanced, they won't accuse you. [...] Yeah, so it's very important, always, to make sure that if you, if you have, if you have a, if you have a story to run, make sure that you balance the story, so that it will put you into a better position. For example, if I go to Nairobi, I meet with the IO and drink with them, eat with them, they are happy to receive me. Come with the government, happy to receive me. That's because of that.
Respondent 8

This function of impartiality is different from any epistemological purpose - in which journalists might claim that sourcing quotes from government and rebel spokespeople was required for a 'true' account of the conflict. Instead 'impartial' means being able to shift responsibility for the content of what is reported onto (generally elite) sources, to whom criticism of the content of the reporting should then be directed. In effect, 'balance' through citing multiple parties can allow the journalist to deflect criticism towards various spokespeople and other elites, with a response to the effect of:

And you guys know, like, we interviewed the president several times, we've, we've spoken to so many people in the government. It doesn't matter if you like our reporting or not, but we balance it, and that's what you guys want.

Respondent 9

Balance also allows journalists to shift the blame for coverage to the government and others whose spokespeople are not available, in a defence which essentially claims that they did their job as best they could, and it was the government's officials whose unavailability affected coverage negatively. Anger at what has been included (or not included) and its consequences can then be redirected back towards elite actors or government bureaucracy through being reframed as their failure to give accurate information (or information at all). An example of such a move is one journalist's account of navigating South Sudan's byzantine taxonomy of government spokesmen:

So what they do to me, is when I, when they call me in about a report, cos somebody could see it on TV and call them and say why did she report about that? And I would be like, I'm doing my job. Then they use the point of the government spokesman. So if it's something to do with the military and you don't use the military spokesman, you used the government spokesman, they get pissed off at that. And if it's something to do with the government and you use the presidential spokes, they get pissed off about that. So they literally, like, showed me a piece of paper saying if it's military, go to the military guy. And I was just, like, sometimes they're not reachable. And if we don't have them, then you guys get pissed off. I'm like, they should always be reachable, yeah but it's not our fault they're not reachable. We call, we send texts, and they don't want to show up, then you can't hold us accountable for that.

Respondent 9

A strategy of balancing is not equally available to all journalists, however. As mentioned already, South Sudanese journalists felt that they were generally subject to a rule from the Media Authority that they were not allowed to speak to members of the opposition as a universal rule:

Respondent 10: They say, that they don't like if foreign journalists don't show both sides of the story. Local journalists have it a lot harder. They're prevented from mentioning the opposition in their stories so they're unable to balance it because they can't include a comment from the other side.

Interviewer: So it would be OK if you got IO quotes?

Respondent 10: Yes, I get them all the time. I quote both sides.

. . . .

Respondent 16: When you are going to send [a story that quotes the opposition], they will know it was you who did it. You come back, just from the airport, they will receive you from the airport. And maybe to, know, know where you are. Very simple. So it is, that is why you see, for us here, mostly, it is very difficult to balance the story. For example, if the government is saying this, and it is difficult for you to verify it from the other side.
Interviewer: Yeah
Respondent 16: So you end up with the story from one side. You know?

. . . .

[The Media Authority] issued this code of conduct saying you can't interview IO in South Sudan, and like local media houses can not quote anything to do with the opposition. And I was a bit surprised to see it, but now I realise that yes, it has nothing to do with the opposition. Or any negative reporting about South Sudan, whatever that is, until they issue a code of conduct, we wouldn't know. But if you're an international media house, like Reuters, AFP, Al Jazeera, AP, you can do that, you're allowed. Because they understand that most of the opposition that we interview are not in South Sudan.

Respondent 9

Balancing - in the sense outlined here - can have useful effects in allowing journalists to redirect the consequences of their reporting towards elite sources who might cope with them better. This observation comes with some caveats though. Firstly, there is a danger that this approach, when taken to extremes, can annihilate any space to actually write what is believed to be true from the point of view of the journalist's own experience of the situation or collected evidence. Equally, it may make it difficult to openly and directly point out that the claims of elite sources are contradicted by the facts in particular stories, insofar as pointing this out requires the journalist to be responsible directly for potentially dangerous claims. Secondly, it was not universally held by all journalists that balance of this sort was either useful or desirable. Journalists who were freer to write in ways that would anger elite actors - such as those based outside the country - had no need to balance stories for protective reasons and could exclude elite responses in favour of a focus on testimony and evidence alone, pursuing more denunciatory reporting than would be possible otherwise. As one journalist explained this position:

for me it's changed a lot since 2013. I used to go and see, whenever I went to Juba, I would stop in at whichever ministry or something, that if I was doing investment, I would go to the trade ministry, or oil ministry or development mini.. whatever. I kind of stopped doing that after the war began. Because, because I

was so, like, fucking angry with the way that the political elites were behaving, and the way that their ludicrous infighting over who gets to be the big boss was just killing people, destroying the country. I was so kind of offended by all that, that I, I don't think I spoke to anyone in government since. And I don't want to. So my only... I just have no interest in giving any breathing space to their bullshit, because they're all just types of lying fucking scumbags, the lot of them. And I don't want to talk to them, I don't want to deal with them, I don't want to see them. I've no interest in what next bit of bollocks they're going to spout. What I'm interested in is how their fucking venal, appalling behaviour is affecting people who're just trying to live their lives. And so I don't think I've spoken to a government person since the war started and every, every story I've done, every report I've done has been rooted almost entirely in just someone who is living somewhere, who is feeling the effects of what they're doing.

Respondent 11

This type of response was occasionally given as a counter to approaches of balancing through the inclusion of elite perspectives. By asserting the primacy of victims' accounts of what happened, an alternative voice can be found to ground claims about events. As with balancing elite sources, such an approach allows the journalist to deflect attacks on their impartiality on the grounds that they are simply reporting what communities themselves have said - though relying on such an appeal carries obvious potential for transferring risk onto the community who has spoken out, risk that may rule out such ways of legitimising claims that the government in particular might find disagreeable. More than one journalist commented on the difficulty of securing on-record testimony from communities for particularly sensitive stories involving the government, out of a fear of this sort of reprisal.

Identity and safety

In discussing relative risk and practices of managing it, it would be negligent to ignore that race and foreignness were both factors that affected the level of risk that journalists perceived themselves facing. Journalists from outside South Sudan frequently reflected on these differences and how they translated into very different practical barriers to working:

Everything I said [about safety] that applies to me does not apply to them [South Sudanese journalists]. And quite the opposite. Not only are they considered party to these nasty ethnic conflicts because they were born into one group or another and through no fault of their own every group is on someone's side and against someone else... But yeah, I mean, they are, I mean... yeah. There is no comparison between the supposed risk that we take as foreigners and the, and the very real daily mortal risk that South Sudanese journalists take... But yeah, we have, like, a massive safety. And, and the other thing, you know, there is still this sense, I think, that if you, if you do in a South Sudanese journalist and you leave him in a ditch, nothing will happen. CPJ will issue a statement. If you do in an American journalist, there's going to be consequences. So, you know. Whether there really will be, I don't know, but, but there is a sense that there will be consequences. And that's the same reason why, you know, I forget the figures but there've been scores of aid workers killed in South Sudan in the last whatever, four years. I'm not sure any of them were foreign, like we white foreigners from like America or Europe. Most of them were South Sudanese, some of them were Kenyan or Ugandan. You know. Foreigners enjoy a degree of immunity, and and we use that, right?

Respondent 11

. . . .

Of course they harass more, the government harasses much more the local journalists than the internationals. I mean the, they, I would say, maybe I am wrong, but the worst thing a, an international journalist can happen, in most of the cases, is that you can be deported, you can be kicked out from the country.

Respondent 2

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...oftentimes, I don't know if this is going to be one of your questions, but South Sudan right now is a place where basically the reporting there is practically running off privilege. I don't think it's safe for almost, you know regional reporters, and definitely not South Sudanese to do a lot of the reporting there. So you're basically often just making the bet that this random guy knows that if he kills a white person or hurts a white person, people are going to care. [...] And there's a lot of fear now, which has been the case for, since I started reporting in this region. The, the, the fear of being responsible for getting a white person killed leads people to, you know, they don't want to give access to front lines. And that, that mostly seems based off, like, no-one wants to be part of the drama of someone dying on their watch.

Respondent 3

. . . .

[...] [photographer] is a phenomenal photographer, he's white so he can go everywhere. Because like you can't necessarily send a Dinka photographer or an Equatorian photographer anywhere in South Sudan. You can send [photographer]. And that's a huge constraint, by the way, for South Sudanese journalists.

Jason Patinkin

What was interesting to note from many of the responses was a logic in which the protections arising from being foreign aren't so much inherent in the fact of being 'not South Sudanese' itself, but in other characteristics that foreignness was understood to imply. In the most obvious respect, being read as foreign offered the possibility of being read as outside of the conflict politically - someone who isn't interpretable as being part of any specific faction. Such an outsider status was not only available to the clearly Euro-American foreign journalist though. Many South Sudanese journalists commented on the fact that whether they were likely to be read as Nuer or Dinka - rather than whether they were South Sudanese - was what was important in whether or not they faced hostility in certain contexts:

And of course there is the, the tight conditions. Some, some journalists cannot go to certain places, because it is controlled by the opposition or specific tribes, and they cannot visit for sure that particular places, and they are limited.

For internationals you can go, technically, in principle, you can go anywhere because you are not conditioned by this, by your tribal identity, no?

Respondent 2

. . . .

Within the community they look at you, you want to sell them out. If I'm Dinka and I go to Nuer, they are hey, this is [a] Dinka man, he just come her to the the information to the, the government. Is also in Equatoria here, it's happened. So these people will say, you know, it's something that's happened by the way.

Respondent 3

. . . .

But UNMISS here you cannot be allowed [into certain areas] if you are Dinka. This is something here. This is very hard for us, and maybe some other tribes normally. But for Dinka journalists sometimes very hard, it's 506 very hard. Even the UN can identify you are a Dinka. They they are saying no, saying no, they don't want to take the risk. Because in case, OK, they want you to go there, but these people, they don't know what will be the reaction of those people. And we know that people, sometimes they have different ideologies. They can even grab you. So maybe they, those who are, who take you, who took you there [to the site] will be in [a] problem. So this is how now we cannot apply to go there.

Respondent 4

. . . .

And also, since I joined [news organisation], there's some areas [where they] need me to go and cover it, but because of the, the tribe, so, they, they excuse me, they told me [name], sorry, because you are from Dinka, you are not, we cannot take care of your safety when you go to there, where the, the other tribes [are].

Respondent 13

. . . .

Even when I went to camp. I see these people suffering just from, the both [sides], because the two guys are fighting, and those citizens, they are suffering. But when I enter there, some guys they say oh, this guy's, this TV [journalist] is [belonging] to government, this is Dinka, what what. And they start to harass on me. So the security guards they say, ok, go go go. So I left. So from that time, when I see in the eyes of the guy and the way they're talking, they say, oh, this war now, they turned to be a tribal war.

Respondent 14

. . . .

>...this time [it] is serious. Because the war is between two tribes. It is become [serious]. So if you, ever you belong to Dinka, so you'll be safe. But if you belong to Nuer, it would be hard... there's some areas [my organisation] need me to go and cover it, but because of the, the tribe, so, they, they excuse me, they told me [name], sorry, because you are from [wrong tribe for the area], you are not, we cannot take care of your safety when you go to there, where the, the other tribes [are].

>**Respondent 13**

Beyond the risk of being understood as party to the conflict, being South Sudanese meant being interpreted as a legal subject of the South Sudanese state and its institutions in practical ways that foreign journalists would less straightforwardly be. Being foreign meant at least the possibility of diplomatic and legal support which could affect how the state dealt with you in various respects. As a vivid illustration of the point, Chris Allen's death attracted a degree of unwelcome international attention and badgering of South Sudanese officials for an investigation that has extended for years after the incident. By contrast, the deaths of John Gatluak Manguet, Peter Julius Moi, Pow James Raeth, Musa Mohammed, Boutros Martin, Dalia Marko, Randa George, Adam Juma and Isaiah Diing Abraham Chan Awuol produced limited local protest, a Wikipedia entry and condemnation from the CPJ, but little enduring pressure on the government to find and prosecute those responsible.

Foreignness, I would suggest, is perhaps better understood not as some protective characteristic of a journalist's identity in and of itself which provides protection by virtue of 'international' reporting having some special status in all jurisdictions, but as a marker which, along with race (and other characteristics), signals a context-specific probability that someone may carry institutional or personal associations that may make harming them a risky prospect. In this way, the safety that race and nationality offer can be understood as fundamentally *discursive* insofar as individuals will be read by the state, the police, armed actors and others and those readings will inform whether and to what extent they feel free to act against a particular journalist. In contexts with long colonial histories compounded with the colonial geography of Aidland, it is wholly unsurprising that race and nationality firmly signal exceptional status in ways that might be protective. I say 'might' because while being, say, a white American places one discursively in a fairly protected category in South Sudan, this identity can be read entirely harmfully in different national contexts. As Respondent 1 phrased it:

>So, in South Sudan, I'm extremely privileged to be white, so I can cover both sides of the conflict and more or less, I'm not going to be, my tribe isn't going to be a factor. I'm clearly not South Sudanese, I am going to have access to both of those things. So there, you know, you are adding something to like the overall picture. And I'm not, in South Sudan, at least, I'm not a target, these things only benefit me. I am not a target because of these things, unlike [other country], where I am automatically a target because I am white, American, and a woman. Which automatically means I am worth significantly more than other white people. Pretty much like at the top top when it comes to, when it comes to an ideal person to kidnap.

An additional observation that arose during interviews and observation was the complicated intersectionality of identity. The kind of risk that a journalist's identity might expose them to or insulate them from is best understood by asking how they might be read in an all-things-considered manner by a specific 'audience'. One's race, nationality, ethnicity, gender, dress,

ways of interacting and company kept - to name a few characteristics - will intersect to produce specific, plausible 'readings' that result in being perceived as anything from a benign interloper to a potential (foreign or domestic) spy. One journalist explained this complicated process as follows, pointing out that while aspects such as racial identity mattered greatly, they were complicated in precisely this intersectional type of way:

> ...if you were a Ukrainian reporter working for the New York Times, I don't think you would get less, I don't think you would be treated differently than, than an American working for the New York Times. There's a Sudanese guy worked for the New York Times for a while, and he got treated quite a bit differently. But that's caught up in not just race but, like, he was northern Sudanese, and so like he was facing a lot of Arab, you know, like anti-Arab stuff, and was accused of being a spy all the time and other stuff. So that one was a bit more complicated. But no, I don't think nationality mattered so much as race, and then institution has it's own, so they would kind of, you know. In theory, someone like Hiba [Morgan, from Al Jazeera] could be treated better than a white person who is working for someone that no-one knows, because, because Al Jazeera might outweigh the other stuff. But, but definitely race was, like, mattered a ton.

Respondent 3

Journalists were very aware of the effects that their perceived identity would have on their ability to do their jobs safely or often at all. In many respects, this discussion is largely my attempt at synthesising theoretical work that they had essentially worked out for themselves beforehand. While certain identity markers - race and ethnicity in particular - were not controllable, other aspects of how they would be read by those they interacted with were, and were something that they would routinely engage in work to manage. Being clear about one's identity *as* a journalist, with its implied appeals to neutrality and as a protected class, was one such form of this identity work. Signalling one's media house (where useful) or nationality were others. Some of the work done to influence how one is encountered verged on being more affective - or at least, less explicitly about asserting symbolic links with other groups. This is discussed in more length in chapter 6, but involved learning to move and interact in non-threatening ways. As one journalist explained the process:

> How you treat people. How you treat other people. How you speak to people, how you interact with people. Because people are people, and the way we, kind of, non-verbal communication is quite global. And so, people, people can pick up on that, you know. People can pick up on whether you are being truthful, or what your agenda is. That's not, a lot of that's not verbal. And most of the places where I do my work, I don't speak the language, so there's a lot of that. And so people can, people can smell it out. People know. But also, being, I'm also very clear about what I am doing and what my intentions are. To the point where sometimes it annoys people. But yeah, sitting down, discussing things with people, this is what I am here to do, this is why I am photographing. Yeah. It's, I think, really important.

Respondent 1

These observations fit with existing work by other researchers of conflict journalism. Palmer (2018), for example, has argued for a hierarchy of grievable life when it comes to journalists being harmed, functioning along colonial lines that privilege white, Western journalists above their non-white, in-country colleagues. The South Sudanese case complicates this observation, suggesting that how hierarchies of privilege are constructed is affected by discourses

within the conflict, both in terms of what categories matter and how these might be assembled into an intersectional assessment of an individual journalist. Elsewhere, Palmer and Melki (2018) have observed strategies of performing different identities in order to navigate different contexts by female journalists, and I would suggest that cases of respondents considering the implications of their identities and the dangers of ethnic or national markers are examples of this kind of "shape shifting" logic [p. 121]. In the reflections above, it is clear that respondents imagine the effects of salient elements of their identities on how they might be received, and take these into pre-emptive consideration when deciding where (and how) to appear in their work.

Extralegal strategies of protection

For the most part, journalists in South Sudan work within the rules of the game as laid down by the Media Authority and enforced by security organisations such as the NSS. There are, of course, moments when journalists duck this framework altogether and go about the work of reporting the conflict in the country in concealed defiance of the authorities. The question for a researcher in such cases is whether they ought to ever describe such practices in this, or any, document. I would answer no.

There's something odd about writing a refusal to discuss certain findings, but if ethics in research is to have any practical value at all, there must be instances where they require deciding *not* to write certain descriptions into a research text. This seems to be straightforwardly such a case. To recount such strategies would be to chronicle ways of going about journalism which succeed precisely because they are invisible. Very few (if any) strategies for journalists to circumvent state repression are of a kind that a state could not respond to their existence if they knew about them. Including detailed accounts of how journalists go about avoiding the state in extralegal ways would create an inventory of safety practices with very real value to organisations who would use such information to harm journalists.

This is not to say that such practices aren't theoretically interesting for the implications they have on both practices of journalism and journalists, nor that there isn't practical value to sharing practices of justifiable, successful avoidance of state repression with journalists who need to do such work. Rather, it is to point out that an academic text which will have an unpredictable afterlife once submitted is an inappropriate place to record these thoughts and observations. In all likelihood, this is research for which particular opportunities to share exist - few, if any, of which require a written record.

5.4   CONCLUSION

This chapter began its discussion from where chapter 4 left off - with the observation that risk is something that is everywhere 'written' into the structure of the space in which journalists work, and is something that must be appropriately accommodated in their practices, if they are to succeed. This 'success' of their practices is partly a matter of materially succeeding in doing reporting and coming back unharmed, but also a more discursive matter of having what was done recognised as 'professional' journalism. This view of risk as both a constraint on practice and an element of it is, I suggest, a useful contribution to thinking through the practices of conflict journalists. From this point of view, I have explored a number of different tactics described in common by journalists working in the country, discussing some of the considerations and limitations in each of these approaches.

Association can provide journalists with access to safe physical spaces to rest and work, but relationships with those who can provide it are differently available to different journalists and depend on a range of factors. Moreover, these relationships carry risks for the perceived status of a journalist and their work. Being too close to humanitarians or the security establishment may undermine a journalist's ability to function *as* a journalist, even as it serves to keep them safe. While the reflections of journalists suggest a frequent perception that access to humanitarian infrastructures of safety is often granted on the basis of a vaguely defined quid-pro-quo of the sort familiar to researchers on information subsidies (Gandy, 1982; McPherson, 2016), there is evidence to suggest that NGO-journalist 'collaboration' of this sort is often grounded in common normative commitments between NGO communications staff and journalists. In particular, sympathetic communications staff with journalistic backgrounds or interests in having particular stories that affect them and their communities told illustrate in practice the kind of shared moral economy that Wright has previously described in relationships between NGOs and newsrooms (Wright, 2016a, 2018b). This discussion, in particular, makes a contribution to studies on the practical interaction of NGOs and journalists in the production of news stories, an area that Orgad and Seu (2014, p. 21) have highlighted as being particularly underdeveloped, relative to work done on audience and text studies.

Avoidance was another strategy that journalists recounted, involving an ability to judge 'acceptable risk' both as a practical matter and as something which could delegitimise them as 'gung ho' or thrill-seeking in the eyes of colleagues. This, I have argued, has much in common with the observations of self-censorship as a strategy of coping in authoritarian contexts that has been observed by other researchers in (for example) Bangladesh (Hasan and Wadud, 2020) and Uganda (Walulya and Nassanga, 2020).

Balancing stories with commentary from elites on both sides of the conflict, whatever other epistemological benefits it might have, also helped journalists who needed to hold onto an impartial position in relation to the state and other parties to the conflict. Like other forms of safety, balance-through-equal-attribution was something that in-country journalists often had to pay more attention to than colleagues outside, who enjoyed relatively greater freedom to denounce bad actors. Finally, respondents were acutely aware of the effects that their racial, national, and ethnic *identities* had on how they were read by others and the potential risks that this could entail. Some of these identities were essentially unalterable and visible, while others, such as highlighting particular social roles or affiliated news organisations, could be strategically emphasised from context to context.

The overarching argument in this chapter is that risk can be usefully theorised as not simply a material constraint that must be navigated for the practice of journalism to succeed, but also as an element of the practice of conflict journalism itself. Rather than being everywhere and always avoided to the maximum extent possible, risk is something that must be appropriately planned around and managed by the journalist - generally through gathering sufficient knowledge about the dangers of the work and making 'responsible' choices in light of this. In this way, risk becomes something that the professional conflict journalist must enter into a relationship with - both discursively and materially - if the practices of reporting that result are to be recognised by (at least) their peers as the kind of practice that a 'good' conflict journalist does.

I have described risk as something that journalists needed to respond to 'responsibly' in order to be seen as a professional journalist, via the example of Chris Allen. His fatal expedition to Kaya attracted guarded questioning by respondents regarding the risks that he took, in ways that suggested his risk-taking may have been 'unprofessional'. This discourse of the journalist relating to risk through it being a matter of making responsible personal decisions 'frames out' the many other understandings of what created danger for Allen in ways that closely resemble the critiques of neoliberal 'safety culture' by Rentschler (2007) and Palmer (2018). Both have critiqued this view of risk as one that is too narrowly framed in terms of personal choices instead of wider structural issues. It is also a discursive regime in which the costs and

responsibility for managing risk can be more easily passed on from news organisations to a precarious strata of journalists, and from journalists to the invisible labour that they, in turn depend on.

Fixers, translators and others make up an invisible strata of precarious labour in the overall news production architecture (Palmer, 2019), and this silence was deafening in respondents' discussions of risk. Of the coded interviews, only one respondent made brief mention of the role of fixers (in securing access to sources). While it seems likely that a discussion of fixers and their role in safe reporting would be acknowledged if explicitly probed for (it was not an part of the original interview guide), the near-complete absence of the topic in journalists' reflections on managing risk suggest that Palmer's observation of the invisibility of fixers in the labour of journalism is the case in South Sudan too.

This chapter has not intended to be an exhaustive list of every safety tactic practised by journalists working in the country, but ought to give a sense of some of the major understandings of how risk could be practically managed, and some of the starkest differences in what these tactics look like between journalist of different types - often, but not always, cleaving along local/foreign lines. The cases of managing one's perceived identity and building relationships with various actors, in particular, ought to direct attention to the fact that staying safe and 'doing journalism' in South Sudan was not simply a matter of tactical choices and the manipulation, where possible, of one's semiotic markers. Working in the country is in many respects profoundly affective - an observation which carries a wide range of implications for the study of journalism of (at least) this type. Developing this thread further will be the concern of the next chapter.

