



Slide 1

News teams have to shape events into some sort of narrative that readers are familiar with in order to make a story more interesting and comprehensible for their audience.

One way of doing this is by trying to represent people as either 'good' or 'bad' thereby creating binary opposites that we expect from narratives, and also looking for problems which they can follow up after a few days with some kind of solution. Often news stories seem to have a neat resolution after a few days or weeks, even if that is not the case in the real world.

Neo: They're all just stories, right?

Skelley: The structures are different.

Neo: Not just beginning, middle, end?

Skelley: Not at all. News stories put all the important facts at the front, magazine articles maybe start with a human interest story or a question to pique your curiosity, and novels usually build up to the important facts at the end.



Look at *The Guardian* front covers the week following the bombing at Manchester Arena on May 22nd 2017.

What narrative strands can you see emerging here? Who is being portrayed as 'good' and 'bad' and why?



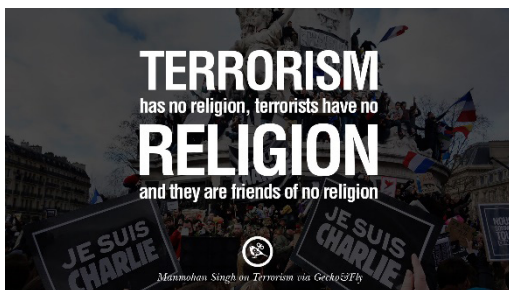
News Contexts

General Election 2017 held on June 8th.

PM at the time, Theresa May who used to be Home Secretary, made huge cuts to the police force in the years preceding this attack. Labour believes her cuts put people at risk. Tories believe uncontrolled migration allows these attacks to happen.



The two leaders have very different views on foreign policy too. Corbyn is a self-confessed pacifist and believes the “war on terror” isn’t working. May, on the other hand, allows the UK to continue making Arms Trade Deals with countries such as Saudi Arabia.



At the time, anti-Muslim rhetoric was rife in the UK leading to fear of immigrants and immigration and the speedy rise of right wing groups such as BNP and UKIP. Social media is littered with xenophobic vitriol being shared but also many people trying to prevent such hatred, explaining that not all Muslims are terrorists.

Despite many people’s views on Donald Trump becoming president, Theresa May appeared to get along well with him when she visited The White House in January 2017.

May believed she had to show Trump how keen Britain was to work with the USA, especially in light of Brexit.



the **guardian**

The Guardian’s mainstream left political leaning means their reports often support Labour and also seek to explain that Muslims are not the problem, terrorist are the problem.

The media has long been seen as setting the public agenda and the topic has been researched since as far back as the 1960s when studies were carried out into the agenda-setting capacity of the news media in American Presidential elections. Let’s consider if this is still the case.

Look at The Guardian front covers again and discuss, ‘How important were the social/ historical/ political contexts to the narratives created?’