6 | BODIES AND FEELINGS

> It just tires you out, right. I guess one last thing is this whole R&R that NGOs and UN agencies get every six to eight weeks. Last year, I thought, oh, it's crazy, that's way too much. But then I was here for five months without taking a break at all. And I was tired after it. I was exhausted. And I thought, oh, I am not going to come back. And then I left for two weeks and I felt refreshed and good, and, so I do think there is value in leaving. I've changed my mind a little bit about this. At first I was, no, I can do this. I, what are these NGOs [doing]. No, no, no, I think that was. I had to really, humbly accept that I also, it's good to go out and leave.
>
> **Respondent 15**

One of the most profound revelations that emerged from interviews, observation and reflection on the day-to-day experience of following journalists in Malakal and Juba was the extent to which feelings and bodies figured in the work of journalism. Before arriving in South Sudan, earlier drafts of this thesis had begun to reflect a suspicion that bodies and the affective baggage that comes with them might enable and constrain practices of journalism in fundamental ways. This turned to be more important than I'd anticipated, in part because fieldwork (in retrospect, unsurprisingly) meant actually being affected by, well, affects. This chapter sorts through some of these observations in order to arrive at a clearer view of the way in which bodies and affects might matter in the practices of my respondents. It is not my intention to propose some grand theory of affect, journalism, and conflict, but to argue that bodies and affects are present in ways that have implications for how journalism likely proceeds (or fails to) in contexts like those found in South Sudan.

To begin this chapter, it is worth briefly reflecting on what I mean when I use the words 'affect' and 'emotion', as I take Wahl-Jorgensen's (2019a) position that there is something useful to be gained analytically by making a distinction between the terms. I agree with Wetherell's (2013) view that considering 'affect' to be somehow beyond language, as Massumi (2002) does, is untenable if one intends to *say* anything about it. While the things we feel certainly begin to do (new) discursive work when encountering representation, it is possible to nevertheless hold onto both the semantic and somatic aspects of what is felt at the same time as being able to see them as discursively entangled. I can, for example, reflect on both the discursive implications of characterising my current state while typing a thesis chapter as 'caffeinated' and contemplating the actual, somatic effects of too much coffee on my own consciousness, or on the behaviour of another.

That said, the meaning of the descriptions I employ in recognising an affected state may, of course, be entangled with what is actually felt in various ways. Given this entanglement, why not simply collapse the terms 'affect' and 'emotion' into one another? While sensations and the language used to recognise and describe them may interact, this is not always the case - or at least not always the case to the same degree. On the one hand, as anyone who has ever told (or been told) a ghost story might attest, fear can be increased or reduced - in part - through description and talk. In another case, what one might refer to as extreme physical exhaustion is far less amenable to being modified through the discursive effects of talking or trying to reimagine the feeling as something else. One cannot talk oneself out of the tiredness that follows a marathon or an all-nighter in the same way as one can talk oneself out of (or

into) being fearful. The somatic experience is simply less responsive to meaning-making work done about it. Without denying the complexity of both examples and a complicated space in between, what I want to point to is the idea that some kinds of sensations - what I refer to as *affects* in this chapter - are far less amenable to change in response to language. They seem to be primarily biological-physical sensations that may become enmeshed in discourse, but are less responsive to language themselves. In some cases, such as physical exhaustion, these affects may simply be largely impervious to any effects arising from description, in other cases, such as those I suspect Massumi (2002) is contemplating in his claims of affect as outside of language, they may be so subtle as to escape notice - and thus language - at all.[1] To the extent that they escape notice, of course, there is little that can be said of them by a researcher, since - per definition - they were not, cannot, be noticed. Other kinds of sensations, such as anger, sadness and forms of resonance with the perceived feelings of others, are far more amenable to being shifted or transformed in response to their encounter with language and social practice generally. I use the term 'emotion' to capture these less unidirectional, more discourse-responsive complexes of affect meeting discourse(s).

This distinction is compatible with that made by Wahl-Jorgensen (2019a), who highlights that the view of emotion as "the relational interpretation of affect experienced in individual bodies", making the point that this linkage of the affective and the discursive makes it possible to think of the circulation of feeling *between* bodies. If one is interested in how feelings might be generated and circulated during social practice, as this chapter is, emotion becomes a useful term for referring to this kind of practice-generated-and-circulated-feeling. Affect, then, becomes a useful term for discussing other kinds of feeling with non-discursive origins, such as the effects of heat, hunger and pain where they exert force beneath or outside of of discourse.

6.1 THE CASE FOR THINKING ABOUT BODIES, AFFECTS AND EMOTIONS

The most straightforward way of understanding the relationship between affect/emotion and practice is to view it as being somehow *akratic* - something which is particularly true when thinking of the work of journalists. By 'akratic', I have in mind Arpaly's use of the term as meaning "acting against one's best judgement" (Arpaly, 2000, p. 490) such that if it is your all-things-considered judgement that you ought to do X, and you then fail to do X (when you could), you are behaving akratically (and irrationally). In particular, Arpaly makes a distinction between non-motivational 'cold' irrationality (e.g. borne of tiredness) and motivational, or 'hot' irrationality, which occurs when emotion overrules an agent's best judgement (such as in cases of acting out of anger, grief, or sympathy).

Seeing hot irrationality as a professional hazard fits with (orthodox) professional norms of journalism that demand an "essentially amoral and emotionally evacuated journalistic outlook" (Cottle, 2013, p. 233), in which journalists might infuse their *writing* with emotion (where they are writing in a genre that allows it), but in which they themselves ought not to be swayed by emotion in making their assessments, as these had no place in the facts of a story (Wahl-Jorgensen, 2019a,b).[2] Unsurprisingly, this was a view that was often repeated by journalists in various formulations:

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[1] Imagine, for example, tiredness which has not yet surfaced to the point of reflection. It has effects, but goes unnoticed, unrepresented at the time.

[2] This is not to claim, of course, that norms of separating out emotion and avoiding attachment are universal. The debates around Peace Journalism (Loyn, 2007) and the 'journalism of attachment' (Bell, 1998; Ward, 1998) are probably the most obvious examples of dissent.

I mean, my emotions, I don't think there's any place for my emotions in the story at all, unless you're writing an opinion piece, and that's what it's about. It's really, has nothing to do with me.

Respondent 1

. . . .

I think wire journalists, you're, you're sort of beaten, any emotion's beaten out of you, and you are told to just strip [it] out and it's just a very factual, quick account.

Respondent 12

. . . .

Some people don't distance [their] emotion, and it is really unethical for you to be emotional when you are reporting a story... [if you are emotional], you are adding more harm, because a reader will really know that what you've projected here has your feeling in it, because the tone itself is supposed, for somebody who has had some classes on psychology of communication, they will really sense that the writer has added his, his own opinion in it.

Respondent 6

6.1.1   Chapter structure

In reply, this chapter makes four arguments in favour of the idea that affects and emotions are in fact far more complicated roles in the practices of journalists. First, I argue that while 'emotion' is explicitly cited as a danger to journalists' truth-seeking work, at least one non-akratic affect - exhaustion - is not understood as a danger to the truth-discerning function of journalism in the same way. There is nothing like a comparable norm in professional discourse that journalists ought to be rested, yet unlike anger or empathy, exhaustion may not (or not only) produce a failure of will in a particular direction, but a failure to deliberate[3] competently at all. That is, it can create a powerful inability to reason in general, rather than an akratic failure of will after reasoning has taken place. This is a reality that journalists must cope with physically and emotionally if they are to practice successfully.

Second, in even more classically 'akratic' situations, where one's emotional state might produce a failure to act in accordance with one's all-things-considered best judgement (to borrow Arpaly's (2002) phrasing), I argue that it is not in fact obvious that journalists are reasoning akratically. There are circumstances in which journalists' felt emotional attachments may be better understood as rational, information-bearing instincts even when they run counter to journalists' all-things-considered assessments of their responsibilities in particular situations. I draw on Arpaly's (2000) work on emotion as a basis for rational action to argue that there are at least some instances in the practices of journalists as they related them to me and I observed during fieldwork where apparently rational decisions were overridden by emotional instincts which functioned as better, or at least plausibly rational (and therefore non-akratic) alternatives to journalists' own preferences.

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[3] It is worth clarifying that I use the word 'deliberate' here in the sense of an ideal-typical rational actor considering their actions and decisions, rather than in the Habermasian sense of more general, interpersonal deliberation.

Third, I look more closely at the implications of bodies for thinking about the practices of my respondents. What are the implications of keeping in mind that reporting in risky situations requires, literally, that some*body* does it? How do some bodies 'fit' contexts and others don't and what is the significance of this for the success of practices? I argue that 'fitting' is an important kind of embodied, affective work that must be done for reasons both banal and existential. Gregory (2019) has already observed, in the context of US army checkpoints in Iraq, that giving off 'bad feelings' can carry dire consequences, and I argue that a dynamic of this kind is important in the practices of conflict journalists.

Finally, I argue that the idea of a 'skilled' conflict reporter ought not to be limited to imagining a mind with a specific inventory of conflict- and journalism-related knowledge, but also a body tuned to react automatically, without deliberation, in very particular kinds of settings. In this way, the skilled conflict reporter ought to be imagined in much the same way as Wacquant's (2004) boxer or Arpaly's (2000) tennis player - capable of non-deliberative 'fast action' in playing the 'game' in a skilled, yet non-deliberative way. This view, in turn, raises important questions about where and how such knowledge is 'learned' and with what implications for journalists[4].

It is worth once more reiterating that in general, I wish to argue that there is more to the role of bodies and affects in journalistic practice than matters of akratic risk, though in certain moments this may certainly be the case too. By pointing to the existence of more diverse effects of bodies and affects on practice, I wish to raise at least the possibilities that rational deliberation cannot be assumed in extreme work contexts, that there are cases in which felt obligations may collide with norms of detachment in non-akratic ways, and that what counts as 'skill' includes an embodied ability to function in new and potentially risky environments, with ramifications for what it means to train to do this kind of work. These observations, in turn, are directed at making one overarching point - that affect and bodies in fact matter profoundly to the successful practice of (at least) these forms of journalism.

6.2 EXHAUSTION

As a part of my ethnographic fieldwork, I accompanied two journalists, A and B[5], on a reporting trip to the UN's protection of civilians site in Malakal for a period of six days. During this time, they were gathering testimony, video and photographs for an investigative story focusing on possible war crimes committed by the government. The relatively short time in the Malakal POC site (six days), given the scope and detail of the story they were working on, was still double the usual period that the UN typically granted journalists. In our case, I believe this exception to have been granted partly out of the UN communications officer's sympathy to the story they were interested in and partly out of cheekily ignoring the UN's recommendation of a three-day stay at the beginning of arranging the trip.[6]

The 'protection of civilians' (POC) sites in South Sudan are a unique phenomenon. They came about shortly after nationwide violence in 2013, when tens of thousands of civilians who were being targeted by state and rebel forces stormed UN bases, demanding to be let in for safety and protection. While allowing civilians inside a UN military base is normally strictly forbidden, commanders in South Sudan almost universally opened their doors and allowed civilians inside. In the case of Malakal, this meant allowing Shilluk and Nuer civilians to seek safety from Dinka-aligned government troops who had been murdering civilians in

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[4] And others. Many of the points raised in this chapter have obvious application in a range of other domains

[5] One of the journalists involved asked that they remain anonymous and so to practically respect this request, both journalists' names are not given.

[6] This came out of a discussion with UN staff prior to departure, during which I queried whether six-day stays were normal.

nearby Malakal town. These civilians have since been relocated from inside UNMISS bases proper to large sand-walled spaces directly adjacent to them, where UN forces continue to protect POC site residents from annihilation at the hands of the forces outside of the camp. In Malakal's case (but different other jurisdictions) the danger is the government army, the SPLA. My fieldnotes from arrival day recount something of my impressions on arriving at the POC site:

> At the airport [some distance from the POC site], armed UNMISS soldiers in serious-looking body armour are guarding the runway as we come in to land. We exit the plane, immediately board a small white 21-ish seater bus which takes us to a waiting area inside the nearby UNMISS base, which we later learn is called the MovCon (Movement Control) office. Everywhere is interesting things. Armoured infantry fighting vehicles, soldiers from Rwanda, Nigeria, India and the UK. Giant sand walls a storey high with rows and rows of barbed wire and ditches enclose what seems like a square kilometre of space outside of the formal base perimeter - a space in which the iron sheeting of the Malakal protection of civilians site is visible.

> ...we drop our bags in our new homes for the next six days. Each of us has a twenty foot container, consisting of a bed at one end, a grim meter-and-a-half shower area at the other, and a desk and metal locker cupboard in the middle between them. It is spartan, but will be more than enough for us. And it's infinitely preferable to camping, which was a distinct possibility a few days prior. Outside is hot and dry to the extent that cracks have opened up in the earth large enough to twist your ankle in, making walking around the accommodation a tricky affair. I will discover in a few days time that mice and other animals live inside these fissures to escape the 42 degree temperatures that characterise the daytime here.
> **Fieldnotes - March 23**

Over the next six days, we would be on our feet traversing the POC site for interviews and other appointments for between sixteen and eighteen hours a day, bookended by a minimal porridge-and-bread roll breakfast at the base restaurant and a dinner at the same location later in the evening. Lunch on most days was a matter of luck and timing, involving walking the length of the POC site back to the base canteen and hoping we would be in time for the limited lunch period, though there were days where our schedule simply made returning impossible, and we would subsist on sugared tea from vendors in the POC site.

Before departure, I had tried to be as fit as I could reasonably be beforehand, so as to make sure I could keep up with any journalists I might follow on assignment. I'd finished a three hundred kilometre hike in northern Spain only a few months before, and would run a half marathon when back in London a few months later. I mention this so as to make the point that the shattering exhaustion of that period of reporting not be entirely attributed to my own failings in preparing for observation beforehand. Working such long days in 42 degree heat rapidly took its toll on all involved and my fieldnotes quickly became filled with concern at the difficulty of trying to think properly as the days wore on:

> Physical and mental strength. My exhaustion is testament to this. Working here is a trial in sleep deprivation, hard work, sore muscles, and tempting collapse before we head back to Juba next week Thursday. Doing this work requires a mental and physical stamina, both to manage the punishing daily schedule (and then, in my case, write it up while A and B sleep), and to overcome the fear involved in travelling here, travelling to ████████[7] (or dealing with the FOMO

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[7] A town whose population had been forced out by SPLA soldiers, who had garrisoned it since. A and B were scheduled to approach it with a UN patrol and all involved understood this to be a risky undertaking. Everyone returned safely, but SPLA forces refused to allow them to disembark and the resulting stand-off came close to violence.

of being left behind, in my case, as there are not enough spots on the boat), and potentially travelling to ████ on Wednesday.

Fieldnotes - March 24

. . . .

These notes have become more fragmented now, because the workload here in Malakal is punishing. Even simply surviving our daily reporting schedule and copying all of the data off my cameras is taxing my stamina and sleeping patterns. Never mind trying to journal on top of this.

...Spending eighteen-hour days walking from one end of the POC site to the other in 42 degree heat with insufficient water, and few opportunities to get back to the UN base for food (and no packed food of any kind) is shattering. I barely dream, and am most definitely losing weight and sleeping insufficiently from day to day. I'll make it through to Thursday, certainly, but it's abundantly clear that there is a hard, short limit to how long anyone could reasonably endure working at this pace in this context, and it's not much longer than a week. Already, it's hard to make any kind of complicated decisions - daily interview schedules are being dictated by a series of check-lists that we do out best to update each morning, and then defer all thinking about the structure of the reporting trip to whatever is on it. It is literally impossible to find the mental bandwidth for any more sophisticated planning than this.

Fieldnotes - March 25

. . . .

I'm up just after 07h00 for breakfast. Which is a miracle, given how tired I feel. Sleeping is not so much resting as simply blanking out into unconsciousness for a few hours, and waking with the kinds of aches you get from going to the gym. Muscles which haven't worked for too long, complaining that they need a break. They won't get one.

Fieldnotes - March 26

This was, in hindsight, a textbook example of exhaustion making meaningful deliberation impossible. Discussions that had taken place prior to arriving and on the first day in the POC site quickly gave way to managing a written check-list of what we had resolved to do and see each day out of a pragmatic realisation that anything not written down would be quickly forgotten. This exhaustion can be understood as being the effect - in a very direct way - of of structure acting on our bodies. The availability of food, water, transport and the perceived duties that needed to be performed each day all combined to produce an exhaustion which substantially undermined our ability to deliberate rationally from day to day.

Yet there is nothing in this account of 'deep field' reporting that would be unusual to journalists who have worked in areas with little, no, or wrecked infrastructure under tight deadlines. For all the colourful descriptions in my notes, there is nothing exceptional about such a context to journalists who have worked in South Sudan for long enough[8]. To the extent that Aidland's manifestation in remote areas of humanitarian emergency resembles something like

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[8] A draft of this footnote sent to one respondent who had done such reporting confirmed, with laughter, that this account resonated with their own experiences of exhaustion during such reporting trips.

the Malakal POC site, one can reasonably expect physical exhaustion of such a kind to be present for many of those who work there. In the case of humanitarians and UN staff, this is part of the motivation for providing regular rotation out of deep field postings. Journalists, for the most part, are not able to afford such R&R escapes.

Exhaustion is an unavoidable characteristic of such direct, in-the-field parts of reporting practice in South Sudan. Moreover, exhaustion of this kind unavoidably produces deliberation-thwarting effects in journalists working in such contexts. Yet this apparently-banal observation demands that we reimagine what kinds of actors journalists are when going about their work. It is impossible for journalists to be deliberative, rational actors seeking truth in such scenarios when it is impossible to be meaningfully deliberative at all much of the time. The assumption that journalists are deliberative, rational agents is foundational to most straight-forward conceptions of journalists doing what what journalists do. Indeed, the idea of the journalist bringing together material and discursive resources to enact moments in practice that are recognisably journalism would seem to imply a deliberateness - that the journalist, in some active sense, *brings* things together.

The interesting question, then, is how exactly something that is recognisably journalism (and not some other practice, or an incoherent mess) might be done by a journalist who is too tired, too hungry, too *exhausted* to function in a deliberately rational way. A flippant response might be to argue that journalists, when they are so tired as to be barely or non-functional, are simply unable to practice journalism, except perhaps by luck. Yet to do so ignores that A and B were engaged in daily practice that to any outsider was recognisably journalism. At no point did anyone they encountered, interviewed or relied on appear to see them as being 'not-journalists'. They collected material, followed evidence and ultimately produced a story that was long-listed for a major journalism award, alongside a handful of pieces all produced by major networks - including CNN, BBC, Al Jazeera and PBS. This is also not an unfamiliar story, as journalists who have pulled all-nighters covering major breaking news in a fog of excitement, coffee and Red Bull would recognise.

6.2.1 Coping with Exhaustion

So if journalists are not being classically deliberatively rational when practising journalism in such moments, where is the clearly patterned decision-making that guides their actions coming from? In the case of working in the Malakal POC site, three approaches to managing the effects of exhaustion were evident in the behaviour of A and B: tactics of externalising thinking, tactics of deferring to professional habit and tactics of 'keeping it together', emotionally speaking.

Externalising deliberation

As the days wore on, interviews led to ever more leads for A and B, and a need to coordinate schedules with not simply the UN press officers, but also a growing set of sources from within the POC site itself. Working with community and religious leaders who were willing to arrange further interviews and introductions meant having to manage an increasingly busy daily schedule in order to make sure that enough evidence could be gathered for the primary story as possible, while still also trying to gather any ancillary material that might prove useful as additional background to the main story or even possibly as smaller, different stories. As we became more exhausted, keeping track of commitments made and outstanding goals became ever more difficult, and A, B and I started to depend more frequently on a series of daily check-lists that we would update each evening back at the UN base and then check and rewrite each morning.

This tactic of 'externalising' the work of remembering commitments and schedules resembles Clarke and Chalmers's (1998) account of extended mind, in which memory and belief (as to what evidence has been gathered, what needs to be investigated and so on) is being externalised via a notes and check-lists in order to cope with an inability to deliberate fully or reliably due to exhaustion.[9] In this instance, notebooks and scraps of paper simply served as a more durable means of remembering connections, appointments and items of interest from each day than our own minds would have been. At first glance, a reliance on note-taking and lists may seem fairly banal, but it points to the broader observation that one tactic for coping with an inability to deliberate fully may be to delegate elements of the process elsewhere.

In the case of externalising memories and beliefs onto paper in the case of work in the POC site, the site of externalisation - the notebooks - were continuously and reliably under our control from day to day. It would not be difficult to imagine a situation, though, where memory or belief might be externalised in locations which may be liable to change in ways that could have significant effects on how practice is shaped. While many important decisions were written in notes, other group decisions were 'stored' interpersonally, through reminding each other of things, taking group decisions and then asking the group later what had been decided regarding the order of events on certain days or the relative priority of different interviews. Given this, it is not hard to imagine journalists working in other exhausting contexts externalising decisions they have made - or potentially decision-making in certain domains entirely - to those they work closely with. In principle, fixers, facilitators, communications liaisons or the humanitarians and soldiers one might be embedded with could all participate in the cognitive work of journalists in ways that resemble (potentially un)reliable externalisation of mind. The limited example of externalising belief and memory that I observed would not be enough to support a claim of the existence of such a phenomenon, but it is an intriguing possibility for thinking about how relations under pressure might inflect journalistic practice in more fundamental ways than existing critiques of embedding entertain.

Deferring to professional habit

Another tactic for coping with a diminished capacity to deliberate was being able to defer to professional habit. The most straightforward example of this being during the set up process for interviews with various sources each day. A and B both had years of experience in national newsrooms and had conducted countless interviews before. As a result, much of the practical work of recalling how to set up beforehand and how to conduct it was familiar to the point of being a habit that no longer required (many) explicit decisions. Putting on a lapel mic, setting up for a two-camera interview, checking light sources and asking a range of basic questions were all activities that required little mental effort. Splitting responsibilities between recording and interviewing is a common and standard enough practice across newsrooms that A and B were able to adapt and share roles quite fluidly, with little need for explicit negotiation from moment to moment.

Professional habit, in this case, meant that despite the exhaustion of a busy schedule and its effects on conscious deliberation, a practice identifiable as journalism nevertheless proceeded consistently from interview to interview. Photographs and video produced from the trip were exactly the kind of raw material that a newsroom anywhere could use to assemble a range of stories from, in terms of both their technical quality and the choice of subject. Interestingly, these professional habits of production during interviews - in A and B's case - appeared to include patterns resembling Nothias's (2020) idea of a 'post-colonial reflexivity' which manifested as an inclination to avoid recording non-consensual portraits and images of poverty that would be familiar to critics of the 'poverty porn' genre of humanitarian images. Given

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[9] It would be interesting to explore more fully the view that journalism and note-taking are in general a case of extended mind, with this specific example being different to 'normal' practice in degree rather than kind. Such a discussion lies beyond the space available in this thesis, however.

the centrality of concerns about race, othering and inequality to journalism in South Africa, it is perhaps unsurprising that A and B's approach to reporting would differ from other, potentially more extractive approaches to visualising Malakal and the story they were interested in.

Of course, a single period of observation is too little to assert that non-deliberative professional habit might extend beyond technical elements of production and basic questioning to the politics of representing others, but it is an interesting possibility to consider. Insofar as journalists can recognisably go about their work via - in part - a kind of deference to what 'feels right' based on thousands of prior repetitions, the moral and political quality of those thousands of prior repetitions might well inflect habit beyond simply making sure that cameras are set up correctly and batteries are charged each night before bed. If habits of professional journalism are acquired within a specific culture - as they must surely be - there is every reason to think that norms around race, coloniality, photography and so on would be encoded in those habits and, by extension, form part of the default mode of operating when too tired to explicitly think about it.

Keeping it together and other emotional work

The third tactic of managing the effects of exhaustion that I observed involved *personal* work directed at suppressing one's own emotional state and *interpersonal* work directed at managing the overall emotional experience of working together under trying situations. During their time in Malakal, A and B travelled upriver with an UNMISS boat patrol to investigate a nearby village illegally occupied by SPLA troops. On their return, they recounted what became a very tense stand off on the riverbank with soldiers in the village who did not want journalists to disembark:

> A and B are back by mid-morning. There was apparently a tense exchange of words between UNMISS and the SPLA in [the village], who were not at all keen to let journalists out of the boat. As a result, they denied permission to do a patrol of [the village] to the entire UNMISS force. As a result, UNMISS will cite the SPLA for a violation of some or other part of the ceasefire agreement, and [everyone] returned home. A describes UNMISS putting safeties off their rifles and putting belts of ammunition in their heavy-calibre patrol-boat guns before attempting to dock, and the entire experience [of the stand-off] as being among the closest to an outright fire-fight that he has ever been involved in.

> **Fieldnotes, March 27**

Tense encounters that pose a direct danger to journalists are to a certain extent an inevitable part of doing work that involves professionally taking risks and trying to manage safe passage to remote or unwelcoming areas. During interviews, respondents cited roadblocks and being summoned by authorities as common examples of such dangerous encounters, and it would not be hard to imagine others. During acute moments of danger like these, the management of personal emotion becomes an important part of behaving professionally and making it through the exchange successfully. Feelings of fear and anxiety, terror or even anger may be natural responses to such situations - visceral examples of what (Connolly, 2002, 74) describes as "thought-imbued energies [that find] expression in the timbre of our voices, the calmness or intensity of our gestures, the flush of our faces, the rate of our heartbeats, the receptivity, tightness or sweatiness of our skin, and the relaxation or turmoil in our guts".

What is particular to such situations is that they are often potentially high-stakes scenarios, where making legible to others what you are feeling - or worse, acting on those impulses - may

be profoundly unhelpful. Contrary to nature documentaries and action films, fight or flight are often among the worse possible responses to encountering armed actors or unsympathetic authorities. In moments like these, skill at concealing (the most obvious elements of) what one is feeling may be absolutely necessary to safely navigating situations of physical danger. Such 'keeping it together' work matters insofar as making one's emotional state clear to others carries risks that the structure of the interaction currently in progress might shift. A minor roadblock becomes an altogether more predatory exchange, a stand off somewhere on the bank of the Nile becomes potentially lethal for A and B.

Many hostile environment awareness training courses - including the one I attended before travelling - build in a day or two of 'practical' training which includes simulating roadside injuries and kidnapping of attendees. Despite knowing that the person shooting blank rounds over your head and zip-tying/hooding you is your instructor from a few hours earlier, it's unforgettable how reflexively you are drawn to react during the interaction. Enquiring about the purpose of the exercise during my training, the instructor explained that the primary value of being faux-kidnapped was for participants to get a sense of what it would feel like affectively, so that if it ever happened in reality they would be better equipped to recognise the kind of default responses they were inclined to and suppress them in order to behave more rationally - in this case, by paying due attention to identifying information about the situation, the attacker, and where they were being taken. I would argue that in this situation, pre-fieldwork training is attempting to develop this specific skill of recognising and handling fear-type responses in order to manage an interaction as best as one can.

Not all examples of 'keeping it together' need be as dramatic though. Extended, high pressure fieldwork under conditions of exhaustion can lead to less spectacular emotional states, including irritability, frustration and a general potential for friction arising from being tired and stressed. In these instances, managing to keep one's own affective load under control is a less-spectacular but nevertheless important element of working together well as a team. Further evident in Malakal was a constant interpersonal emotional labour directed at keeping everyone's spirits up. Black humour, occasional pieces-to-camera whose sole purpose appeared to be joking around, and evening drinking and chatting about the day that had gone by was not simply incidental, but in fact core elements of practice directed at maintaining the emotional state of an exhausted group from day to day.

More theoretically speaking, Wetherell's (2012) concept of affective-discursive practice captures these observations around personal and interpersonal emotional work well. Given the material conditions under which A and B were 'doing journalism', the practice quickly finds itself generating affects and emotions which may help or hinder the work at hand. In extreme cases, it could make the work unable to proceed or render it unrecognisable as professional journalism. To keep things going (well), a degree of emotional self management and work to keep the overall emotional harmony of those involved in the practice manageable must be performed. Interestingly, this view implies that at least some of the apparent stoicism of the heroic masculine 'foreign reporter' ideal-type might in fact be a misreading of sophisticated and attentive emotional work occurring between various individuals, directed at managing the affective/emotional situation in which they find themselves. This is not to deny or excuse the heroic adventurer discourse that often surrounds journalists covering war and violence, but to tentatively suggest that in at least these types of situations there may be more going on.

In some respects, this account also resembles Kotišová's (2017) observation of what she calls 'cynicism' in Czech journalists covering crises, understood as 'neglecting the emotionally demanding character of tragic events" in order to get the job done. This, in turn is similar to Jukes's (2017) idea of the attitude of 'cool-detached' adopted by journalists reporting on the Dunblane massacre and chemical attacks in Syria. As an affective practice, 'keeping it together' is this, but is complicated in other ways that go beyond both of these. Unlike cynicism, it is not simply about 'getting the job done' (though it is this too), but also about preventing practical of affective escalations that might have dangerous consequences or destabilise the

practice. In addition, keeping it together is both work that one does on oneself and an inter-subjective affective practice in which journalists help *each other* in the work of maintaining a degree of emotional wellbeing and detachment. Both Jukes' and Kotisova's accounts consider journalists engaged in reporting as individual agents and look at their affective moods through this lens. There is more to see here though, in seeing relations between journalists as geared towards sustaining specific 'emotional cultures' (to use Kotisova' term) via affective practices (Wetherell's).

6.3 EMOTIONS

In her rejection of the idea of emotion as automatically akratic, Arpaly discusses the hypothetical example of Sam the student (Arpaly, 2000, p. 495), whose all-things-considered judgement it is that he ought to be a hermit in order to improve his academic performance. Despite his belief - reached after his best efforts at deliberation - that this is best for him, Sam fails to *desire* to become a hermit. Arpaly argues that this lack of desire points to the fact (unrealised by Sam) that his apparently 'all-things-considered' judgement is deficient insofar as it is failing to include certain things that he truly values. Arpaly argues that his lack of desire to behave as he believes he should (or desire to behave otherwise) is in fact tracking what is a far more rational set of actions for him, were he only to have a more complete picture of the 'all things' that his 'all things considered' judgement ought to consider. His emotions, in this case, are pointing him quite reasonably to goals that he in fact has, but has not recognised in his attempt at deliberation.

What is the relevance of Sam's failure to desire being a hermit to the work of journalists in South Sudan? A justification of a 'bearing witness' type is required as a result of the morally problematic position conflict journalists may find themselves in during routine practice - of professionally watching others' suffering without an accompanying professional obligation to assist directly. This morally awkward position is not simply an 'in-principle' possibility, but something that journalists attested to encountering in a very personal way. Much like Sam failing to desire what he believes he rationally ought to, journalists can and do find themselves in similar dilemmas where what they believe they ought to do professionally as journalists sits in conflict with their emotional instincts.

Below are three such cases that illustrate this phenomenon. In the first, one respondent recounted feeling conflicted over helping an interviewee during previous work in the Democratic Republic of Congo:

> **Respondent 7:** I've only one time in my entire career, given money to anyone, which I did like much, much later. Which was to a, in DRC, was a woman who had been raped and needed money for a surgery. And like after, after the interview I like sent someone back and said, like, its not from me, but, but I still feel unethical about that choice.
>
> **Interviewer:** Wow. So you felt that was the unethical thing to have done?
>
> **Respondent 7:** Yes. Yeah. And I, I really. I dunno, I have that debate all the time.

Although the respondent felt that the conflict between professional judgement and desire ought to have been resolved in favour of professional rules, this has not brought their considered

judgement about how they ought to act in line with their felt commitments. As they continued to explain subsequently:

> I do experience the guilt, immensely, like when, like that situation where like, but frankly, there is nothing I can do. I can hardly afford to pay my own rent, how on earth am I going to help them? It's, like, there's like, there's like a million people, you know. How am I, so it's really tricky, but its funny because I struggle to answer that question...

> **Respondent 7**

In the second case, A and B in Malakal had just completed an interview with a woman who had fled to the safety of the protection of civilians site and who was now living in near-destitution in the camp. As my fieldnotes reconstructed what followed:

> At the end of the interview, A wants to follow [the interviewee] about on her daily routine, to get some B-Roll footage of her doing 'normal' things, and she tells him that she would normally head to the market to get some basics for making dinner for her kids, but that she doesn't have the 50 SSP ($0.25) that she would usually need in order to get enough food to make dinner. A calls B and I together into a huddle to ask whether we think it would be OK for him to give her the money to go to the market. I reply that I am not opposed to it - it is a tiny amount of money (to us), and would not be likely to wildly distort what her daily routine actually looks like. B is opposed to giving money to interviewees as a hard professional rule. A decides that he will give her the money anyway, arguing that it won't make her do anything that she would not otherwise typically do with her day.
>
> Some days later, B will bring this episode up, and tell us that she thinks, ultimately, it was okay for A to have given her money. At the time of the exchange, I am not in a rested-enough frame of mind to really try to examine the moral implications, which is itself an indication of the effects of tiredness on my and (from their apparent exhaustion too) A and B's moral reasoning. It appears as though we all just defer to moral instincts of various kinds. I defer to a desire to help as a primary moral rule - possibly at the expense of the authenticity of the resulting material - while B appears to defer to a hard professional rule of 'no paying ever' - as her own heuristic for dealing with the situation. The entire discussion happens in a matter of a few minutes, as we are surrounded by interested children, and the interviewee (and [our fixer], and many others) are waiting nearby. So even if we were in a frame of mind to debate more complicated ethical decisions (and, mentally, we are not), the forum in which the discussion takes place simply does not allow for it. I'm not sure how representative this moment is of other moments of moral reasoning like it, but this whole experience is one of the clearest moments of a moral dilemma that I observe actually taking place during our time here.

> **Fieldnotes - March 25**

In the third case, a respondent reflected on feelings of attachment towards reporting from South Sudan:

> I feel like, there's a bit ago where I was just talking to someone and I was just kind of, I dunno, I was having a moment, and I was just like, there's nobody here, there's nobody in the country, and I feel, and, it's, it's not rational, it's not my

responsibility to report on the entire country. It's absolutely not. It's not, realistic. But nobody's here. And, in, in one way it's great. You have no, there's not a lot of competition, you know, it's not like you are fighting for outlets, you have access. I mean in that way, sure. But I genuinely do care about the country, and the longer you are here the more invested you get. And so you want these people to get coverage, and you want people to know what's happening. And I, I definitely feel there, at that point, I felt like I have this responsibility. And of course that doesn't mean that I'm bound to South Sudan for my life. Of course not. Because I'd go insane. Yeah, but there is something about, I do feel responsible.

Respondent 10

Like Sam the student, what is common to all three accounts is that they are examples of journalists encountering a dissonance between their professional assessments of the extent of their obligations to others, and feelings that are not in line with those assessments. The naïve explanation for such scenarios is to view them as moments where emotion ought not to be trusted, but this does not square with the reality that in every one of these cases, it was not simply that journalists experienced feelings of wanting to behave in ways contradictory to professional judgement. They were aware that their emotional impulses were in each case of a moral nature. Respondent 7 was aware that their desire to help was tracking a perceived moral duty to help a woman in need. B appreciated (and came around to the idea of) the existence of an obligation to make a small financial sacrifice to help the woman in the POC site. Respondent 10 was aware that her felt obligation to report was grounded in caring about others and enjoying a position from which to speak.

So emotion in at least these types of instances appears not to be a failure of will to agree with reason (in an akratic sense), but rather journalists' feelings tracking perceived moral obligations that don't have a home in the set of 'all things to be considered' that make up professional journalistic deliberation. What is of interest in all of these cases is not whether the moral obligations that emotions point to can be satisfied in any general sense (given the levels of need in many contexts, they virtually always cannot) , but the fact that strongly felt moral obligations sit in tension with what, as journalists, respondents occasionally felt they ought to do. In the practice of representing others' suffering, these dilemmas are not a bug, they are a feature worth more attention.

6.3.1 Moral norms and professional practice

Insofar as emotions appear to be tracking journalists perceived moral obligations, we encounter an uncomfortable dilemma in professional journalism of this type. That there is a conflict between the requirements of practicing as a professional journalist and felt obligations towards sufferers that are grounded in more universal moral norms relating to helping those who are hurt to the extent we can. To be clear, this is not so much a question of whether journalists *can* successfully assist in any given case - as mentioned before, this is generally likely to often be impossible. The dilemma is one of whether professional journalistic practice ought to include (rather than forbid) personal moral entanglements of this sort. Seeing emotional attachment to sources' suffering as akratic allows for an elegant exclusion of felt moral imperatives on the grounds that they interfere with the 'objective', truth-telling function of journalism. This criticism of felt obligations as akratic incorporates two claims. In the first, it is a charge that emotional attachments felt by journalists are irrational. In the second, that emotional attachment directs journalists attention to things other than the truth of the matter at hand and are therefore counter to the truth-seeking imperative that is the foundation of what a practice of journalism ought to produce.

Yet the types of attachment outlined here rebut both of these claims. The felt emotional attachments are not irrational, but are tracking very familiar moral obligations towards suffering individuals. The fact of these individuals suffering is also not, per the second claim, a distraction from the truth of the situation (of famine in South Sudan, rape in the DRC). The suffering that these felt emotional ties direct journalists' attention to is in fact *the* truth of the situation. That is to say, it is the claim whose truth is the basis for the entire activity of finding and reporting the situation that these people are caught up in. An alternative argument for severing felt personal obligations to sufferers from professional practice might be to claim that journalists are acting in a professional capacity as a certain kind of moral agent with role-specific duties that are different to those of an 'ordinary' bystander. Yet to the extent that journalists have role specific (moral) obligations as truth tellers[10], their professional moral role is one that they occupy *in addition* to one as bystander, not instead of it.

The point I want to make in this far-too-brief discussion is not simply that journalists feel - in a literal, emotional sense - particular moral obligations, but that the professional practice of journalism lacks an ability to integrate these experiences in the practice of journalism. Where journalists help directly, this is often framed as something undertaken outside of the role of journalist, before or after the practice of journalism is done. Given the moral nature of (at least) this type of journalism, and the inadequacy of arguments excluding felt emotional attachments as akratic or a matter of moral role-specificity, professional journalism has hard work to do to make its practice morally coherent.

6.4 FITTING IN

Ahmed (2010) and Arpaly (2000) independently use the example of entering a room and feeling 'the mood' change to make the point that certain bodies don't 'fit' particular spaces and that this lack of fit has an affective dimension in which what being unwelcome 'feels like' is both information-bearing and important part of what it means to fail to 'fit in' a context. In Ahmed's case, she discusses the effect that the presence of a black woman arriving in a group of white feminists has - citing bell Hooks's (2000) observation that "the atmosphere will notably change... The white women will become tense, no longer relaxed..." (Ahmed, 2010, p. 67). Arpaly, in her discussion of emotion as rationality gives the example of James, who "enters a room and walks quickly out of it. Except for a feeling of discomfort in the room, he does not know why he leaves..." (Arpaly, 2000, p. 506).

In both cases, what I would like to draw attention to is that failing to 'fit' in a situation in is not simply a matter of how one is 'read', discursively speaking, but a question of the kind of affects that are produced during encounters with others. Affects which can take the form of feelings of unease. If a body can fail to 'fit' a situation in practice, it's not hard to imagine the corollary - that it may be possible to learn to pass in particular surroundings. To fit. One respondent explained this dimension of safety in working in contexts from Somalia to South Sudan as being "how they moved through the world as a person":

> **Interviewer:** What do you mean by 'how you move through the world as a person'?
>
> **Respondent 1:** How you treat people. How you treat other people. How you speak to people, how you interact with people. Because people are people, and the way we, kind of, non-verbal communication is quite global. And so, people, people can pick up on that, you know. People can pick up on whether you are being truthful, or what your agenda is. That's not, a lot of that's not verbal. And

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[10]A view which I wholeheartedly endorse in chapter **??**

most of the places where I do my work, I don't speak the language, so there's a lot of that. And so people can, people can smell it out. People know.

In the case of journalistic practice, being able to fit during the interactions (in Wetherell's (2013) terms, affect-producing social practices) that take place in very different contexts is important. In extreme circumstances, being able to 'give good feelings' (or at least, non-threatening ones) can be a matter of life and death (Gregory, 2019). In more banal interactions, being able to put others at ease with your presence is a necessary component of being able to perform the practice of journalism smoothly.[11] An instructive example occurred watching A go about photographing residents of the Malakal protection of civilians site. One of the common elements of A's practice of making photographs of people in the POC site was his ability to rapidly establish a rapport with shopkeepers, teenagers, church worshippers and anyone else who caught his eye as a potential subject. Before taking any photographs, A would engage in a deliberate process of friendly conversation in which he would say hi, sometimes show the person some of the photos on his camera and/or run through a good natured demonstration of taking a photo and casually showing how the process worked. He might engage in small talk about how business was going, how someone was doing that day, and so on. As other respondents put it in discussing how they go about their photography:

I, you know, like if I want to have a photograph of somebody, and I saw his situation is not good. I go first, I greet him, I chat with him before I, so, and after that I get a permission from him. Do you want me to photograph you? Shall I, and I tell him, nobody knows about your situation. I'm there, I'm the way, I'm, I will take your [photo], so I photograph the situation you live in, to show the other people. So it is the concern, this is my concern.

Respondent 13

. . . .

But when you come and [take a] photo [of] someone, also you need, not [to] just come, aaaah, just like this. You try to, to be with them in the same atmosphere. So when you be with him, it will be easy for you to take his photo. Like, if you come and they refuse, and they say, oh, don't take my photo. Say OK, no problem, sorry. When he says OK, no problem, take my photo. So it's like that.

Respondent 14

Superficially, it would be easy to conclude that this is all just A making incidental small talk with people as he went about his work. But in the detail of the interaction, in the fact that especially hard conversational work was being consistently put in *prior* to photographing, and in the body language and expressions (big smile, loose comportment), it becomes clear that a significant part of what mattered in these interactions were their affective character. Having the photographic subject at ease and consenting to being photographed mattered to A for both aesthetic and ethical reasons. The to-and-fro banter beforehand served - at least in part - as an element of (photo)journalistic practice, a practice that didn't simply begin with the shutter and end with photo editing and other work much later. Being able to work well as a photojournalist meant being able to be affectively disarming, having skills at putting a wide variety of people in a range of different situations at ease.

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[11]'Smoothly' here is an attempt to say both 'successfully' and in a positively (or at least neutrally) received way, affectively speaking.

This observation is not distinct, perhaps, from the emotional work directed between A, B and myself for the emotional maintenance of the group during fieldwork. It does, though, become much more intertwined with the outwardly directed practice of journalism as it is experienced by those with whom journalists deal. It also perhaps requires a degree of flexibility and adjustment that might not characterise emotional work directed at fellow journalists, with whom one shares various characteristics that would make coordinating the affective character of interactions an easier proposition.[12]

This work of giving off 'good' (or at least, not bad) feelings is likely fundamental to a range of journalist-source relationships and opens up interesting lines of thinking about the kind of work that journalists are doing in interactions with sources and subjects of various kinds. Certainly, many sources' decisions to speak to journalists may be rational (in an orthodox sense), goal-maximising ones. They may even also be decisions taken on the basis of trust in shared norms. Yet in other situations, might it not be the case that sources decisions to talk and subjects decisions to be photographed might have an affective component? Where the source/subject knows or can predict little about the likely outcomes of participation and knows little to nothing about the norms of a specific journalist or their organisation, might decisions to cooperate not potentially be based on more affective criteria? In the case of photography, the ubiquity of the practice has meant that we are all to some extent aware of the feeling of having a lens pointed at us without being requested. That instinct - before it is a rational objection of some kind ("Where will this photo appear? Who is taking it?") may be an uncomfortable feeling of being watched. Insofar as certain elements of journalistic practice are oriented towards recording and re-presenting, dealing with those feelings is a form of emotional work that must be done somewhere - whether that is in the very specific work done by A in his pre-photograph conversations or part of broader discourses around recording that might put many of us at ease all at once.

6.4.1   The implications of fitting in

The questions raised by the importance of 'fitting in' are not ones that can be reasonably completely answered on the basis of the evidence obtained during fieldwork. My more modest claim is simply that 'fitting in' is an important part of successful journalistic practice in at least some cases and that fitting has consequences. 'Fit' is not simply a matter of having and deploying rational knowledge, but is *affective* - it has corporeal and emotive elements. Without necessarily being in a position to draw detailed conclusions about how, exactly, practices of journalism create certain affects, what seems clear is that this dimension of practice exists and has very real potential consequences for the work of journalists.

Moreover, one doesn't merely fit or fail to fit and that is the end of the matter. One fits *as* someone, in any given scenario, whose comportment and affective resonance with others is (in part) determined by the semantic content of the body one occupies and other discursive connections that inflect any moment of practice. As respondent 1 explained earlier in the exchange quoted in this section, one can be comfortable in a space, but nevertheless still be a white woman from the West, with all of the semantic baggage that this implies. So fitting, while nevertheless a real phenomenon with real stakes and effects, must take place within a set of elements that characterise a particular moment of social practice, elements that may not be fully overcome and which may constrain the kinds of affects that are possible. The white woman photojournalist is unlikely to ever completely disappear, even as successfully fitting may drastically decrease her strangeness and create a (more) 'comfortable' motion through the social world she travels through.

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[12] In the sense that it is easier to establish a rapport with people we 'get' and who might 'get' us in return.

6.5 EMBODIED KNOWLEDGE/FAST ACTION

In talking to many respondents about the dangers of the work, the subject of Chris Allen's death during his reporting trip to Kaya was a topic that frequently emerged as a cautionary tale about the dangers of trying to report front-line combat safely. More than one respondent pointed out that Allen had been in the same town at the same time as Goran Tomasevic[13] and Siegfried Modola[14], a pair of well-known war photographers who had managed to escape unscathed from reporting the same battle. As I have already discussed in chapter 5, some of these reflections on Allen's death made a point of discussing the importance of being prepared for - but still taking - risks as an element of what makes such front-line work a recognisably 'professional' journalistic practice. Additionally, though, one journalist who knew Tomasevic singled him out in particular as an example of a photographer who was able to navigate active combat well:

> Goran used to be the East Africa Bureau Chief for photography here. He now works out of Istanbul, and is doing, yeah, he is probably one of the best living conflict photographers. And yeah, he is one of those people, so he kind of took me under his wing, and he's one of those people, like, I watch, like a hawk, and move with, because he knows what he's doing. Same thing, like, ex-military, Serbian. You want to be standing where this guy's standing...
>
> ...had I been Chris, had anybody on the planet been Chris, and you happen to be in the same place as Goran, like, you are with the best conflict photographer on the planet. Like, me, I would not have been more than an arm's reach from him at any time. [...] I was just, watching other photographers work, it can seem like, or it can look like, and from the images you're thinking like, wow, this photographer just ran into the middle of the situation and took this photo and ran out. When in fact some of the best conflict photographers are ex-military, they are very highly trained, like when they are hearing gunfire, they know what direction it is coming from, the type of weapon, the type of cover that's going to protect them from that. They're not, it's a risk being there, because you are in an unsafe setting, but the calculations they are making allow them to move with confidence through it the setting.
>
> **Respondent 1**

What Respondent 1 was pointing to was not - or not simply - that Goran was knowledgeable in a 'book-smart' kind of way about how to work more safely during a firefight, but that his experience made him capable of literally moving in the kind of way that made him safe(r) than others might be in the same situation. It is this ability to instinctively move safely that I would like to discuss. It seems unlikely that the decisions being made by Goran at the time (and those of other journalists in similar situations elsewhere) are of the 'all-things-considered' kind that characterise the deliberation of the ideal-typical rational actor. Yet equally, their actions in such situations are not random. A skilled journalist navigating a firefight safely is not simply running around chaotically or playing out a script from an action film. There are a series of rational decisions being made rapidly and with high stakes. So how might this occur?

Towards the end of her discussion of non-deliberative rationality, Arpaly (2000) outlines an account of what she terms 'fast action', demonstrated by a professional tennis player who is able to navigate a court with great skill in order to win the game, without explicitly deliberating on specific moves as she makes them. This account parallels Wacquant's (2004) observations on the embodied, practical knowledge learned in the course of becoming a boxer and, I would

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[13] https://widerimage.reuters.com/photographer/goran-tomasevic
[14] https://siegfried-photo.photoshelter.com/index/G0000h7rE3mPcZ0w

argue in cases like this, certain moments in the practice of journalism too. Being able to practice safely and effectively relies - in at least these situations and likely elsewhere - on rapidly responding to circumstances in a rational, yet non-deliberative way.

Much as Arpaly's tennis player is able to shift her actions on the court to play well, a journalist in a fast-moving situation such as the battle of Kaya may be relying - at least in part - on non-deliberative knowledge in the same kind of way. Instinctively recognising threats, being able to make sense of the context and moving/reacting appropriately may all happen in a manner similar to Wacquant's experience of dodging and weaving punches as a boxer. (Wetherell, 2013, p. 106) too, points to such possibilities in discussing Bourdieu's (1990) overlapping concept of *habitus* through the lens of affect and embodiment - we may develop "integrated coordinations and patterns" into which we can readily slip when "prompted by a familiar situation".

6.5.1   Pedagogical contexts

Taking seriously that the knowledge required to navigate (some) moments in conflict reporting, at least two further questions arise. How is such knowledge acquired, and what comprises it? Formally speaking, Hostile Environment Awareness and First Aid (HEAT/HEFAT) courses run for journalists and others headed to 'risky' contexts attempt to do some of this work of developing an ability to prepare for, recognise and respond to threats. The aggressively-acted kidnapping scenarios discussed earlier in this chapter function not only to develop skills at keeping feelings in check, but - through repeated scenarios - may also help to develop default responses to a range of dangerous situations and medical emergencies. The presumable end-point of repeated exercises in trauma first aid, for example, is a much more fast-action approach to diagnosing and treating common types of wounds and security situations. In the case of Goran and other journalists with military backgrounds, this knowledge may also come through the training processes that the military provides and years of experience navigating actually-hazardous situations. After fieldwork, I managed to interview one of the journalists who had been present in Kaya that day and ask them about learning to navigate danger. Their response confirmed this suspicion that it incorporated learning to feel a situation from previous contexts:

> I got my experience not in South Sudan, not in Congo. I got my experience in the Central African Republic. [...] 2014 was very very bad, regarding, you know, the violence there and the ethnic violence on the streets of Bangui, and I was there for like months on end. [...] And basically, you know, every day you were going out, you know, in your car, to look at what was going on in the city, and there was acts of tremendous and atrocious violence between, you know, people and groups and crowds, and, and you learn very quickly how to, basically how to feel if, if there is tension in the air when you open your window and you negotiate with somebody from a crowd, a crowd itself, policemen. You have to see if the person is intoxicated. If the person is in a good mood, if the person wants some-thing already, straight away. If it's an act of, you know, if they are aggressive, if they are not aggressive. And all this comes from experience. And most of the times, you know, you have a feeling behind your, you know, on, behind your neck that something is wrong, and you have to subtract yourself from that situation as politically, diplomatically as possible. But if you feel danger, then you get the hell out of there. In most cases, this works, and sometimes you can get it totally wrong, and things go bad. But, but, yeah. It's, there is no one rule.

Respondent 33

Indeed, conflict contexts themselves may also function as a kind of 'pedagogical context' much like the gym in which Wacquant trained as a boxer (Wacquant, 2004). In his gym, Wacquant explains, there was no single person who had a complete theoretical concept of 'how to be a boxer' or who was in a position to teach it. Not even the coach in charge of the space. Instead, what the coach 'knew' was how to arrange the routines of a gym such that the environment which resulted was able to somehow turn out competent boxers who had been 'educated' into this state, in a sense, by the context itself - by the thousands of everyday encounters with different participants in the gym and the socialisation that took place as a result. In the end, all of the small conversations, the practice bouts, the socialisation into physical fitness routines and so on all came together to quite literally reshape the bodies of aspirant boxers. Living and working in Aidland, I suggest, has similar effects on journalists to Wacquant's gym. For the most part, new arrivals craft a habitus of sorts out of the experience of being in the context, learning from mistakes, conversations, war stories and dangerous moments as they go. The same is likely true of military training and - to a far more limited degree - the days of experience that HEAT training offers.

This said, different kinds of pedagogical contexts will likely have very different outcomes. Wacquant's gym not only socialised newcomers into becoming technically excellent boxers, it socialised them into a way of reading situations (in the ring, in the gym) and normative values (one's attitude to one's body, norms of sportsmanship, and so on). Equally, in the case of journalists, exposure to different pedagogical contexts would produce forms of embodied knowledge closely tied to particular ways of parsing contexts and normative values. In my fieldwork, this entangled adjustment of personal behaviour was reflected in my more limited version of Wacquant's gym, the residential HEAT course I attended before departing on 'real' fieldwork. As my notes from the training period reflected:

My overwhelming memory from the course was being taken into the forest by Trainer 1 (thinking that I was going on a First Aid practical) and being instead kidnapped at gunpoint by Trainer 2 in a V for Vendetta mask. Despite, on some level, being fully (?) aware that it was Trainer 2 kidnapping me, the whole experience was incredibly traumatic, and I found myself responding physically and emotionally as though it was a real scenario I tried deference and various degrees of non-cooperation until Trainer 2 fired his pistol over my head and my heart basically stopped. At that moment, I was fairly straightforwardly hooded and zip tied, marched into the forest, and rolled onto the forest leaves, alongside my classmate C from [news organisation]...

That experience of being kidnapped - the fear and powerlessness - has stuck with me intensely ever since. Both as a reminder of something that I would profoundly like never to repeat, and a source of dozens of repeat mental re-runs. What would I do differently in future? Did I fail to avoid being taken somehow? By the time I realised what was happening, it was all far too late to do anything about it. The combination of learning 'academic' material on danger and its avoidance/mitigation (first aid, weapons training, etc.) plus the practical scenarios, is that I left the course having internalised an idea of the places I am going to as dangerous, and that seeing them through the lens of danger is the most prominent/appropriate way of approaching my journey to South Sudan. The practical scenarios functioned well to impress on me the new paradigm in a direct and emotional way. That fear - that kidnapping is horrible - essentially works to justify treating spaces as threatening. It justifies looking for exits in every room, reading people suspiciously, and all of the other perceptual changes that occur as a result. To the extent that journalists going to South Sudan undergo this process, risk mitigation - for all its noble intentions - is working to establish a very specific perception in journalists. One which I would expect to create a different view of

people, places, communities and events as a result.

Fieldnotes, November 20, 2017

It would be weeks into having arrived in South Sudan before I managed to stop viewing new situations as potentially hostile. In part, this was because the combination of new friends and the overall structure of life in Logali House and surrounds was functioning as a contradictory pedagogical context, 'educating' me into a different way of understanding daily situations and fostering different natural reactions to them. Eventually, not every encounter appeared threatening and technical preparation for every possible eventuality started to feel excessive and slightly embarrassing. Examples of this shift included the way in which my body armour stopped seeming like an absolute necessity and began to feel ridiculous, and how my overall levels of suspicion and anxiety towards travelling around Juba receded as the context became more familiar.

The point I wish to make in this discussion, then, is that an important part of being able to practice journalism well in Aidland-style contexts involves a mastery of embodied/fast-action types of knowledge which aren't formally taught, but are instead gradually taken on through residence in a pedagogical context of some kind. There are at least three further points worth making in connection with this observation. The first is that while Aidland may be the most obvious pedagogical context, there are certainly others - military and HEAT-style experiential training being two possible alternatives. Moreover, 'Aidland' is more likely better understood as a family of pedagogical contexts, as there will almost certainly be differences in the kind of embodied knowledge produced by life in Juba as compared to life in, say, Kabul, Mogadishu, or Goma and for different possible life worlds within any of those contexts.

Secondly, these pedagogical contexts differ not only in the embodied knowledge they foster, but in the ways of perceiving the world and the normative values that they encourage. They may all, to various extents, develop forms of embodied knowledge that may make one safer in some absolute sense, but do so with very different imagined contexts in mind and with very different systems of values underpinning them. How the world is imagined and normatively judged in HEAT courses, army training and Aidland contexts will likely be very different to one another, and produce very different kinds of embodied knowledges. Moreover, even a single instance of Aidland likely contains multiple pedagogical contexts, ranging from the 'journalists' hotel' to the heavily bureaucratised and securitised life of the UN compound. These different possible contexts matter because the kind of context journalists might take up residence in may in turn have effects on the kinds of ways they become adapted to function in doing the practice of journalism.

This, in turn, provokes the question of what the 'right' kind of pedagogical environment for conflict journalists might look like? What kinds of intuitions and reflexes ought to be developed, with what perspective on the world and normative judgements? The humanitarian lifeworld, Aidland, may in many cases function as the dominant pedagogical context for most journalists, given that they are often poorly equipped to afford to create their own infrastructures of safety (see chapter 5). Yet while it may transfer useful kinds of embodied knowledge, it also transfers norms and perspectives that critics of embedded journalism have already identified. Moreover, if certain kinds of training (such as the army) may come to naturalise the posture and movements of a soldier (with the potential for being read by others as such), might there be a humanitarian analogue? What would it look like to comport oneself as someone from Aidland? How might a journalist want to move differently?

Finally, and most pragmatically, the problem with a pedagogical context that produces people competent in navigating danger is that to work well, it may be a dangerous pedagogical context. Where Aidland is the dominant context for journalists learning how to be journalists in and

of conflict, taking up residence in it is also to take up risk in a (more) dangerous context than exists in, say, a HEAT course.

6.6 CONCLUSION

I made the observation in chapter 2 that the 'emotional turn' in journalism studies (Wahl-Jorgensen, 2019a; Kotisova, 2019) has pointed to a gap in existing knowledge of how affect and emotion might feature in the specific practices of journalists going about the work of reporting. This was, I argued, true of affect/emotion in the practices of journalists more generally, but especially so when thinking about the work of conflict journalists, even while their work has long been recognised as particularly embodied and emotional/affective (Palmer, 2018; Tumber and Webster, 2006). This chapter has contributed to this gap by exploring four different ways in which thinking about bodies and their affect/emotions reveal how these are intimately linked to the 'doing' of journalism by respondents in ways that are part of, rather than incidental to, their practices.

In the first case, I argued that exhaustion was one particular affective state that affected journalists - particularly when working outside of the capital, in more poorly-resourced, inhospitable contexts. Exhaustion was something that A and B (and I) struggled with while working in the Malakal protection of civilians site, and was something that had to be compensated for in practice, if it was not to undermine their work. I have argued that (at least) tactics of externalising elements of decisionmaking, deferring to professional habit and the emotional work invested in 'keeping things together' for themselves and for the group were important adaptations for succeeding in the work of journalism while exhausted. In the case of 'keeping it together' in particular, I have suggested that the apparent stoicism of the conflict reporter may conceal important emotional work directed at managing the affective resonance of groups working together under strain. Without disagreeing with critiques of the macho discourses of conflict journalism (Palmer, 2018; Rentschler, 2007), it seems that more sophisticated work is done than simply keeping up appearances of masculine invincibility.

Second, I examined moments where journalists felt emotionally conflicted about their relationships, both to individual sources and to the larger communities whose stories they felt themselves to be in a position to communicate. I argued that these feelings were not simply an akratic distraction in the course of doing what a 'good' journalist rationally ought to, but drew on Arpaly's account of emotion as a form of rationality to argue that journalists' feelings were actually functioning as a form of non-deliberative rationality (Arpaly, 2002, 2000). On this view, journalists' feelings of obligation were in fact information-bearing responses at the level of emotion/affect, drawing attention to moral norms that sat in conflict with journalists self-conceptions.

Third, I returned to discussions of 'fitting in' during encounters first highlighted in chapter 5, arguing that avoiding potential danger and accessing sources were two cases where the feelings that the journalist gives others may have important practical consequences. Respondents indicated an awareness of this in reflecting on how they engaged with others, describing moments that resemble Wetherell's (2013) ideas of affective-discursive practice. From this point of view, journalists must pay attention not just to semiotic markers of their identities (that is, how others might 'read' them, per chapter 5) but to the feelings circulating in a situation. Do they put others at ease? Can they? This insight fits with research by Gregory (2019) on the role of affective states at Iraqi checkpoints and, I would suggest, with Palmer and Melki's (2018) descriptions of the 'shape shifting' practices of female conflict journalists directed at bringing about feelings of ease, camaraderie or care from those they were in the company of.

Finally, I argued for understanding the 'skill' that makes a skilled conflict reporter as being in part a form of embodied knowledge or 'fast action' of the kind described by Wacquant (2004) and Arpaly (2000) - moments in which journalists appear to take rapid, deliberative action without, in fact, any actual, explicit deliberation being undertaken. I argued that there are forms of reflexive 'skill' which are best understood as a kind of embodied experience, a view which in turn raises important questions about where, how, and with what kinds of entanglements it is acquired. The idea of 'experience' as contrasted to more formal pedagogies is not a new insight, of course, being raised by journalists interviewed by Tumber and Webster (2006) for example. Rentschler (2007), too, has critiqued safety training for its effects in teaching journalists "how to see like a combatant" [p. 258]. To this, Wacquant (2004) and Arpaly's (2000) ideas of embodied, non-deliberative action contribute new ideas as to how 'learning to see like a combatant' might be learned, as well as broadening the discussion of how journalists learn the skill of reporting a conflict to include other potential pedagogical contexts, like Aidland and the military.

Each of these four threads has contributed to making the larger point that emotion/affect are not simply additional to journalistic practice or a follow-on consequence of it in the form of PTSD (Osmann et al., 2020; Feinstein et al., 2002), but are in fact integral in how practices are enacted. Being unable to cope with exhaustion, unable to do the necessary affective work on oneself and others, unable to fit in and unable to move instinctively correctly when it counts may all make the practice of journalism difficult, impossible or dangerous.

Having made these points, I will now return to the phenomenon of journalists feeling conflicted that I raised in section 6.3 in the next chapter from a more sociological/discourse-oriented perspective. This chapter has so far made the case that feelings of guilt, regret, or obligation are not incidental, but bore information about real moral conflicts that journalists perceived in the course of their work. What these are, where they come from and how they are navigated are the subjects of the next discussion.

7 | CONFLICTED WITNESSING

'Responsibility' sounds like I decided that I would side with the victims, whereas, I think if you are, like, a decent person, then you have, you, there's no other choice. You can't choose anything else.

Respondent 11

In the previous chapter I discussed cases where journalists encountered a tension between the obligations they felt themselves to have and those that were part of their professional roles (p. 115). Here, I argued, affect was alerting journalists to duties that lay outside of what (orthodox) norms of professional journalism were able to accommodate, such as assisting respondents with money or developing attachments to the people and communities they knew. With its focus on affect, this was a phenomenological account of what appeared to be an ethical tension between conflicting roles that made itself felt in particular moments. This chapter takes instances of 'role conflicts' of this type as an entry point to developing a sociological account of what these 'roles' are, and how they might produce tensions in the practices of journalists.

Useful to this account is Taylor's (2002) idea of a 'social imaginary' as "the ways in which people manage their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images that underlie those expectations". In Taylor's conception, the social imaginary is carried in "images, stories and legends" (Taylor, 2002, 106), which affirm both a factual and normative account of the world - what presently *is* and what *ought* to be. Recognising the facts of a moment of practice in terms of a particular imaginary suggests norms that ought to guide the phronetic doing of whatever it is that someone with those values ought to do in that moment (adopting Flyvbjerg's (2001) characterisation of phronesis as the "situated enactment of values"). That is, how I ought to act in a given moment of practice involves wrestling with such questions as 'who am I in this moment?' and 'what would a good (ideal) person of this type seek to do?'.

This approach lets us understand how a moment in practice (such as A and B in chapter 6 being asked for money by a desperate interviewee) might produce an ambiguity in what kind of role the journalist occupies (between, say, journalist and potential helper) that can interfere with successfully 'doing' a practice in a given moment. Where it is possible to imagine more than one possible role, ambiguities may arise during practice as to what my role and those of others in fact are. How 'facts' of my role in a situation are resolved will (depending on the social imaginary that we are operating in) come to suggest the norms of how this moment of practice *ought* to proceed. Where I clearly recognise myself (and am recognised) as a journalist, certain ethics govern how an interaction ought to proceed. Where I am (and am recognised) as a helper, different and potentially conflicting norms may apply. Who I might be recognised as, how this identity relates to others, and what obligations might arise as a result are made possible through the social imaginaries that journalists and others share and (re)articulate during practice.

A moment in a practice where the 'facts' of the situation ascribe the journalist roles within two divergent imaginaries is a moment which might then produce divergent normative expectations (obligations). In the case of an indigent interviewee asking for assistance, a journalist may find themselves 'double-interpellated' into a role other than the one they presently recog-

nise themselves as, with different and potentially contradictory normative demands as a result. The journalist's recognition of this interpellation and potential inability to meet both sets of obligations may then create a conflict that may be literally *felt* as guilt, regret, sympathy or some other emotion. Put simply, it may not always be possible or easy to be both a *good journalist* and a *good person*.

One can develop an account of tensions of this kind as being in at least some instances the result of two particular roles in the social imaginary which organises the world of journalists working in South Sudan. Specifically, that within a *humanitarian imaginary* of the kind outlined by Chouliaraki (2013) journalists imagine for themselves a role of intermediating witness between those who suffer and those who might be able to assist in alleviating or denouncing that suffering. In interviews, journalists clearly articulated a humanitarian imaginary in terms of how, per Taylor's (2002) conception, they imagine what it is that is going on and how everyone in the (social) world fits together. The role they accord themselves within it, though, creates tensions of at least two kinds. As a matter of personal ethics, journalists find themselves needing to occasionally balance norms of detached, professional reporting with obligations to denounce injustice or help others that arise from imagining themselves as spectators during encounters with suffering and other consequences of war.

To make this case, this chapter proceeds as follows. First, I outline some of the key features of a humanitarian imaginary as Chouliaraki (2013) describes it and make the case that a humanitarian imaginary of this sort exists. That it is inscribed in respondents reflections of the work they do, as well as being observable in the organisational and material infrastructure of Aidland that facilitates the work of journalists. Second, I argue that journalists imagine for themselves the role of a detached witness within this humanitarian imaginary. Finally, having argued for journalists identification with the role of witness, I proceed to a discussion of some of the tensions that it produces; tensions that must be resolved phronetically in the course of 'doing journalism' in situations where these imaginaries overlap. I point to tensions of two types in this regard. In the first type, *personal* normative tensions exist between the ethics of the journalist-as-witness and their possible obligations as a spectator to suffering who feels obliged to assist or denounce what has been seen. In the second type, *institutional* normative tensions exist between journalist norms around witnessing and a particularly hegemonic strand of 'neutral' humanitarianism that characterises the imaginary of actually-existing institutions and structures in South Sudan. These two types of tension create obstacles to doing journalism successfully and having what one does recognised *as* journalism, obstacles which must be overcome in practice.

7.1   THE MANIFESTATION OF THE HUMANITARIAN IMAGINARY

In her description of the humanitarian imaginary, Chouliaraki characterises it as a "historically specific articulation of cosmopolitan solidarity which acts directly on the global South through specialised institutions (IOs and NGOs), yet seeks legitimacy in the West" (Chouliaraki, 2013, p. 27). This legitimacy is secured through the communicative structure of the theatre, which produces a 'moral education' of publics in the West through the presentation of others' suffering and its implied injunction to spectators of that suffering to empathise with the situation of the sufferer and ultimately act in the form of, say, assistance or denunciation. Given that spectators in the West are rarely positioned to respond directly to mediated accounts of suffering that they encounter, proxies of the sort whose branding clothes Landcruisers and signboards in places like Juba effectively become moral agents on behalf of others.

The humanitarian imaginary that Chouliaraki describes includes sets of practices through which the communicative structure of the theatre is enacted, and through which it is re-constructed in potentially variable, but generally stable, ways. To borrow Taylor's characterisation of imaginaries as existing in stories and legends, practices involve doing things as though these stories were real, and in the process simultaneously creating new ones intelligible through the old ones and conferring a sense of a stable social reality. The work of humanitarian appeals and news journalism from places where human suffering takes places (such as South Sudan) are two particular forms of such practices cited (Chouliaraki, 2013, p. 54 & p. 138), with a focus on the texts that these practices produce, rather than the micro-sociology of their production as it takes place in a context like Juba. Part of what characterises a humanitarian imaginary is the roles and norms that it makes available - it's ideas of what kinds of people we might be, and what obligations might derive from those positions. Spectators who encounter the suffering of others imagine themselves caught up in a duty to act to denounce injustice visited on sufferers, or to assist them as best as they can. Implied in this relationship between the spectator and the sufferer is the role of the witness, the one who has knowledge of suffering and takes on an obligation to tell others what they have seen, so that they might encounter this (mediated) suffering, sympathetically identify with it, and act according to the moral imperatives their judgement requires.

Sections of professional life in Juba are quite clearly organised with a humanitarian imaginary in mind. Where Chouliaraki considers the the construction of the humanitarian imaginary as it appears in/to the West, the professional life of sections of Aidland is everywhere populated with the organisational machinery intended to produce (or facilitate the production of) texts that function according to this logic of bringing sufferers accounts to potential spectators. For NGO-generated appeals, the videos, photographs and other material that make up appeals are often the designated professional function of NGO communications officers, who may either do this work directly or hire outside professionals to create it according to particular ideas of what kind of 'exposure' would be 'good' for the NGO concerned (Cottle and Nolan, 2007). Access to humanitarian transport infrastructure and accommodation is often understood in terms of a humanitarian-imaginary logic of making suffering visible in order to develop support (financial and ideological) for NGOs and IOs, as well as securing the moral order that underwrites their status as legitimate proxy agents for Western humanitarianism (DeChaine, 2002; Chouliaraki, 2013). Furthermore, the conditions implicitly (and occasionally explicitly) placed on journalists seeking access to humanitarian infrastructure for their own work betray the biopolitical character of much of Juba's humanitarian bureaucracy. The relationship between many NGOs and the journalists they let on their flights is generally understood to be one in which reporting that brings donations, funding, and legitimacy for an NGO brand is welcome. Reporting that brings denunciation of the politics and perpetrators of the conflict in South Sudan is much less welcome at the level of the organisation. This is something that I will return to later in this chapter.

Chouliaraki's humanitarian imaginary is not the imaginary as it exists in the minds of the staff at, say, MSF or WFP alone, though. It is, per Taylor, a far more broadly shared sense of how people fit together and the normative order that makes these relations sensible. The broadness of the humanitarian imaginary is such that its structure is readily apparent not only in the professional organisation of humanitarian field communications, but frequently emerges in journalists' own reflections on the purpose of their work. During interviews with respondents, questions would - by design - eventually turn to asking what they perceived the value of their work to be. In response, respondents would often articulate value in terms of the outcomes of informing others and bringing about action of some kind through reporting, with at least a dozen respondents articulating justifications of this sort.

In most cases, respondents would make reference to NGOs or other international (non-)government entities as capable of acting to change the course of the conflict, if only some broader public were aware of what were happening and took action to enable these proxy agents to act. Common to such justifications was an assumed order in which NGOs, governments and the UN

exist as the manifestation of a will to assist which might be mobilised to make a difference in the lives of those who are suffering. In such talk, the practice of journalism is justified in terms of the change it can bring about through enabling the actions of such actors. Examples of this form of justification included:

> Well perhaps it helps in different ways. Of course it's awareness, or the international audience. It's awareness of, yeah, awareness makes things change sometimes. The international opinion, the public opinion can, would have had some episodes or some, some, some examples in the history, no, where the public opinion agrees on something, it can change the government['s] decisions. So when something, I mean in terms of international news, Western governments can do, or, I'm talking about my, my government, or the general European Union, or even the UN, no? When there is a big pressure from the general opinion, the public opinion, driven by, by the press, by the media, [that] is when things may change.
>
> **Respondent 2**

. . . .

> Even UNICEF themselves, they use some of these quotes, some of these stories, the touching stories, to help them secure funds. You get the point? Because they are trying to get all of the donors. So by, for a donor to listen to some of these stories, what do you expect? They are going to inject their money into UNICEF.
> **Respondent 3**

. . . .

> ...I am not personally convinced that the, the war part is as important part as the why and the consequences and the ways to stem it and like long term effects and, to me, that's like the way to get people to engage. Because ultimately, like, if the international community is trying to change anything, it's through like public pressure that they'll be pushed to make certain decisions, right?
>
> **Respondent 7**

These justifications all possess common assumptions about the ideal structure of communication as being one that brings the account of the sufferer before a spectator as an injunction to do something about it. The 'public' and (potential) donors are assigned the role of the spectator in these descriptions, capable of having their (moral) will enacted via NGOs, the UN and governments. The ideal outcome is imagined in various forms as one in which spectators might be moved to act through their agents.

While maintaining the overall communicative structure of the theatre, a slightly different set of articulations by respondents assigned the role of spectator more directly to organisations, rather than making distinctions between NGOs/IOs/Governments and spectators in the form of a 'people' who encounter the news. One such description by Respondent 16 went as follows:

> People are suffering. And some of the NGOs, they [are] used to mobilise resources... So what do we do? Sometimes you go and talk to those people who are suffering. Are they getting any food from NGOs, or getting any [support]. They can tell you the truth. You see the way we are, sometimes, because you can go,

you can see children are suffering malnourishment and [so on]. People are, you know, dying. You talk to them. And then you come, you send that story out. So those NGOs, it's going to open their eyes. Immediately they will respond very fast.

Respondent 16

The implied visuality of the theatre[1] is quite clearly invoked in the visual metaphor of "it's going to open their eyes", once sufferers have "[told] you the truth" and you have re-presented such accounts to the NGOs. Having seen (and, it is implied, believed) the suffering presented, "immediately, they will respond very fast." This outcome both repeats the humanitarian logic of encountering suffering and responding to its imagined moral claims and - through the un-questioning assertion that NGOs will assist "immediately" - constructs "NGOs" as unprob-lematically benevolent in a practical (rather than denunciatory) sort of way.

Evidence of the presence of a humanitarian imaginary in the accounts of journalists lay not simply in the imagined arrangement of a sufferer-spectator pair, but extended to journalists' understandings of the nature of that relationship - to what *ought* to happen when spectator encounters sufferer. When asked why they did the reporting they did, Respondent 11 replied:

> It is about finding the sort of, you know the uniting aspects of human ex-perience within the vast diversity in which we live. So, if you can draw a line somehow between, you know, a woman whose grass hut was burned down by government forces, who fled into the swamps and is now back in this miserable little village waiting for the next government offensive. If you can draw a line between her, and the guy who's sitting on the tube in London in the morning reading a newspaper, if people still do that, and make them understand there is a commonality of experience you can, you can build this kind of you know, empa-thy bridge between them. That, for me, is like the main reason for doing this. To make someone in a far off place feel like what it must be like to be that person in the other place.

In many respects, this is a clear articulation of a humanitarian imaginary and the structure of communication between sufferer and spectator that it imagines. Respondent 11's search for "the uniting aspects of human experience within the vast diversity in which we live" is the lan-guage of a cosmopolitan project, but it's one whose members sit in two different worlds that call to mind Chouliaraki's observation that the humanitarian imaginary has become mapped onto existing global North-South divides (Chouliaraki, 2013, p. 28). The spectator is pre-sented as "the guy who's sitting on the tube in London in the morning" in a relationship to the sufferer, "a woman whose grass hut was burned down[...] who fled into the swamps and is now back in this miserable little village". In each case, both positions are drawn from discur-sive idealtypes of global northern- and southernness - the urban Londoner taking the tube to work vs the destitute woman struggling back to a destroyed village (of burned-out grass huts). These stereotypes are themselves the result of long histories of colonial and other discourses that imagine life outside the West as savage (Banivanua-Mar, 2008) and life within it as a kind of urban modernity.

Articulations of this form were widely shared by respondents, who invoked metaphors of links, lines and bridges across which spectators might empathise with sufferers through 'understand-ing' something of what the sufferer's situation was like. In respondent 19's words:

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[1] The metaphor of the theatre as the communicative structure of the humanitarian imaginary is discussed at length by Chouliaraki (2013) based on Boltanski's (1999) schema of a spectator encountering a (mediated) account of suffering, which acts as a kind of moral injunction on the spectator, who is hopefully moved to respond.

> I think we do have a responsibility to bridge the empathy gap. And the way you do it is by providing as much detail about the survivors, to make people understand that these are people who had normal lives, just like you and me, and these are people who had families, they went to school, they farmed their fields, and, and this horrible thing happened to them.

So far, so straightforward, perhaps. Yet there is something else present in respondents' implied structure of communication which I have so far hinted at with pointing out the language of links, lines and bridges. This is the self-ascribed position of the journalist in this schema.

7.2   THE JOURNALIST AS WITNESS

The use of bridge-style metaphors in journalists' descriptions of their role was absolutely pervasive and refer to an imagined position in the communicative structure of the humanitarian imaginary that is claimed by journalists and which is neither that of the spectator nor the sufferer. The role is that of witness, distinct from both and with its own normative requirements that journalists routinely identified with. This section makes the case that journalists do, in fact, imagine such a role for themselves. Moreover, the role of witness is understood as distinct from that of the spectator in its obligations in ways that would be recognisable among the orthodox norms of professional journalism.

As mentioned earlier, the frequency of the metaphors of mediation in journalists' self descriptions was uncanny:

> [...] so my job is kind of to mediate between the reader and the, and the subject, as best I can, and write as powerfully as I can.
>
> **Respondent 11**

....

> I mean, you tell what the people, the common South Sudanese who cannot say. I mean, there are people, there are stories, there are people having stories to tell. And they have, there is no platform, [for them to] use, I am there as a platform, to report and to tell, [that these] things happened. They don't have a voice to say that. They, they, so I act here as one way of sending this message to the government, be it to the government, be it to the whoever, you know, is concerned about it.
>
> **Respondent 8**

....

> But you just go like, some of the most remote areas, you find somebody who is not educated, but you can find him, even though where they are there's no network, you can see them carrying the phone like this one (shows basic phone). They listen to radio. Yeah? So it means that they need to get information, and to get that information is only through us.
>
> **Respondent 16**

. . . .

> [...]people don't know what the issues on the ground [are], it's so, I mean, to
> bridge that gap between what's happening in Europe and here, I think I want to
> be able to bridge that gap somehow. So I want to bring the story, what's happen-
> ing here on the ground, I want to share that with Europe and North America and,
> well, where my news agencies are, basically. With the world.

Respondent 15

In each case, journalists position themselves rhetorically as an intermediary between sufferers whose stories ought to be told, and audiences of potential spectators who ought to hear these accounts. That journalists might describe themselves as intermediaries of this sort would likely strike the reader as nothing more than common sense, and in a way, that is precisely the point. That it is uncontroversial that journalism of (at least) this type serves to mediate encounters between spectators and sufferers is itself a comment on how firmly it is part of the arrangement of of how these people (journalists) 'fit' into the arrangement of roles and duties in a humanitarian imaginary. As witnesses, journalists are neither sufferers (as what they report is not their own suffering or victimhood) nor moralising spectators[2] in their capacity as journalists. In their conception of their role, journalists self-position as the figure of the witness - the one who bears witness to the truth of others suffering, (re)presenting these accounts to audiences of potential spectators. Peters's (2001) description of the position of witness characterises this 'middle role' eloquently in his description of it having "two faces: the passive one of *seeing* and the active one of *saying*" [p. 709].

7.2.1 The normative obligations of the witness

The role of the witness, respondents consistently explained, was to connect those whose stories ought to be heard and those who ought to hear them. This role, it was understood, came with particular normative expectations. In particular, that the feelings and convictions of the journalist-witness were meant to appear as though absent from the sufferer-spectator encounter, so as to avoid the charge that audiences might be forming their moral convictions on the basis of an attached or 'unbalanced' account.[3] In addition respondents often described a perception that a duty to bear witness was not simply supererogatory (i.e. 'good' if they did, but not required), but in fact obligatory. Failing to bear witness when one was in a position to do so felt like ethically poor behaviour (in terms of the rationality of the humanitarian imaginary and journalists' roles as witnesses). It is to each of these discussions that I now turn.

The transparency of the journalist-witness

In the imagined structure of the humanitarian imaginary, the encounter between the spectator and the (mediated story of the) sufferer functions as a morally educational encounter through staging an authentic appeal by the sufferer with which the spectator is invited to sympathetically identify.[4] This encounter is imagined as presenting the spectator with the facts of another's suffering - often tied to the perceived authenticity of bodily pain - in response to

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[2] They are not spectators in their role as *journalists*, though they may also occupy this role during the course of doing their work - precisely one of the double-interpellations I will shortly discuss.

[3] The strength of this norm is well illustrated historically in the debates around 'attached journalism' that took place after the war in Yugoslavia (McLaughlin, 2016, p. 33)

[4] See (Chouliaraki, 2013, p. 28) for a more complete description

which the conscience of the spectator can be moved to action. When we encounter (a visceral mediation of) another in pain, we find within ourselves the conviction to denounce what has happened and to try to assist, as it were. Authenticity is a precondition for the sympathetic identification on which the moralising outcome depends, given that the spectator ought to be able to assume that they are identifying with 'real' suffering as it is experienced by another.

Where the journalist-as-witness is involved in mediating this meeting of spectator and sufferer, they risk destabilising moralising potential of the encounter through leaving their own subjective 'fingerprints' on what the facts of the matter appear to be (which would undermine its authenticity)[5] or being seen to suggest how the spectator ought to feel and reason (as this ought to arise from the spectator's own identification with the sufferer and the moral imperatives this generates). As a result, the journalist as witness must remain factually and affectively 'transparent' in the encounter they arrange between the spectator and sufferer if it is to retain its moralising potential.

Consequently, where journalists claim the role of witness, it is unsurprising that their ideas of how the journalist 'ought' to mediate these connections includes precisely these kinds of norms. In reflecting on the role of emotion in their writing, for example, Respondent 19 explained the rules of their role as follows:

> I think there is no place whatsoever for reporters' emotions in [reporting]. Because I think that's kind of presumptuous. I think that you come in there with a job to report on a situation. There is no place for your emotions there. And, to, I think, also pretend that in any way, you can emotionally relate to what they are going through, and bring in how this affects you, then I think you are completely missing the point here, as a journalist. I don't think that you, I think that your job is to stay objective, your job is to report the facts, to try to understand what happened, and report that. Like, I think if you are starting to get affected personally, and you start to, that's kind of like, and OK, yeah, please don't mention my name for this, but it's like Nick, what is his name, Nick Kristof kind of reporting, which I hate. Where this whole white saviour complex starts feeding in, which I can't stand. So, no, I think you, you need to kind of, you need to do your job, and I think if you. You know I don't, I don't, I mean sure, I get emotional sometimes when I listen to survivors. Especially survivors of sexual violence. That's something that affects me very personally. But, you know, if I start getting emotional about it, I'm not doing anybody a favour here. That's not my place.

Respondent 19 makes a distinction - common to many respondents - between their own emotional responses and those of the people whose accounts they re-present. They explain that if you bring in your own emotional relationship to what you have encountered, then "you are completely missing the point here, as a journalist." which both rules out putting one's own emotions in reporting, but crucially, caveats this with "as a journalist", to locate the inadmissability of emotion as being tied to the specific *role* that they professionally occupy (by implication, emotionality may have a place if one occupied some other role). The pointed description of Nick Kristof's reporting as an example of a "white saviour complex" is given as a particularly public infringement of this separation, as they conclude that "no, I think you, you need to kind of, you need to do your job".

This discussion of the emotionality (of the journalist) versus 'objective', 'factual' reporting is repeatedly invoked as being a norm linked to the role the journalist occupies, rather than as a universal proscription, via linking this norm to the 'job'. Throughout their account, they repeatedly turn to phrasing about what is and is not a part of the job to make this point: "[...]you

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[5] This is an ideal aspiration, of course, as achieving 'authenticity/veracity' is communicatively impossible. See Peters (2001) and Frosh (2006) for two examples of this discussion

come in there with a job to report on a situation. There is not place for your emotions there.", "I think that your job is to stay objective, your job is to report the facts[...]"[unlike Kristof], I think you, you need to kind of, you need to do your job[...], "[...]if I start getting emotional about it, I'm not doing anybody a favour here. That's not my place.".

In another example, Respondent 11 similarly condemns their own emotions as out-of-role, in contrast to the emotionality of subjects' own accounts, which *ought* to be conveyed to their readers to provoke exactly the kind of empathetic identification that the spectator-sufferer encounter is assumed to make possible:

> The whole, like, show don't tell. It's the, so let these people tell their stories in the way they told you, which, which means in the interview, you've kind of, I have a lot of, almost as dumb as question as like 'so when your child was thrown into the flaming hut, how did you feel?', you know, I can't believe I have to ask this, but you do. Because when someone, because then the response won't be like 'I was sad'. There'll always be something like, you know, they'll say something, you know, 'it was, it was like my heart had been ripped from my chest'. You know, like, someone will say this, and then like, yes, that's what I need, that's why I'm here. I'm here to get that from you, and give that to a reader, so that when they're sitting on the train to work in the morning, they have to stop themselves crying. And it stays with them. And so that, you know, so, there, I want that emotion and the reader's emotion. But my emotion is irrelevant. You know, like, if I, if I am a weepy little fucker, that's got nothing to do with the story. If I'm like some stoic, you know, who can handle anything, that's got nothing to do with the story either. What's important is my ability to draw emotion out of the people I'm talking to, and transpose it for the readers.

"Show don't tell" is a cliché phrase that many who have attended journalism school have had beaten into them, and it's interesting in the context of this discussion for the point it makes that the journalist's role is to (appear to) direct attention to what is important (showing), rather than explaining what is important about it (telling). The visual metaphor also points to the privileged position of allowing audiences (as spectators) to 'see' for themselves, rather than relying on journalists' (re)interpretation of the facts of the matter. In Respondent 11's telling (and echoed widely amongst other respondents) emotion does have a central place in the 'work' that a story does to produce a sympathetic emotional response in readers (who will have to "stop themselves crying"), but that this emotion is that of the subjects who suffer, not the journalists.

This emphasis on separating out the emotions of the journalist from the emotions of subjects fits with Wahl-Jorgensen's (2013) observation that in the texts of Pulitzer prize-winning stories (of the type many respondents were professionally tasked with writing), none included discussions of the journalist's own emotions. What respondents explanations reflect, I would suggest, is the normative reasoning underlying the patterns in news texts that Wahl-Jorgensen has pointed to. The reasoning in these accounts, when read in terms of the communicative structure of the humanitarian imaginary, also give us a reason *why* this should be a norm in such journalism. For the encounter of spectator and sufferer to do its moral work, it is important that the journalist-as-mediator not appear[6] to interfere with or substitute for the factual or affective 'truth' of the sufferer's situation, so as not to undermine its authenticity or interfere with the spectator's process of sympathetic identification.[7] The affective details of what the sufferer has experienced are absolutely required in particular for the sympathetic identification

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[6] I use the phrasing 'appear to' interfere because, of course, the process of mediation *is* interference of a sort. Even if only in terms of its choice of interest and framing.

[7] It lies beyond the scope of this argument, but Seu's (2010) examination of how audiences of humanitarian appeals 'do denial' and reject their moral injunctions includes exactly this tactic of 'seeing' the NGO as the mediator and their interference, and using this in rebuttal of the appeal.

that ought to (ideally) occur. Indeed, Wahl-Jorgensen describes the kind of storytelling in her corpus of Pulitzer-prize winning articles as "more accurately described as story-telling with a moral purpose, which mobilized emotions – directly and indirectly – to engage audiences" - precisely the kind of communicative structure on which Chouliaraki's humanitarian imaginary is founded. Respondent 11 made this point eloquently in proceeding from their earlier description to explain why reports of atrocities by groups like Human Rights Watch fail to have an effect on audiences:

> [...] you know, if you just write a bloodless, factual thing, like, it has no, it doesn't resonate with anyone. And if it doesn't resonate, what was the point? You know? You might as well be writing those turgid, but incredibly detailed Human Rights Watch type [of] reports. Eight hundred pages of horror which documents stuff, but doesn't make you feel anything.

Witnessing as obligation

Beyond a shared set of norms around maintaining invisibility in the authenticity of the encounter and its affective character, respondents also repeatedly described feeling the role of witness as an 'obligation' arising when they found themselves in a position where they had privileged knowledge of the conflict and could link sufferers and spectators communicatively. This language of obligation emerged repeatedly:

> [...] I think, like, because I've become very invested in the people and in the place, and like, no matter what, when you've been a part of it and also when you see things and you know, hear hundreds and hundreds of horrible stories, like, you don't want to just leave it behind. There is sort of an obligation I think, like that's my journalism as well.
>
> **Respondent 7**

. . . .

> after being there for some time, this is the catch. When you come to know a place, you can operate well in a place and perhaps you can get access to things that perhaps other people can't get access to, I think you have a certain responsibility to use that... I think you, yeah, if you have that knowledge of a place, yeah, you have a responsibility to use it. Yeah. So I think that's what's continued. That's why I continue to go back.
>
> **Respondent 1**

. . . .

> This is our country. Because we cannot leave it. When you become away from the country, who will inform the people? So we, it's a daily task, and we are suffering, but we will not, particularly me, I will not give up to do that...
>
> **Respondent 3**

. . . .

I just think, when you're one of, you know, when you're one of a select few who can do something, then you sort of, when there's when there's a limited pool who can do it, then if no-one does, there is a certain element of responsibility that comes with that.

Respondent 4

. . . .

[...] why I keep on doing journalism is, sometimes when I look at the environ-ment that I am in, I say, OK, if all of us, we leave this job, we leave this journalism, who will talk about what is happening? Nobody. Because sometimes people like us, we can stay, you can see somebody calling you. Say hey, can you tell us what is happening. People hunger for information. They need to get the information. But they don't know where to get information. And they trust you. When they are calling to me, they trust you, whereby they can get the information they are looking for from you.

Respondent 16

. . . .

I feel like, there's a bit ago where I was just talking to someone and I was just kind of, I dunno, I was having a moment, and I was just like, there's nobody here, there's nobody in the country, and I feel, and, it's, it's not rational, it's not my responsibility to report on the entire country. It's absolutely not. It's not, re-alistic. But nobody's here... But I genuinely do care about the country, and the longer you are here the more invested you get. And so you want these people to get coverage, and you want people to know what's happening. And I, I definitely feel there, at that point, I felt like I have this responsibility. And of course that doesn't mean that I'm bound to South Sudan for my life. Of course not. Because I'd go insane. Yeah, but there is something about, I do feel responsible.

Respondent 10

Common to all of these replies is a logic in which the journalist finds themselves in a privileged epistemic position, out of which an obligation to link sufferers' accounts to potential spectators arises. Each of the replies cited here offers a formulation of knowing about something that ought to be communicated, which is variously described as a position where "you've been a part of it [...] you see things and you know things", having "access to things that perhaps other people can't get access to", "you're one of the select few who can do something", and "there's nobody here, there's nobody in the country [besides us]". These phrases all gesture to journalists having privileged access to facts of suffering that they recognise themselves being in a position to mediate. The position of the journalist, here, is one of having a potential to do the work of the witness by virtue of the knowledge they have accumulated of the conflict and its impact on the lives of those it has affected.

Why the language of obligation then? That is, why might this be understood as a duty, rather than a supererogatory kind of norm? In terms of the humanitarian imaginary, the (ideal) mediated encounter between sufferer and spectator is one in which the spectator is moved to act and this is a good (as in, morally praiseworthy) thing to happen. Given the (potential) moral goodness of this encounter, the witness who is positioned to bring it about would be

morally praiseworthy for having facilitated it. That is to say, where I have (and recognise that I have) the capacity to make possible an encounter that could do good, I am good for making such an encounter possible. The converse of this logic, though, is that where I have (and recognise that I have) the capacity to make possible such an encounter and fail to do so, I may be blameworthy for the good that could have been but wasn't. The ethics of witnessing includes the unsatisfying possibility of failing to bear witness, or walking away from the story knowing that there are no others who might tell it in my stead.

This reasoning is not simply an abstract logical possibility in terms of the rationality of journalism's place in the humanitarian imaginary. Respondents themselves, in the second-halves of their reflections above, make exactly this kind of inference about an obligation to bear witness or at least to not abdicate this role, knowing that there are (virtually) no others to take it up on their behalf. As Respondent 7 puts it, "you don't want to just leave it behind, There is sort of an obligation", or Respondent 16's reflection that "if all of us, we leave this job, we leave this journalism, who will talk about what is happening?". Similar sentiments are expressed by respondents 1, 4, 10 and many others not quoted here.

What should be clear is not simply that journalists imagine for themselves a role of witness, but that this role is imagined by respondents to carry specific normative commitments. These commitments include both *how* the role of mediator ought to be performed (as ideally 'invisible' to the authenticity and affective nature of the encounter) and *that* it ought to be performed; that is to say, finding themselves in a privileged epistemic position, journalists felt obligated to bear witness.

7.3 IMAGINARY TENSIONS AS PRACTICAL TENSIONS

Having argued for the existence of the imagined role of mediator and some of its normative commitments as related by journalists themselves, it is time to return again to the practice-focused question that this chapter opened with. What is happening when journalists encounter what appear to be tensions in their roles during the course of doing their work? Despite a professional attachment to the role of witness and its norms, the work of journalism requires that journalists encounter suffering and its consequences first as an unavoidable precursor step. One can't mediate without being a spectator first, as it were. And this encounter with the facts of suffering and the conflict more generally casts the journalist as a spectator, even as they are simultaneously also a witness. This encounter with suffering as a spectator is (or can be) affecting. As (Peters, 2001, 714) describes it, "To witness always involves risk, potentially to have your life changed."

This encounter between suffering and the person of the journalist carries a risk of 'double-interpellation', where the journalist may find themselves in a position that is unresolved between spectator and witness - a moment of double-interpellation. As spectator, the potential exists for sympathetic identification resulting in action of some kind - denunciation or assistance. As witness, there exists an obligation to (appear to) 'bracket out' this sympathetic identification in order to do the work of creating a detailed account for others. The demands of these roles may, unsurprisingly, conflict in ways that must be resolved if the journalist is to be able to imagine themselves as both a 'good' witness and a 'good' spectator. Two particular forms of this kind of double-interpellation conflict are those between the journalist's role as witness and their role as a denunciatory spectator and between their role as a mediator and as a spectator who could assist directly. It is to each of these that this discussion now turns.

7.3.1 Mediator and spectator-as-denouncer

While a sense of obligation to report was described in general terms by many respondents, a few elaborated more specifically on what it was that they felt this responsibility required them to do. Trying to make specific claims about what their obligation to report involved would often result in respondents having to negotiate between a role of a spectator who felt compelled to denounce what had been witnessed to others, and the more invisible role of the journalist as mediator, for whom advocacy would be improper. This is the first of two kinds of personal normative dilemmas that journalists encountered, and was illustrated especially clearly in Jason Patinkin's reflection on his relationship with the audience(s) he writes for:

> So I'm not here to make you care, I'm here to get the facts out, the facts out as fast as possible. You know. Now, I've written some, like, longer stuff. Which is like whatever, especially lately. Which is fun to write and I would like to do more of it, but, but, no, I'm not here to make people care. Maybe I shouldn't say that? Am I? I dunno. I dunno. Like, I mean, I think people should care. I dunno if it's my job to somehow make people care? I, I, like, I want facts to be known. I want people to like have the right information. That's like my priority.

Though Jason makes an explicit judgement that "people should care" when confronted with the facts of the case, he pauses beforehand to equivocate over whether it is in fact "his job to somehow make people care" before settling on arguing that his role is limited to making sure the facts are known. This question of sharing facts that people "should care" about versus soliciting 'caring' as part of his role is something that Jason works through, thinking out loud, before settling on a decision that it is his role to "get the facts out" and not to *make* people care. This dilemma is developed in a different way by Respondent 9 as they reflected on the obligation they felt to report:

> ...it's our duty to try and convey it as much as possible, of what it is on the ground. I'm not saying get [the audience] to actually act, but get them, get them to care. Bottom line is to get them to care. Sometimes it happens, sometimes you get... I, I mean, and it really keeps us going sometimes when you get a message saying, you know, I really want to help, or I was really touched by that story.

Unlike Jason, for whom the question of making audiences care was not a part of their role, Respondent 9 states this conviction plainly ("Bottom line is to get them to care."). For this respondent, their obligations include both conveying information ("it's our duty to try and convey it as much as possible, of what it is on the ground") and making audiences care, but does not extend beyond this, to getting them to act.

What might we make of these justifications, read together? Both have in common the communicative structure of the humanitarian imaginary, in which journalists stand between those to whom things are happening and those who are capable of responding. Both also share a common conception of the journalist's position as mediator - providing the facts of the matter to those who (in Respondent 9's words) "are not living this reality". Despite this, there is a clear difference in respondents' ethics of what duties their position entailed along an implied spectrum that ranged from knowledge to caring to action.

This spectrum, I would suggest, is precisely the commonly-imagined, discursive terrain on which a tension between the role of mediator and the role of spectator-as-denouncer is being worked out. The role of a professional journalist requires not agitating for action or caring in an explicit fashion, lest this undermine the sympathetic identification of (other) spectators

with the authentic 'facts' of the story. This is in line with the manner in which conventional discourses of professional journalism push their subjects towards a narrower, epistemological, rather than moral, duty of relaying 'facts'[8] rather than lobbying for action, evidenced in norms against directly making demands of audiences, lest one cross a line into becoming an 'activist'. Elsewhere, respondent 3 outlined a typical version of the danger of the mediator becoming attached:

> I wanted people to understand [the situation] better. I always wanted [it] to be that if someone wants to know, they can know, I hope, more, by reading my reports. I think that's kind of the most you can do at a certain level. I don't think it's my job to try to call to attention. Although there's like obviously you want this story to be read, but like there's a point there you can't cross, and then it's just like if someone wants to know this, I really hope, I really hope if they looked, you know that they can find this and that it's there. And it's in the public record, you know, and it's, and there's other people's jobs to kind of do the rest of it, but you can't do it all at once, and I think that if you do, you kind of mess up the entire thing. And I think we've all seen really bad versions of activist, of activist journalism and the sort of consequences it can have.

Here, the metaphor of "a point there you can't cross" points to a discursive boundary around what marks a professional journalist as distinct from other roles from becoming something else - something that in this case is, or is prefixed by, 'activist' (Mills, 1993; Calvert, 1999). To advocate for action is to shift from being the invisible mediator of a spectator-sufferer account, and stray into the role of the denunciatory spectator - something that is "other people's jobs". Despite speaking in terms of a common imaginary, what role respondents actually have in relation to the stories they encounter is doubled in a way that is more than incidental. In doing the practical work of seeking out newsworthy material - stories which they imagine can move a reader on a train in London to tears (to paraphrase Respondent 11's earlier account) - journalists must necessarily perform a kind of sympathetic imaginary work, finding material that an imagined spectator might recognise as cause for action and denunciation so that it might be mediated. At another level of abstraction, journalists who spend significant amounts of time living in South Sudan (which is to say, all South Sudanese journalists and a handful of foreign press) inevitably come to connect with the politics of the place. They make friends (and enemies) and come to experience the effects of the conflict more or less personally as time goes on. Many respondents knew people who had been harmed by the rebels or the government - either during the course of the conflict itself or as part of the broader intimidation of the press that was led by the NSS and Media Authority (see chapters 4 and 5 for a discussion of this).

It is unsurprising, then, that journalists find themselves occupying both the personal role of spectator to the injustices of the conflict and the professional role of mediator in how they approached reporting it. In practice, respondents ended up resolving these tensions in different ways. A handful risked professional criticism and charged of having become too attached to the story by writing in an openly condemning fashion about the government. Others kept personal criticisms aside until they inevitably left the country (or were deported), giving those denunciations voice at last in books, op-eds or other forms of writing in which it was appropriate for such attachment to appear as such. Yet others gave expression to the normative demands of being a spectator by privileging action over denunciation where they could.

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[8] Whether interpreted as doing the work of relaying facts, or making what one relays understood as 'fact'.

7.3.2 Mediator and spectator-as-actor

The question of whether it was appropriate for their role to help those in need was a second case of a personal normative tension that journalists occasionally confronted while working. In the previous chapter, I outlined two examples of this kind of conflict in discussing the affective quality of this tension for the journalists involved.[9] Respondent 7 recounted giving money to a desperate interviewee via a third party and feeling this to be unethical (as a journalist). While conducting interviews in Malakal, A and B argued over whether it would be OK to give an interviewee the equivalent of twenty five cents with which to go to the market to buy some food. A ultimately went ahead and gave money to the interviewee, in spite of B's disagreement, and B would bring the issue up again out of the blue, days later, to say that it had preoccupied their thoughts and come to the conclusion that this was the right thing to do.

Both cases are, I would argue, an example of a particular kind of 'double-interpellation' in which a journalist with a self-assigned role of mediator/witness finds themselves hailed (either literally, in the case of A and B, or via their own imagining of the situation in the case of Respondent 7) as a spectator who is being specifically asked to assist someone in need. A role conflict arises from journalistic norms prohibiting paying sources or developing attachments for the perceived conflicts of interest that they might create, and its potential for leading interviewees to give inauthentic accounts of their circumstances as a result. That this is a conflict of normative principle, rather than one of resources, is illustrated well by the effort expended by A and B in their argument over an insignificant sum of money in the Malakal case.[10] For Respondent 7, when asked about why they felt giving money was a problem, they outlined a conflict of this type:

> [...] for example, in DRC, people expect money when they do an interview, and a problem that happened is fixers figured that out. So fixers were telling every reporter the same story. They would find women and they would be like, to the woman, in their language, they would be like this is what they want to hear, say this, and I will say, I will translate this is what you are saying. And so the story of rape was coming out. It was like the same story every time, because they had figured out that is what they wanted. And then people would get money at the end. And like, that is not what we want to do, right?

What is worth commenting on in Respondent 7's reply is the constitution of a normative "we" in the final sentence, in confirming that creating incentives for testimony is "not what we want to do, right?". Assistance is not universally inappropriate, but it is for the "we" of journalists who depend on mediating accounts that must be (beyond question as) authentic.

In resolving this tension, in the examples of it that I encountered, journalists often understood the tension *as* a conflict, identified a primary role, and made a decision along strictly deontological lines (e.g. I am a journalist, therefore X duty applies) and felt it to be appropriate or inappropriate as they reflected on it later. As in the case of B, who came around to feeling that giving money was a 'good' thing to have done, or Respondent 7, who ultimately reasoned that she ought not to have done so, but did it anyway. In the latter case, a focus on affect as a form of rationality as developed in chapter 6, points to a way of making sense of what would otherwise appear to be an 'irrational' regret after the respondent had reasoned they ought not to have been charitable.

Conflicts between assisting and bearing witness are much rarer in practice than those between denunciation and mediation. Problems of deciding to get involved or to observe are, in gen-

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[9] See page 115.

[10] Which is not to deny that being unable to afford to help is not a consideration at times, but to rather point out that this is also a principled, rather than practical disagreement.

eral, resolvable through journalists committing to proceed in the specific moment of practice *as* journalists, and then making good on obligations to assist during other moments where they are not inhabiting their professional role. Kevin Carter's famous image of the vulture and the child was, after all, followed by him making sure the child then continued on their way.[11] During a pilot interview some months before setting off to South Sudan, B had narrated practices of working in Somalia on a humanitarian story in the past where many journalists would put down their cameras once they had filed their stories for the day and get stuck in helping humanitarians with whatever errands they needed done. This allowed journalists to 're-hat' themselves into non-journalistic roles (in this case, as humanitarians) in order to make good on perceived duties to assist where they could in a way that would not produce a role conflict with being a journalist, since they had now 'stepped out of' that role. When and how such role-changing is allowed is of course a much larger conversation, as this would not be entirely at the discretion of the individual, but would likely also be determined by the structure of the context in which they find themselves. Swapping - as B did - to something like a humanitarian role at the end of a work day in Somalia is made possible (or at least easier) when in the company of humanitarian hosts. One could likely not as intelligibly swap in other situations.

7.3.3 Imaginary roles, material incentives

In addition to these two forms of personal normative tensions, an institutional tension exists between the norms of journalists and the interests of many of the organisations that make up Aidland and its critical infrastructure. At this level, conflicts may arise in practice which are not simply a matter of journalists' self-perceptions. The bureaucratic space in which they work is itself structured in particular ways that prefers journalists perform their witnessing roles in ways that push spectators to act in 'biopolitical' ways that help preserve the health of the bodies of sufferers, rather than suggesting (or worse, denouncing) the 'situation' as a matter of injustice. By a 'biopolitical conception', I refer to Chouliaraki's (2013) account of the critique that a communicative structure based around the spectator encountering the reality of another's suffering doesn't automatically secure an outcome in which an injustice is recognised and denounced. It is possible, depending on (inter alia) the framing of the mediated account, for the sufferer to appear as 'bare life', rather than 'political' life (*zoe* and *bios* in Agamben's (1998) terms). In the context of South Sudan, a strong institutional preference for the former can produce normative tensions between journalists and those who hold power over the spaces in which they practice.

The Media Authority and the NSS are perhaps the most unsurprising instances of this kind of preference against denouncing perpetrators of injustice, given the government's own involvement in the suffering many journalists report on. During interviews with journalists who had fled the country, threats from the Media Authority and NSS in retaliation for reporting that attributed blame to the government was a common story. The death threat emailed to a journalist and reproduced on page 4.3.2 was probably the clearest example of the tension between the NSS and journalists who make, in the threat-writer's words, "empty accusations against the Government of South Sudan" which have "cause[d] us some huge political standoff[s] with the rest of the world." Denunciation, for the letter-writer, amounted to making a journalist a sufficiently dangerous enemy of the state to justify "severe consequences on your personal lives".

Perhaps more surprisingly, many journalists also described ambivalent relationships with NGOs on the basis of a suspicion that they did not always share the same normative commitments around matters of denouncing perpetrators. In particular, questions of whether humanitarian NGOs and the UN ought to be understood as complicit in the dynamics of the

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[1]The extent to which Carter actually helped the child after taking the photograph is actually unclear, and likely disputable, but the point I am making here is that he *could* have assisted subsequently and many journalists are generally in similar positions.

conflict or even presented as the cause of suffering in, for example, cases of sexual violence at the hands of UN troops was controversial. In one case, a journalist was cited by others on multiple occasions as having crossed an unspecified professional line of sorts in their criticism of the United Nations mission and the complicity of humanitarians in refusing to cooperate with journalists trying to expose government atrocities.[12] What was conspicuous in this case was the unease that attached to this journalist in the eyes of many of their colleagues for having used their platform to hold humanitarians to account. In the second instance, during a lunchtime get-together (recounted on page 93) with some of the journalists and humanitarian communications officers in Juba, one journalist remarked that they had known about a just-breaking story about sexual abuse of displaced people by UN forces for months, but dared not report on it because it would mean an end to being able to work in South Sudan after the UN inevitably retaliated by refusing them permission to fly on UNMISS planes and no longer offering them PR assignments for UN agencies. This kind of blacklisting was, as it happens, precisely the experience that the first, 'black sheep' journalist described as occurring consistently once they became a critic of UNMISS and other UN agencies.

Without being as reductive as to make a functionalist argument that (some) journalists adjust their normative commitments in order to ingratiate themselves with those who effectively own and gatekeep the infrastructure of Aidland, it should be clear that some of the norms around what kind of spectatorship of the conflict is valued (a biopolitical idea of the spectator as giver-of-donations to sustain the bodies of sufferers) sit more comfortably with the politics of international interveners than others (such as the naming and denunciation of perpetrators). Having a journalist making use of humanitarian infrastructure for a practice intended to shame the UN, humanitarians or the South Sudanese government constitutes a major risk for such those who rely on both the acquiescence of the host government in the field and the moral approval of audiences in the global North for their presence. This is, of course, a dynamic that is not specific to South Sudan, Cottle and Nolan (2007) have explored these concerns in Bali, the Democratic Republic of Congo and elsewhere.

The tensions in this relationship around how 'journalists' and 'humanitarians' imagine they fit together - to return once more to Taylor's idea of an imaginary - were visible too in the stories and myths that journalists would circulate. On a number of occasions, respondents volunteered versions of a story about a UN communications officer trying to hunt down and evict Justin Lynch from the Malakal POC site for live-reporting an attack on it[13] as as an illustration of the risks of a practice that is misaligned with the incentives of one's host organisation (and the lengths to which that organisation might go to escape embarrassment). Understood this way, the continual re-telling of that story by respondents then begins to resemble the circulation of a modern day morality tale about the consequences of journalism outside of (or against) humanitarian orthodoxy. A myth, in Taylor's terms, that warns new journalists of points of friction with those they may need to depend on.

My intention here is not to provide a full accounting of the imagined relationship between journalists and the state/NGOs, but to make the point that the tensions arising between the normative expectations set up by journalists' mixed position as mediator/spectator are not simply a matter of journalists' own perceptions of the roles they inhabit. Expectations of the kinds of roles journalists ought to have, and their position in the communicative structure of the humanitarian imaginary exist more structurally too, in the dispositions of the organisations who control many of the resources that journalists require in order to do their work. As a result, the resolution of role tensions must often be made to the satisfaction of more than simply the journalist themselves.

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[12] When I eventually interviewed this journalist, this was indeed their view, and their language describing the complicity of humanitarians in the war was blistering.
[13] See page 88

7.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter began with the question that chapter 6 raised as to what might be happening, sociologically speaking, in those moments where journalists felt conflicted over what they ought to do in the course of their work. I have argued that one might productively use Chouliaraki's (2013) humanitarian imaginary as an entry into thinking of these tensions as conflicts in norms. These tensions arise in moments where the questions of 'who am I in this moment?' and 'what would a good person of this sort do?' lead to different, contradictory norms that journalists must reconcile in order to proceed with coherent and recognisable-to-others practices that do not become destabilised into 'illegitimate' forms of attachment or activism.

I have pointed out how - from respondents views on the value of their professional roles and the structure of the 'Aidland' context in which they work - it is clear that a humanitarian imaginary and the roles and norms it takes for granted suffuse how, per Taylor, people "fit together with others". Within this humanitarian imaginary journalists claim for themselves a role of witness, mediating between the reality of the conflict and imagined audiences of spectators. From journalists own reflections, this role is acutely felt as a form of obligation to speak what they know from a position of privileged knowledge about the conflict and carries particular norms that may direct journalists to conceal their own explicit judgements and emotions when acting in the capacity of a witness mediating accounts to others.

The role of witness produces tensions in moments where journalists find themselves 'double-interpellated' as spectators themselves and in broader (potential) conflicts with organisations in the country who would prefer journalists to pursue more narrowly biopolitical forms of witnessing. As a result, journalists must find ways to resolve these role-tensions in practice if they are to be able to continue to be recognised as 'good' journalists and their practices are to remain coherent across moments.

It is worth commenting, in closing, that the efforts of journalists to maintain a coherent practice of 'good' journalism in the material and discursive context that they find themselves involves a pragmatic synthesis of much of what has been discussed in the previous chapters. The geography of Aidland provides the material resources for doing journalism and a bureaucratic context in which certain norms of journalism may be politically unwelcome. The affective character of the context too, creates ambivalent effects on journalists. Felt attachments may lead journalists to quite literally feel the weight of perceived normative obligations, at the same time as exhaustion and anxiety makes discharging them harder and confers some of the epistemic authority on which their speech depends. At the same time as a shared humanitarian imaginary maintains a coherent schema of who journalists (and others) are and how they relate, it may produce tensions that must be resolved in moments where these expectations differ. A journalism that proceeds in such a context, then, is a creative practice, in which each moment must be made to work with what material and discursive elements are available, producing something new, but of a piece with what has been done before.

8 | CONCLUSION

> I've also learned a great deal. Research has, in a sense, most definitely *occurred*. It'll be a matter of sorting out all of the thoughts and all of the feelings into something that might begin to resemble an academic format. What do the experiences of the last week mean? What do they have to say about the possibility of bearing witness? It's clear that the conditions of production - the physical, bureaucratic and emotional landscape have all inflected the work [in Malakal POC] profoundly. But what will be the right theoretical language to capture those experiences? How ought I to think about it all? And how to condense all of this into two or three empirical chapters. My brain just blanks right now.

> **Fieldnotes, leaving South Sudan**

This thesis has been an attempt to try and make sense of the experiences and practices of journalists in South Sudan in terms that would be most recognisable to them. That is, to move from context, practices and journalists' own reflections back towards theorising them. As I pointed to in beginning a description of the context in chapter 4, the complexity and contingency of the actual material and discursive environment exceeds what can be neatly captured in the linear text of a thesis, but that this is no excuse not to start somewhere and do what one can. This chapter reflects on some of what I have so far argued, as well as looking towards its connections to journalism studies more broadly and the future research it suggests.

Over the last four chapters, I have developed a number of lines of thinking in response to my original two research questions of what enables and constrains practices of journalism and how journalists navigate normative tensions in their work. I begin this conclusion with a discussion of my findings to these two research questions across the previous chapters, along with what they suggest is common about the structure of journalistic practice in the country. Next, I look at the implications of the findings in this thesis for theory in various areas. This project makes contributions to (at least) thinking about risk as an element of practice and the role of bodies and affect/emotion in the practice of journalism which are worth pointing out explicitly. In each case, I outline the significance of these findings for these areas of research and the questions that this might bring about as a result.

Unsurprisingly, it is also the case that not everything that could be said about the practices of journalists working in South Sudan has been. In the course of selecting some of the most productive conversations, others have had to sit on the wayside, perhaps awaiting future lives as journal articles or conversations with journalists. Most obviously absent is a more complete discussion of the observation that the economic structure of journalism generally (and foreign correspondence in particular) is shifting away from previous arrangements in important ways (Waisbord, 2019; Sambrook, 2012; Hamilton et al., 2004). This was, in fact, an entire chapter in an earlier draft of this thesis that had to make way for other material, and is one of many threads whose lack of discussion is by no means a comment on their importance to practice. This and some other 'roads not taken' are discussed in the third section of this chapter, along with some reflections on the strengths and weaknesses of the project as a whole - what worked well, what complicated the process?

Finally, while each of the discussions I have presented has contributed in some way to addressing these research questions, they are by no means exhaustively 'answered'. The arguments

and observations presented in each of these chapters have contributed to thinking about the ways in which practice is negotiated by journalists, but also, I hope, left new questions for the reader. Every map suggests new ones at its boundaries, as it were. In line with this, I conclude with some final thoughts on future directions that this project suggests.

8.1 FINDINGS

The point of orientation for this thesis has been to examine the work of journalists through the theoretical lens of *practices*. This view has understood practices as being enacted from moment to moment in more or less stable ways that draw on the material and discursive resources of the context in which they take place to ensure their success (see chapter 2). 'Success' was understood as having both a material dimension (in the sense of *doing* something in the world) and a discursive one - in ensuring that each moment of practice is *recognisably* an instance of that practice.

In the case of journalists in South Sudan, this meant drawing on resources to enact practices of reporting that both succeed in literally, materially, obtaining and (re)mediating/constructing accounts of conflict and its effects and doing so in ways that are recognisable as professional journalism. That is to say, they are doing what it is that a 'good' conflict journalist does. This view then prompted the two research questions that guided the empirical chapters of the thesis.

8.1.1 RQ1: How are journalists' practices enabled and constrained in the context of South Sudan?

Through this lens of asking what kinds of resources are needed for the successful 'doing' of practice, chapters 4 and 5 examined the riskiness of the context as respondents understood it. Risk was understood here as literally 'written' into the social and material geography of the space in which journalists work - from the bunkerized compounds and scarred walls of 'Aidland' and its outside to the imagined threat of the Media Authority and the National Security Service. Risk, I have argued, can be understood as both a constraint on the practices of journalists and, perhaps counter-intuitively, a resource that helps constitute this form of journalism as morally praiseworthy and authoritative in particular ways.

Seen as a constraint, risk is the (imagined or actual) possibility of encountering physical or psychological harm when trying to report on the conflict and its effects, manifested in roadblocks, encounters with security agents of various types, and the potential for being attacked after being identified in unhelpful ways (such as being a member of the 'wrong' ethnic group, American, or some other category which is salient in a particular moment). 'Doing journalism' under such a constraint meant making use of a range of resources in order to practice safely. This included making use of associations with individuals and organisations that could be relied on to help, avoiding work that was deemed too risky, carefully managing the attribution of voices in stories so as not to present journalists themselves as a focus of retribution, and paying careful attention to the identities they carried and their potential effects in moments of practice.

Each of these approaches to coping with risk has its own requirements. Certain protective associations, such as those of embassies for example, may be given automatically on the basis of a passport. Others, such as close relationships with members of the security service, are more easily (though not necessarily *easily*) available to South Sudanese journalists and long-residence foreign journalists than they are to the majority of the rest of the foreign press. Being

able to make use of the interior of 'Aidland' for socialising, sleeping, travel and access to contacts may be contingent on factors including the news organisation one belongs to, race, and perceived ethnic affiliation. Seen this way, the resources required for different tactics of safety are distributed unevenly across journalists in ways that are generally highly particular. This particularity makes risk felt in particularly intersectional ways - in Crenshaw's (1989) original sense of being visible only through a compound lens of race, foreignness, news agency, gender, perceived ethnic affiliation and so on, where the list of salient categories is itself a case of what 'matters' in a particular context. In South Sudan, at least these categories mattered, but there's no reason to think of them as universal. In conflicts with different fault lines, in countries with different histories of racism and colonialism, there is every reason to think that 'what matters' in how risk is perceived and can be negotiated will change accordingly.

Respondents' reflections on risk and coping with it also indicated that the relationship between risk and identity was something that journalists often effectively theorised for themselves in the course of their work, in the sense that many had clear schemas for assessing what about themselves might make them more or less safe in certain circumstances. From South Sudanese journalists' awareness of the effects of perceived ethnicity on their practices to (white) foreign journalists' talk of the instrumental benefits of whiteness to their safety, risk was very clearly being thought of in particular, situated terms. This observation has implications for existing critical work on the presumed subject in risk training (e.g. Rentschler (2007)), which I discuss in the next section.

I have also argued that risk can be understood as a resource in the practice of journalists too. Indeed, if all risk was, was a constraint to be managed, it would be hard to explain what appears to be a(n often more than) occasional proclivity for journalists to seek risky stories over 'tamer' alternatives. Whether it is Chris Allen headed on his fatal trip to Kaya, Jason Patinkin and Simona Foltyn travelling with rebel forces or South Sudanese photojournalists rushing to cover heavy fighting in Juba's presidential compound in 2013 and 2016, risk appeared in respondents accounts as both something to be responsibly managed *and* a constitutive part of what makes this kind of reporting practice distinctive and valued. I have argued that as a discursive element of the practice, the appropriate taking of risk serves both to enhance the authority of the journalist as a 'flesh witness' to the reality of the conflict and its effects and simultaneously constructs them as a kind of hero - the witness who risks their body in the service of truth, as it were.

'Making use' of risk in practice requires that it be engaged with 'professionally' though. Which is to say that it must be 'managed' in ways that would be recognisable as 'responsible' journalism, rather than slipping into a terrain of questionable motivations and thrill-seeking, which could delegitimise the practice and open it and the journalist doing it up to criticism. Respondents' occasionally ambivalent views on Allen's death illustrated this point well (see page 5.2), highlighting that risk is not necessarily undesirable (indeed, it can pay enormous professional and epistemic dividends as an element of practice), but that norms on the appropriate relationship to it exist and ought not to be transgressed if one is to avoid delegitimising oneself and one's practice as part of the "war reporter, scarf-wearing crowd, who just want to see people shooting guns" (Respondent 11).

This idea of risk as a resource is not new - indeed Hoffman (2003) has pointed out, closer to home for academics, that risk often serves to valorise researchers who work in 'risky' contexts in disciplines that place particular value on witnessing-type methods such as ethnography. It is not my intention to make normative judgements on the appropriateness of risk as an element of practice, nor would such judgements really make sense, given that the operation of risk in the doing of practice is not entirely a matter of individual agents 'deciding' to entangle practice with risk in these ways and valorise the result. Rather, the effects of risk on how the practice of journalists are understood is something already given at the level of discourse - something which must be negotiated in moments of practice.

Chapter 7 pivoted to developing a discussion of the role of affect/emotion in the practices of journalists, via a number of cases in which journalists struggled with feeling during their work. In the case of A and B reporting in Malakal POC, I argued that the physical conditions of reporting from Malakal POC were such that virtually any body working on tight deadlines in those conditions would find itself grappling with exhaustion as an inevitable example of personal biology meeting long days, heat and stress. Part of the tactics of coping with exhaustion were themselves a kind of affective/discursive practice, where A and B did both the personal work of managing their emotional states and the interpersonal work of keeping the group's emotional state upbeat and conflict-free. Other means of coping included externalising information from tired minds onto systems of reminders and notepads and deferring to professional habit. I pointed out, too, that while the management of exhaustion in the case of A and B was particularly pronounced, there is nothing especially unusual about conflict journalists that makes working while exhausted specific to their work. I have suggested that there may be aspects of this discussion that might fruitfully apply to the study of journalism under conditions of exhaustion elsewhere. Breaking news and non-conflict disaster reporting are immediate candidates for this sort of analytic attention, for example.

There is also no reason to think that exhaustion is the only feeling that might constrain the work of journalists in such a setting. Anxiety, for example, was another emotion that I pointed to in chapter 7 as something that journalists often had to contend with, through practices of 'keeping it together' at various moments of actual, acute threat (the roadblock, the encounter with the authorities) and as a general background to living and working in a context of imagined gazes (of the state, of security) and dangers. 'Keeping it together' I argued, was a kind of emotional work directed at managing the kinds of feelings that journalists gave off at various points in their practice - from the approachable openness of A, as he chatted with potential photographic subjects to the ways in which respondents dealt with agents of the police, army, NSS and Media Authority during in-person encounters with them. In these situations, affect/emotion may be understood as a constraint to be responded to by journalists, something that they must actively incorporate into practice creatively, or both, depending on what it is productive to focus on.

Finally, chapter 6 argued for rethinking journalistic 'skill' to include an account of it as a form of embodied knowledge/fast action (page 121) in which journalists have learned to respond to situations and contexts in often non-deliberative ways. The successful 'doing' of the practice in certain scenarios being a matter of unconscious response to familiar patterns and feelings, including senses of danger or discomfort - what Respondent 33 referred to as the "feeling behind your neck" (page 122) that tells you it's time to leave. Here, I argued that feeling may in fact structure how practice proceeds in ways that agents may not consciously reflect on as decisions are being taken, in a process analogous to boxing (Wacquant, 2004) or playing tennis Arpaly (2000). This led to questions of how embodied forms of skill are in fact 'learned' and my argument that pedagogical contexts likely play an important role in their acquisition. This, in turn, raises implications for what it would mean to 'train' journalist to cover conflict safely, what contexts might presently be responsible for doing this work, and what kinds of physical risks and normative baggage might accompany them.

8.1.2   RQ2: What normative tensions arise during practice?

In chapter 6, I began examining tensions in the practices of journalists from the perceived differences (to journalists) between what they believed they ought to do in particular moments and feelings they experienced that were inconsistent with those 'all-things-considered' judgements. I argued, using Arpaly's account of emotion as a form of non-deliberative rationality, that journalists' feelings were not in fact an inappropriate, akratic failure of will, but instead pointed to normative obligations that conflicted with what respondents felt they ought to do

as *journalists*. As illustrations of this case, I pointed to the feelings of obligation to those they reported on that many respondents recounted and variations of a moment in practice where journalists were confronted with individuals in need of assistance.

This discussion was then picked up and developed further in chapter 7, where I argued that respondents' accounts of the role and value of their journalism articulated the structure of Chouliaraki's (2013) humanitarian imaginary, in which journalists saw themselves as witnesses responsible for mediating authentic accounts of others' suffering to audiences of spectators who might be moved to act as a result. This role was tied to particular normative obligations on journalists that included an obligation to speak about what they knew (bearing witness) and maintaining a separation between their own feelings towards the suffering they encountered and the emotions of sufferers themselves. Emotional descriptions of others' suffering were widely understood to be acceptable, while descriptions of a journalist's own feelings were not - an empirical finding in line with what Wahl-Jorgensen (2013) has argued elsewhere based on an analysis of Pulitzer-winning articles.

I argued that tensions arose in the practice of journalists in moments where they found themselves 'double-interpellated' as simultaneously journalistic witnesses bound by these norms and *spectators* to suffering, who ought to moralise and respond to suffering where it is encountered. In such moments, journalists may find it impossible to satisfy both the norms of being a 'good' witness and those of being a 'good' spectator. Moreover, insofar as the work of witnessing entails spectating, this kind of double interpellation is a reasonably likely occurrence that journalists must deal with in its messiness, whether through trying to obtain intersubjective agreement on what their role in a given moment is or via assisting/failing to assist and dealing with the consequences of those decisions for how they felt about their practice and how it was received.

Finally, I described what was occasionally an ambivalent relationship between many journalists and the organisations which create and control the infrastructure of safety and transport that makes up part of 'Aidland' and on which journalists often rely for their work. Organisational discourses of humanitarian 'impartiality' and 'apolitical' positioning tend to prefer more biopolitical outcomes to practices of witnessing, in which assistance takes the form of resources being given to NGOs as preferred agents of the benevolence of foreign spectators. In such circumstances, journalists engaged in witnessing roles that may lead to the denunciation of perpetrators or the investigation of NGO complicity in suffering may be particularly unwelcome. I recounted the repeated circulation of Justin Lynch's persecution by an UNMISS communications officer as one example of a morality tale that warned newcomers to South Sudan of the potential hazards of crossing those who gatekeep Aidland.

8.2 IMPLICATIONS FOR THEORY

The findings in this thesis offer useful contributions - most obviously to the emerging affective turn in the study of journalism, but to other areas as well. Below, I discuss some of the value of the arguments I have developed to existing thinking on risk and journalism, the affective/emotional work of journalists, and the application of the (humanitarian) imaginary to studying journalism. There are doubtless other connections to be made, but these are perhaps the most immediately clear from the arguments previous chapters have developed.

8.2.1 Risk and the journalist

This thesis has discussed the way risk is felt and responded to by journalists in a range of different ways, from how the possibility of danger is inscribed in the environment to the tactics they adopt in response in order to manage safety before and during threatening encounters. I have also argued that risk is not simply a barrier to this form of journalism, but is involved in constructing the practice of it in ways that both gives journalists particular authority as 'professional' journalists and 'flesh witnesses' (Harari, 2009), while binding many of them to perceived obligations to speak.

This approach offers ways of thinking about the relationship between journalists and risk, and hopefully new directions for researching it as a result. Much existing scholarship is (rightfully) concerned with the problem of journalists being *at* risk during practice and either reducing their exposure to danger or pre-emptively training and equipping them for work in unsafe contexts. This work raises, for example, questions about how changes in harms to journalists might be better reduced through better policymaking (Berger, 2020), interrogation of the training programs offered to journalists working in conflict contexts (Høiby and Garrido, 2020; Rentschler, 2007) and better understandings of PTSD and other consequences of working in dangerous environments (Feinstein et al., 2002; Osmann et al., 2020).

To these concerns, my thesis offers two additional contributions to thinking about the relationship between journalists and risk. In the first, it offers a shift from thinking about how journalism takes place not just *under* conditions of risk, but how journalism might be constructed *through* it. That is, how might facing danger legitimise or delegitimise the practices of journalists and inflect the recognisability and authority of their work, rather than focusing only on whether or not it is (materially) defeated? Using the case of Chris Allen's death, I have explored how journalists' evaluate colleagues behaviour in terms that include whether taking risks was 'worth it' and whether risk was 'responsibly' managed in ways that often reflect neoliberal discourses of safety. Integrated into the practice successfully, risk confers epistemic and material benefits to conflict journalists. Integrated unsuccessfully, it can destabilise not only the moment of practice, but how the journalist themselves is perceived.

The second contribution lies in giving an account of what risk actually looks and feels like to actors at the micro-level of practice. I have argued that risk can be understood as an environment of imagined threat, whose potential forces journalists (and others) to make decisions as though it were real, per Massumi's (2010) account of threat as an "affective fact" that demands accommodation as though it were real. Alongside this, I have also pointed to risk as something that can and does manifest in particular moments of threatening encounter - the roadblock, the checkpoint, the encounter with the authorities. Here, risk should not be understood as an environmental quality, or, as Rentschler's (2007) puts it, quoting Foucault (1979), "a 'calculable' terrain on which risk factors can be interpreted". Instead, it becomes the specific stakes of a complicated affective/discursive practice between individuals, in which managing the feelings you give off becomes as important to navigating practice as maintaining appearances in the eyes of others who have the capacity to harm you.

More simply put, journalists would find little remarkable in me pointing out that their professional image can and often does benefit from the aura of danger that their contexts give them. Or that managing risk often involves emotional work - laughing at unfunny jokes, being friendly (but not too friendly) with soldiers you meet, not always saying what you think, and so on. These are obvious features of the job, but ones which have been little studied. What, for example, marks the boundary between acceptable and unacceptable taking of risks, and with what consequences? What are the implications of thinking of risk as co-constructed in practice? How do practices around managing affect by journalists proceed, what do they depend on, and where are they learned?

8.2.2 Bodies and the affective work of journalism

Accounts of the emotional turn in journalism studies by both Wahl-Jorgensen (2019a) and Kotisova (2019) have highlighted a gap in our knowledge of how affect/emotion figure into the practices of journalists, and it is here where this thesis makes perhaps its most useful single contribution. Rather than seeing affect as something 'picked up' in the course of practicing journalism (as is the PTSD research agenda), it can be understood as a critical part of how practice gets done. Using the case of journalists working in South Sudan, I have argued against a stunted view of emotion as an akratic failing of the 'rational' journalist, and pointed instead to alternative ways of thinking of the role of bodies and feelings in the practice of journalism.

In this thesis, this took the form of discussing (inter)personal management of emotional resonances when working while stressed or exhausted, managing the affective dimensions of interactions with others (using Wetherell's (2013) ideas of affective/discursive practice), seeing emotions as a form of non-deliberative rationality, and considering the role of embodied knowledge in the navigation of 'dangerous' space. Thinking of social practices as (often) inseparably entangled with affect is not in itself novel - Wetherell makes these points in her idea of affective-discursive practice - but this research connects these ideas with actual moments in the practice of journalism in conflict, to produce examples of what this theory might look like in the work of journalists and what the stakes are.

This thesis has also been interested in the bodies and feelings of journalists as they live, work and socialise in often highly affective contexts. As a caution to conflating an often macho discourse of the conflict journalist as it exists in training materials (see Rentschler (2007)) and popular culture with the specifics of the actual practices of the work, I have suggested that apparent stoicism may in fact conceal quite attentive emotional work being done by journalists on themselves and others in the course of doing their work (see page 113). This is not at all to suggest that masculinist discourses are not a part of journalists' own self-conceptions or the manner in which they do their work, but to point out that there is evidence of a much more complex affective/emotional dimension to the work of at least these types of journalists, and likely others.

8.2.3 The humanitarian journalistic imaginary

Chapter 7 has illustrated that using Taylor's (2002) idea of the social imaginary - and Chouliaraki's (2013) humanitarian imaginary in particular - to explore the normative perceptions of journalists can help to make clear some of the tensions that characterise moments of this work. I would suggest that there are two ways in which this approach might be useful to the study of journalism more broadly: the usefulness of the humanitarian imaginary in thinking through the normative logic of journalism and the usefulness of imaginaries more generally for approaching the study of journalists.

In the first case, I would suggest that respondents' articulations of the communicative structure of the humanitarian imaginary in which they understand themselves as both spectators and witnesses to the suffering of others is something that is likely not specific to the case of South Sudan. Thompson's (2019) reflections on the duties he felt arising for himself and his colleagues from reporting on the Rwandan genocide suggest that a normative discourse resembling that of the humanitarian imaginary likely permeates the moral norms of journalists engaged in reporting conflict and atrocity. Chouliaraki's original description of a humanitarian imaginary were primarily focused on thinking through the structure and effects of this social imaginary in texts and audiences as they encountered one another in the 'West', but there's no reason to believe that the logic of a spectator's moral encounter with suffering does not extend towards practices of production in context-specific ways. Despite this, I can find no

work theorising journalists' normative roles through this lens. Doing so would not only afford a theoretical language that addresses normative role tensions of the type explored in chapter 7, but would enable a number of interesting research questions. What, for example, is the role of irony in orienting journalists' views of the ethics of their work, in Rorty's (1993) sense of the term as Chouliaraki uses it? To what extent might a humanitarian imaginary structure the normative ethics of journalisms whose object of interest is not paradigmatic cases of war and disaster?

In the second case, investigating journalism practice from the theoretical perspective of social imaginaries offers a way of thinking about the discursive/material terrain on which journalists work in terms that are particularly open to journalists' own definitions of the situation. This would encourage a different approach to taking for granted which actors matter to the practice of journalism and proceeding from there, as some approaches to normative roles of the press tend to do. Asking instead, as (Taylor, 2002, p. 106) does, about "the ways in which people manage their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows..." begins with a question of how journalists imagine their situation and who matters in it, and then proceeding from there with care for both the new actors brought into visibility (such as Aidland) and those not (fixers and other precarious labour, for example). Pursued this way, I would suggest that social imaginaries offer a more open approach to data-drive theorising about journalistic norms and practices that other projects might benefit from.

8.3 REFLECTION ON STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

At the end of the thesis, it is tempting to pretend that the conversation I have neatly unfolded so far was the one I intended at the outset. That would be a fat lie. As this research project developed from a scrawny research proposal into what it has actually become, I found myself taking or being drawn into various decisions along the way, each of which left behind ghosts of other theses that this could have been, in favour of the one that was. Below, I discuss some thoughts on the generalisability of my findings, the validity of researching affect/emotion, and some of the roads not taken in this project.

8.3.1 How the methods took shape in practice

My project relied on a combination of semi-structured interviews with journalists and ethnographic observation of their routines in Juba and while on assignment in Malakal. Each of these approaches had implications for the validity of the process and my own position as a researcher in ways that are worth reflecting on. The approaches I took created a particular positionality for myself as researcher, with its own perspective on what the practices of journalists in South Sudan looked like. The fact that I was positioned also suggests other approaches and positions that might have been, perhaps to other researchers with their own designs, working in South Sudan or elsewhere.

Interview-based accounts

As discussed in section 3.3.1, I approached interview data with a view that respondents' accounts can be understood as constructed performances, particular to the context in which they were given and the purpose for which they are done (Holstein and Gubrium, 2003), but that there are also elements of what was related that ought to be taken literally. A story about the death of Chris Allen or the imprisonment of Alfred Taban, for example, was something that I

understood as both a discursive construction in the sense of the *way* the story was told, *and* an account that makes reference to something that potentially 'really happened' in a more literal sense. Someone did die, someone was imprisoned.

Seen this way, I anticipated that how interviewees might have seen me could reasonably affect such things as choice of phrasing and even what is included or omitted in discussions. Eschewing any idea of describing 'objective reality', what became important was whether the account of journalists' context and practices that developed out of interview accounts was one in which they would recognise themselves if confronted with it, and whether it took seriously multiple, independent accounts of reality where they corroborated one another (as in the claims of censors at the Juba press or the specifics of the Media Authority's accreditation regime). As I gathered interviews, it is my view that two aspects of the process were particularly helpful for obtaining less-guarded, more discursively complicated conversations with respondents. By 'less-guarded', I mean to say that journalists were more willing to speak in detail about material which likely carried risk to them revealing, and by discursively-complicated, I refer to respondents feeling comfortable using journalistic jargon and assuming existing knowledge about the basics of reporting in conflict and the recent history of the war in South Sudan. This kind of language, I would suggest, indicated attempts to describe the situation without having to 'translate' for me in the same way as if I had been a researcher with no familiarity with journalists or South Sudan at all. That is, the language in which interviews were conducted resembled more closely the language of their professional world than it did mine.

In the first instance, the fact that all but the first handful of the interviews were conducted in person did much to set respondents at ease. The affective qualities of in-person interviewing generally made it easier to signal interest and focus on the discussion with greater intimacy than was the case over Skype calls in often non-ideal contexts. In addition, having journalists as respondents meant that virtually everyone was comfortable with the presence of an audio recorder on the table during interviews. I would generally signal early on in the interview that I had worked as a journalist myself in the past, which led many respondents to make use of 'on the record/off the record' grammars in their responses, understanding that I understood and would respect the obligations that these signals implied.

Knowing that I was familiar with the conventions of journalism and some of the context in South Sudan also led, I suspect, to more frank responses from many respondents to my questions about the difficulties they faced working in the country. The decision to anonymise virtually all respondents was the result of them sharing enough detailed, critical stories that the question of keeping them safe became a consideration. That respondents were so frank shows, I would suggest, a degree of trust in me as an interviewer. This was something that was by no means guaranteed - especially for South Sudanese journalists who generally risked the most in speaking with me. My acceptance as an interviewer while in Juba was also substantially helped by actually being in the capital for almost six weeks, though I had not anticipated this beforehand. Early in my time there, Reuters photojournalist Jok Solomon effectively took me under his wing, introduced me to AMDISS (whose significance I had not yet properly appreciated), arranged interviews with a number of colleagues, and even went so far as to take me on a tour of many of the media organisations in the capital one day, visiting the offices of various organisations and giving me a sense of their history. His willingness to help me and the credentials being seen with him conferred were, I believe, important to a number of interviewees being willing to speak with me. More than one interviewee chose to meet with me quite late in my time in Juba and commented on having watched me travelling around the city and making an eventual decision to chat to me after deciding that I was to be trusted with their views. Though unintentional on my part, this was - in retrospect - cleaving to Sluka's (2007) advice that "it is not enough to not be a threat to your research participants; act in such a way as to be *seen* not to be a threat." (emphasis in the original). Jok's friendship, the implied trust that snowball-sampling referrals provided and my own visibility travelling the city on the back of a boda bike (rather than hidden in a Landcruiser I could not afford) paid a dividend that I was largely ignorant of at the time.

The attachment of ethnography

For the most part, interviewing proceeded more or less in line with what I had intended before-hand. My ethnographic approach, in contrast, ended up changing significantly as time went on. In my initial proposal, I had (naïvely) assumed I would be able to conduct a fly-on-the-wall style of ethnography, somehow divorced from the actual politics surrounding journalists and journalism in South Sudan. As fieldwork progressed, I found myself becoming more and more positioned 'with' journalists as time went by - by which I mean that I began to increasingly see the context in which I was living from their perspective. This process began gradually, with dozens of interviews with journalists in Nairobi and Kampala leaving me with impressions of life as a journalist in Juba before I ever arrived there, including stories of the cruelty of the NSS and the dangers posed by the Media Authority. This perception of the state and security services as a threat was then gradually exacerbated in many tiny ways which I have tried to be transparent about in my empirical chapters, including the nervousness with which conversations were had in the garden of Logali house (page 54), anxiety about taking photographs in public (page 48) and watching the nervous expressions of other journalists in the company of the Media Authority at their press briefing announcing an attempt to ban UNMISS' Radio Miraya (page 57).

On the one hand, this gradual shift in where and with who I felt safe was extraordinarily useful for bringing anxiety into view, and with it being able to think about the role of affect in the work of the journalists around me. This was something I had not anticipated before departing on fieldwork, and was - in hindsight - a welcome discovery. This process of becoming 'positioned' in the terrain of threat in which journalists work was also theoretically useful for what it made possible in terms of 'seeing like a journalist', but did also mean that it became effectively impossible to access the subjective world of those who journalists often imagine themselves to be in tension with. It would have been theoretically productive to have been able to interview members of the Media Authority and the NSS about how they saw journalists and what they imagined the role of reporting the conflict to be, but by the end of my fieldwork, I suspect I feared both organisations to a degree that may have approached that of some of my respondents.

This was in part the result of accruing a perception of 'how things are' constructed from what respondents told me, affirmed after my encounter with the Media Authority prior to setting off to Malakal with A and B, during which I was accused of being either a spy or a journalist (see page 65). As much as I had unintentionally succeeded in managing how journalists saw me, it became clear during this encounter that I had simultaneously failed in managing my appearance in the eyes of the Media Authority, who had seen me at press briefings and hanging out with journalists despite having no accreditation as the journalist they believed me to be. This wasn't simply a matter of being misunderstood by agents in the context, but functioned as a form of interpellation, in which I found myself being addressed by the Media Authority as a (likely illegal) journalist, followed immediately by six days of emotionally intense fieldwork accompanying A and B to Malakal, where this interpellation as a journalist was repeated.

In hindsight, it is hard to point to a specific decision to embrace a participant ethnographic/auto-ethnographic approach during my time in Malakal. In part, it was driven by a belief that the importance of the war crimes investigation that A and B were pursuing was such that, ethically, I ought to be contributing more than simply plodding around after them carrying recorders and cameras and not getting involved otherwise. In part it was also driven by finding myself in an environment in which I was being continually read and responded to as a journalist - by UN press officers, UNMISS soldiers, humanitarians and civilians in the POC site. It simply became less dissonant to think of myself in terms compatible with how I was being continuously made sense of by others. Finally, this shift was almost certainly affectively driven to some extent too. Like A and B, I too was exhausted from the days in the POC site, felt threatened

by the same kinds of authorities and adjacent to the excitement and anxiety of an 'important' investigative project. As I wrote in my fieldnotes on leaving South Sudan and looking back:

> I realise, as well, that I've increasingly begun to identify as a journalist over the last week, rather than simply a researcher observing them. I think this may be a result of having to - for all intents and purposes - share the same difficulties and objectives and anxieties as them. I care about what happened to the people of [the location investigated by A and B], I worry about the NSS coming for me. I'll be every bit as arrested as they will be, if the government learns of our reporting and takes a dislike to it. As the media authority's demand that I register with them shows, there is no distinction made between journalists and someone who accompanies their work. To be with journalists here is to be a part of a struggle, most forms of which the state absolutely does not support. It's a bit like the problem with identity. What I say I am has only a limited force to establish reality. What matters as much or more is what I am understood by others in the situation to be. In this case, my claims to be a researcher would only be entertained to a limited degree (if at all) by the government.

This shift in position was a part of what made discussions like those in chapter 6 possible, as autoethnographic writing allowed for reflection on the affective experiences in Malakal that became the thin end of a theoretical wedge opening up what became a much broader discussion of affect, emotion and bodies. It did, however, leave me with a concern as to whether what I had felt, experienced and observed in Malakal was anything like what a 'normal' reporting trip to one of the POC sites might look like. How much of what I had seen and felt was shared by others, and how much was particular to this specific trip, this time?

In an attempt to corroborate these observations, I offered copies of chapters 4, 5 and 6 to respondents to read and comment on. A handful expressed interest, and of these, two who had previously worked in Malakal and other POC sites sent back responses confirming that they found these accounts captured the experience in ways they recognised well. In addition to this, other moments spent chatting to A and B about their own feelings and anxieties also confirmed my own perceptions - most pointedly when A shared at breakfast that they had had the same dream of NSS agents coming into our hotel room to seize data as I had the night before.

In retrospect, it should have been clearer to me that my fieldwork was likely to be full of feelings, and that part of taking seriously journalists' perspectives on the hardships they faced would mean taking them on in my own sense of the reality of the situation. As I reflected on in post-fieldwork updates to my methodology chapter, Shesterinina's (2018) description of the role of fear and empathy in structuring the possibilities of fieldwork was something that would have been helpful to have paid more attention to beforehand. This is not to say that I would not have become positioned as I was in some counterfactual research project, but that it would perhaps have produced considerably less anxiety for me to have been able to anticipate some of these dynamics beforehand.

8.3.2   A note on generalisability beyond the South Sudanese case

I've hinted throughout this thesis that some of the claims here may apply in some way to the practices of journalists beyond the specific case of South Sudan and it is worth being clearer on this point. The focus of this project has been case-specific, interested in the practices of journalists working in South Sudan in recent years, so as to be able to explore as much of the richness of a single case as possible. Having made observations about, inter alia, the structure

of risk, the role of affect/emotions and bodies and the normative roles of journalists, I'd like to make the case that some of the theorising that comes out of this case might have useful application in both other conflict contexts and situations that are not war. Generalisability is, of course, not strictly *necessary*, but where valid it signals that this research may offer both useful perspectives for thinking about other journalism(s) in other places and that it might contribute to the work of actually 'doing theory' in contexts outside of the Euro-American 'West' (see, for example, Larkin (2008, p. 252) for an eloquent discussion on theorising urban culture from the 'South' via the case of infrastructure in Nigeria).

In arguing for a degree of generalisability, I take Cartwright and Hardie's (2012) position that what matters when asking whether what is the case 'here' might be the case 'over there' (for some chosen 'there'), is whether the two contexts resemble each other in causally significant ways. That is, are the factors which contribute to making X the case for journalists in South Sudan also present in some other context. To the extent that this is the case, we should be cautiously willing to entertain the possibility that X might be the case in that other context too. For a number of findings in this research, I would suggest that the context in South Sudan does meaningfully resemble other contexts in ways that might make my arguments transferable to other contexts.

First and most obviously, 'Aidland-style' infrastructure, with its limited, bunkerised and controlled world of travel, accommodation and safety resources is by no means unique to South Sudan. Similarly unequal concentrations of resources in a cosmopolitan world of 'international' interveners characterises many other situations of conflict and humanitarian emergency. Indeed, the anthropological literature on Aidland takes as a basic premise that there are many similarities in the material and discursive lifeworlds of, say, Kabul, Goma, Bangui and Juba. Given this, insights on the structure of risk and the importance of the humanitarian 'inside' for the work of many journalists and the conflicts they produce may offer a useful starting point for similar work in other Aidland' contexts.

Observations around coping with exhaustion and the affective/emotional elements of journalists' work are also likely to be of use in other contexts too. South Sudan is by no means the only context in which journalists might fear (and have to manage) encounters with hostile agents of the state, navigate roadblocks or work under pressure in highly under-resourced situations. While South Sudan's POC sites are bureaucratically/legally particular, there is much about the physical space that would be the same in other relatively tightly-governed, remote and under resourced IDP/refugee camp situations. It seems reasonable to suggest, for example, that journalists working for extended periods in Cox's Bazaar, Dadaab, or similar humanitarian contexts might be exhausted for much the same reasons as A, B and I were in Malakal. There is also no reason to see exhaustion as only a problem for journalists working in highly deprived spaces. Those covering important breaking news or doing through-the-night reporting on major stories, for example, could well be expected to run into the same problems of managing interpersonal emotional dynamics and coping with the cognitive deterioration of being tired.

So while I am not making a precise claim about the *degree* to which my observations in this case might be more generally applicable, I would suggest that this project may be of value to thinking through the practices of journalists working in similar contexts in the future.

8.3.3 Issues for further research

Out of the data obtained from observations and interviews, there were many other ideas that could have been explored in this thesis, for which the space simply wasn't available. As mentioned earlier, an entire chapter on the economics of journalism in South Sudan had to be

excluded. Many of these roads not taken will hopefully be the basis of future work, but in the end I opted to make the observations that could be the most most thoroughly described by the evidence available and which might be the most theoretically or empirically useful to both journalism studies scholars and those involved in practicing journalism in South Sudan or helping journalists in that task.

Economics, was something that more could be said about in future work. It was jarring to see the differences in working costs and potential income between journalists with various levels of access to work inside 'Aidland' and those without. Existing work on the changing economics of foreign correspondents could gain much from taking into account work on the economics of the places where journalists live and work during periods of conflict and humanitarian emergency and the ways in which journalists differ in their earning and spending in practice.

Somewhat relatedly, it would also be useful to explore the relationships between professional staff in humanitarian and other NGOs and journalists further. I had caveated critiques of the organisational interests of humanitarians in chapter 7 as being *organisational* precisely because the norms of individual staff involved in dealing with journalists appeared in some cases to be more ambivalent. NGO communications officers who had worked as journalists in previous careers were often sympathetic to the aims of journalists in ways resembling Wright's (2016a) descriptions of compatible norms facilitating journalist-NGO collaboration, even where these ran counter to more conservative interests of their organisations. Trust and shared norms between journalists and humanitarians, military staff and government officials may be the basis of an economy of off-the-books information sharing critical to how journalism of conflict and its consequences proceeds. This would be something worth pursuing further, were it possible to do so in ways that didn't harm the object of study in the process. It was due to concerns of this type that I elected not to discuss extralegal tactics of avoiding state repression by journalists in chapter 5.

Perhaps less sociologically, it would also be useful to examine the Media Authority and its legal and bureaucratic history in more depth. Its establishment was backed by UNESCO and other well-meaning NGOs, and the story of its transformation from a press-defending entity in law to the repressive force it ended up as would be of value to scholars and policy-makers interested in the negotiation of press-protections in other contexts and the trajectories of press-governing organisations. It would be valuable, too, to explore the views and challenges of those who work in media regulation. It seems unlikely that those in the Media Authority see themselves as journalists see them, and exploring what the organisation thinks it is doing when it acts outside of its legal mandate would contribute a valuable account of how the repression of journalists (presumably) makes justified sense from the point of view of those doing it. Investigations of this sort would likely exclude simultaneous studies of journalists in the manner that I undertook, or at least make them potentially more difficult, given the importance of how the researcher is perceived and associated while out and about in the field. A researcher in frequent conversation with the Media Authority and the NSS would be unlikely to obtain widespread trust by journalists.

8.4 IN CONCLUSION

This thesis asked how journalists reporting the conflict in South Sudan go about their work, investigating some of the elements that go into enabling and constraining their practices and what kinds of normative tensions these practices brought about. I have taken a view of practices as something that journalists creatively enact from moment to moment, using available material and discursive resources, in ways that (re)articulate previous moments of the practice.

The practices of journalists are, as a result, both creative and constrained, something enacted anew in each moment, within the constraints of what has come before.

Empirically, this study has contributed an exploration of journalism as it takes place in South Sudan. I have outlined some of the ways in which the work of journalists is constrained, including the country's Media Authority, its National Security Service and the unequal availability of resources for safe travel, accommodation and access to those whose stories journalists sought to report. Risk, I argued, is both written into the geography of the space in which journalists operate as a potential to be accommodated and something that must be more precisely dealt with in individual interactions that include tactics of ensuring safety and the management of the affective quality of potentially hostile encounters. This project has also described some of the affective/emotional dimensions of journalists' work, including coping with exhaustion, managing the emotions of oneself and others, the role of emotions as a form of non-deliberative rationality and the existence of embodied 'skill' in navigating danger.

Theoretically, this project contributes to the emotional turn in journalism studies through suggesting a range of ways in which affect/emotion and practice might be linked in the work of journalism of at least this type. Moreover, it has argued that emotion is neither an akratic failing of the 'rational' journalist, nor something 'picked up' in the course of doing journalism, but in fact an important part of whether the practice proceeds and how it is recognised. Similarly, in its approach to risk, this project has argued for thinking of risk as not simply a characteristic of the environment, but also a discursive element of practice too - something which can legitimise journalists' role as witnesses, but only where appropriately managed and integrated into the work. Finally, this project has argued that journalists' normative understandings of their roles can be understood as drawing on spectator/sufferer arrangements present in a humanitarian imaginary (Chouliaraki, 2013), but that the role of witness claimed by journalists may run into tensions in moments of double-interpellation, when they may find themselves wrestling between different duties as a spectator and a witness to suffering.

Finally, this thesis offers methodological lessons for those interested in the ethnographic study of journalists covering conflict. I have tried to be as transparent as possible about the inevitable positionality of such work, both affectively and in terms of how the researcher may find themselves imagining who they are and how they relate to the journalists they are interested in. There is much left to do in this field, and it is my hope that this thesis might make enhance and encourage the efforts of others.

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Appendices

A | INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Table 1: Interview schedule and basic characteristics of interviewees

Date of Interview	Nationality notes	Type of journalist	Gender	Type of publication	Place of interview	Length
21 December 2017	Foreign	Writer	Female	Various (International)	Skype	01:23:04
2 January 2018	Foreign	Radio	Male	International News Organisation	Skype	01:09:47
2 January 2018	Foreign	Video	Female	International News Organisation	London, predeparture	00:58:41
7 January 2018	Foreign	Photojournalist	Male	Various (International)	Skype	01:11:44
10 January 2018	Foreign	Writer	Male	Various (International)	Nairobi	01:24:07
15 January 2018	Foreign	Video	Male	National News Organisation (Kenya)	Nairobi	00:45:09
15 January 2018	Foreign	Writer	Female	International News Organisation	Nairobi	00:58:47
16 January 2018	Foreign	Writer	Male	Online News Organisation	Nairobi	01:27:53
17 January 2018	Foreign	Media Development NGO	Male		Skype	01:10:05
18 January 2018	Foreign	Radio	Male	International News Organisation	Nairobi	01:30:43
18 January 2018	Foreign	Writer	Female	Various (International)	Nairobi	01:25:59
18 January 2018	Foreign	Writer	Male	Wire Service	Nairobi	02:05:11
22 January 2018	South Sudanese	Writer	Male	Various (International)	Nairobi	01:19:22
23 January 2018	Foreign	Photojournalist	Female	Various (International)	Nairobi	01:29:33
25 January 2018	Foreign	Writer	Male	International News Organisation	Nairobi	01:12:40
29 January 2018	Foreign	Writer/Radio	Male	Various (International)	Skype	01:14:05
30 January 2018	South Sudanese	Writer	Male	Various (International and S Sudanese)	Kampala	01:09:26
1 February 2018	Foreign	Radio	Male	International News Organisation	Skype	00:46:36
1 February 2018	Foreign	Video	Female	International News Organisation	Kampala	00:53:00
5 February 2018	South Sudanese	Radio	Male	South Sudanese Radio Station	Kampala	01:06:36
7 February 2018	Foreign	Media Development NGO	Male		Skype	01:52:46
11 February 2018	Foreign	Writer	Male	Various (International)	Kampala	02:52:24
13 February 2018	Foreign	Writer	Male	Various	Kampala	01:03:08
17 February 2018	Foreign	Writer	Female	Wire Service	Juba	00:46:15
19 February 2018	South Sudanese	Photojournalist	Male	Wire Service	Juba	01:39:11
20 February 2018	South Sudanese	Radio	Female	South Sudanese Radio Station	Juba	00:44:18

Table 2: Interview schedule and basic characteristics of interviewees (cont.)

Date of Interview	Nationality notes	Type of journalist	Gender	Type of publication	Place of interview	Length
20 February 2018	South Sudanese	Writer	Male	Wire Service	Juba	00:55:49
20 February 2018	Foreign	Writer/Photo	Female	International News Organisation	Juba	01:06:28
21 February 2018	Foreign	NGO Comms Officer	Male		Juba	00:48:38
21 February 2018	South Sudanese	Radio	Female	South Sudanese Radio Station	Juba	01:10:35
22 February 2018	South Sudanese	Video	Male	Various	Juba	01:47:59
26 February 2018	Foreign	Media Development NGO	Female		Juba	01:06:26
27 February 2018	South Sudanese	Radio	Male	South Sudanese Radio Station	Juba	00:54:34
27 February 2018	South Sudanese	Writer	Male	Wire service and S Sudan News Orgs	Juba	00:47:54
28 February 2018	South Sudanese	NGO Comms Officer	Male		Juba	01:12:45
1 March 2018	South Sudanese	Video	Female	International News Organisation	Juba	00:43:58
2 March 2018	Foreign	NGO Comms Officer	Female		Juba	00:57:50
2 March 2018	Foreign	NGO Comms Officer	Female		Juba	00:52:31
8 March 2018	South Sudanese	Radio	Female	South Sudanese Radio Station	Juba	00:43:32
9 March 2018	South Sudanese	Photojournalist	Male	Wire Service	Juba	01:29:32
9 March 2018	South Sudanese	Writer	Male	National News Organisation (South Sudan)	Juba	01:21:04
12 March 2018	South Sudanese	Writer	Male	Various (International and S Sudanese)	Juba	01:15:53
14 March 2018	South Sudanese	Writer	Male	Various (International and S Sudanese)	Juba	01:00:42
14 March 2018	South Sudanese	Writer	Female	Various (S Sudanese)	Juba	00:38:08
15 March 2018	Foreign	Media Development NGO	Female		Skype	00:54:01
20 March 2018	Foreign	NGO Comms Officer	Female		Juba	00:55:59
28 March 2018	South Sudanese	Radio	Male	South Sudanese Radio Station	Malakal	00:35:39
6 April 2020	Foreign	Photojournalist	Male	Wire Service	Skype	01:09:08

B | SAMPLE INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

You are being invited to participate in a research project. This document outlines what this project is about, and what your participation will involve. Please take as much time as you need to read this document completely.

WHAT IS THIS PROJECT ABOUT?

This PhD project is trying to better understand how journalists reporting on conflict and distant suffering do their professional work. Much academic work has been done to try and understand what kinds of accounts of suffering in distant places might make readers and listeners more likely to act to assist, but much less work has been done trying to understand how journalists working in these places actually write or record those stories and images. I hope that this research will help to explain how journalists covering different types of conflicts and complex humanitarian emergencies think about the work that they do, as well as making clearer some of the factors that make their work easier or more difficult to perform in these environments.

WHAT WILL MY PARTICIPATION INVOLVE?

You are invited to participate in this project because of your previous experience working in hostile/conflict environments. Your participation would involve taking part in a once-off semi-structured interview that generally lasts around 60 minutes. I will ask your thoughts and opinions on work that you have previously undertaken, and to explore these issues in more detail. At any point, you will be free to refuse to answer any questions that you would not like to, or to end the interview at your discretion without needing to provide any reasons for doing so.

I would be happy to conduct the interview at a time and place that would be most convenient for you, and if we are unable to meet in person, we can conduct the interview over Skype, email, or whichever alternative means would suit you best.

WHY IS MY PARTICIPATION IMPORTANT?

As a professional with firsthand experience of working in high-risk contexts, your views would assist my research greatly. Conflict reporting is often either misrepresented or under-researched in studies of journalism, and it is my hope that being able to include the views and experiences of journalists such as yourself will contribute towards better clarifying the nature of the work that goes into reporting on violence and conflict in situations that are often not covered nearly as comprehensively as they deserve to be.

The kinds of information that I would be interested in asking about would include, but are not limited to: your experience of working in unsafe spaces, moving around within unsafe contexts, relationships with

sources, your views on the audiences of your work, the ethics of doing journalism in conflict spaces, interactions with 'local' or foreign correspondents and decisions to enter and leave unsafe contexts.

By taking part in this research, the information you supply may be used in relevant future research, including journal articles, book chapters and conference presentations.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND YOUR RIGHT TO WITHDRAW

At the beginning of participation, you will be given a copy of this information sheet and a consent form for you to sign, confirming that you are willing to participate in this research project and outlining the precautions that will be taken with any data you supply. By default, all steps will be taken to preserve your anonymity by default, in order to ensure that any quotes you provide cannot be attributed to you. Examples of this would include removing your name from any attributed quotes and ensuring that no quotes that would be identifiable as coming from you are reproduced without appropriately concealing any such identifiable elements.

Interviews will be audio recorded in order to allow for them to be transcribed accurately, though you will be able to opt out of having the interview recorded if desired. No interview recordings will be shared with any other persons for any purposes whatsoever. Data obtained in this research may be used in relevant future research, including journal publications, book chapters, and conference or other academic presentations.

Finally, you will be able to withdraw from the research at any time before, during, or after the interview without needing to give any reasons for your decision. If you should withdraw, your interview responses will not be included in the thesis. There will be no negative consequences to you if you should choose to withdraw.

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR THE RESEARCHER

Should you have any queries or concerns at all, I would be happy to provide any further information you require about myself or this research more generally. I believe that your participation will make a valuable contribution to this research and hope that you will be willing to share your views and experiences.

Richard Stupart

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http://www.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/WhosWho/PhDResearchers.aspx

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Once signed, a copy of this form will be provided to the research participant, with another copy stored by the researcher and made available on request.

I have read and understood the introductory letter describing the nature of this research project and have had an opportunity to ask for any additional information that I require prior to participating.
I understand that my participation in this research is entirely voluntary. I am free to withdraw from being interviewed at any time and to decline to answer any question(s) if I so wish. There will be no negative consequences for me whatsoever if I should choose to do so.
I agree that this interview may be recorded for the purposes of transcription, and stored electronically.
I agree that data obtained in this research may be used in relevant future research, including journal publications, book chapters, and conference or other academic presentations.
[OPTIONAL] I give permission for my name to be used in this research project
[OPTIONAL] I would like my interview recording(s) to be erased once transcribed

Signature

RESEARCHER CONTACT INFORMATION

If you should have any queries, require further information, or wish to receive a copy of this form, you are welcome to contact the researcher:

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http://www.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/WhosWho/PhDResearchers.aspx

C | INTERVIEW TOPIC GUIDE

Each section details potential questions under each of the themes of interest. Not all were asked in all cases, as the discussion would adapt to what subjects decided to talk about in detail in the time available.

C.1 INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS

Initial questions intended to get the interview off gently. May include discussions of the journalist's recent work, how they came to be a journalist, etc. Gradually moving to discuss more directly relevant concepts:

1. Can you tell me about where you are working at present?

2. What kind of work do you do there?

3. Can you tell me a little about when you first engaged in reporting on conflict and/or complex humanitarian emergency situations?

    (a) What initially brought you to your first conflict assignment?

    (b) What made you decide to go?

    (c) How were your impressions of the work compared to what you had expected it to be like beforehand?

    (d) Did you work alone or with others?

        i. What was that like?

    (e) What made you decide to leave South Sudan?

4. What kind of relationship do you have with news organisations when you have covered conflict in the past?

C.2 CONSTRAINTS

What discursive constraints influence the work of the journalist?

1. What are the difficulties/constraints to working in South Sudan?

2. Have you had any experiences in which how you were perceived helped or hindered your reporting?

3. Has it ever influenced your levels of access with sources or your peers?

4. Has your status as a 'foreign'/'local' journalist helped or hindered how you are able to go about your reporting?

5. Does being a foreign/local journalist influence whether and how you are able to engage with colleagues who are local/foreign journalists?

6. What are the logistics of working in a conflict space like?

7. Can you walk me through the typical kinds of things you would do while reporting from X?

    (a) How do you get around?

   (b) Where do you sleep?

   (c) How do you find stories and negotiate access?

   (d) How do you choose interview subjects and conduct interviews?

   (e) Is electricity an issue, how do you keep devices charged?

8. Do logistics and work routines affect how you go about your work If so, how?

9. How do you file stories?

10. Where do you file stories to?

11. What is your relationship like with your editor when you are travelling in conflict zones?

C.3 ETHICS

Questions relating to self-perceptions of ethical duty and a responsibility to testify. Questions only asked if respondents don't bring up ethics first. If they do, this is probed further as a route into these discussions.

1. Do you think journalists have a moral duty to report on suffering and conflict?

2. Do you think journalists have particular responsibilities towards those that they report on?

   (a) Has this been your experience?

3. What do you understand by the ideas of 'objectivity' and 'neutrality' in journalism?

4. Is there a role for emotional reporting in covering conflict?

5. Do you think it is possible to report on suffering in objective and neutral ways?

6. Have you ever encountered difficulties in trying to communicate the reality of what you have seen in your reporting?

7. Who do you think of as your audience when reporting on conflict?

8. What do you hope will be the outcome of your reporting?

9. Do you think there is such a thing as a 'best' way of reporting on conflict?

10. Do you have particular thoughts on how conflict and suffering should 'best' be reported on?

11. Have you ever had people criticise your presence in conflict spaces, or your work there?

12. When did this happen?

13. What are your thoughts on these criticisms?

C.4 CLOSING QUESTIONS

Some closing questions, to end the interview on a higher note, and provide more opportunity for more open, reflective answers.

1. Why do you think people become conflict journalists?

2. Do you think conflict journalists have an effect on the conflicts they cover?

3. Why do you think it is important that conflicts be covered?

4. What do you think are some of the major factors that influence whether journalists are able to report on conflict well?

5. Have you been given any advice from other journalists covering conflict that has really stuck with you?

6. What would be your advice to other journalists hoping to cover conflict?

7. Do you have any other particular memories of your work that stand out for you?

8. Are there any other questions that you think I should ask?

9. Are there any questions you would like to ask me?

D | ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHS FROM FIELDWORK

Figure 1: Midday street scene in Malakal POC.

Figure 2: Entrance gate H ('Hotel Gate') to the Malakal POC site.

Figure 3: Fortifications on one of the barriers protecting the POC site, manned by UNMISS troops from the Indian Battalion (INDIABATT)

Figure 4: The accommodation during our time in Malakal. Note the heat-cracked earth in the foreground.

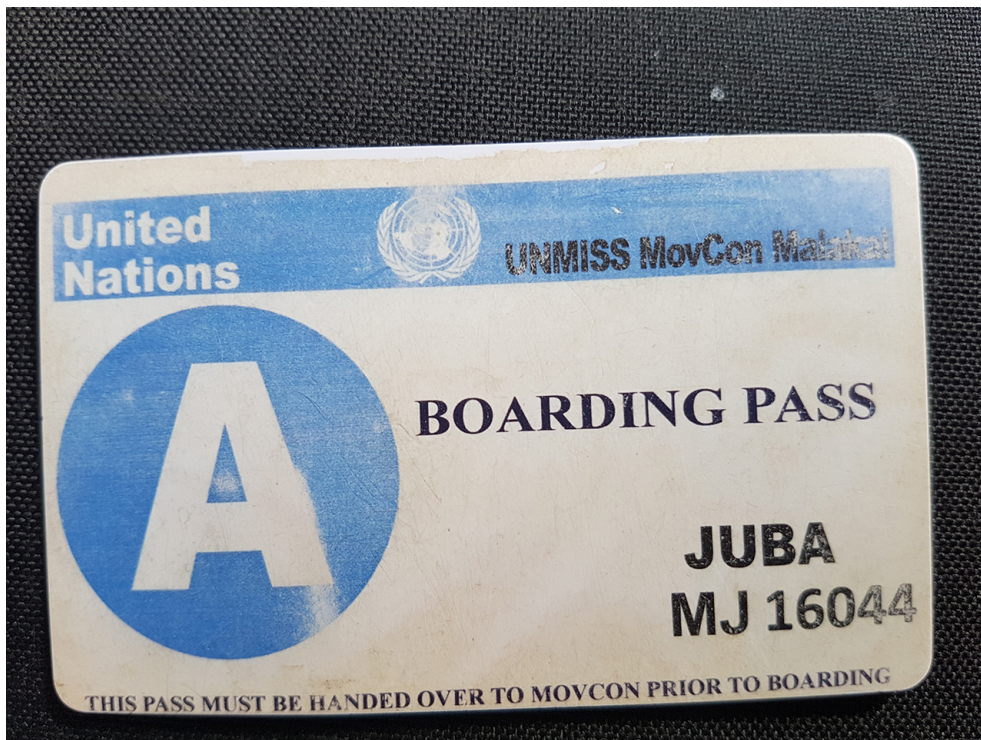**Figure 5:** Inside accommodation in Malakal POC.

Figure 6: UN-issued boarding pass, used during boarding UNMISS flights.